

Impact of Covid 19 Crisis on Women Entrepreneurs in Kurunegala District Getting Benefited from Microfinance Institutions

E.A.T. Thathsarani¹ and M.L.D.C.J. Liyanage²

Department of Finance, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka^{1,2}

tharikathathsarani60@gmail.com¹, chaturaj@kln.ac.lk²

ABSTRACT

Introduction: COVID 19 which spread all over the world as a global crisis became a threat to the global economy. From micro-entrepreneur to large-scale industrialists have to pivot their activities and lifestyle as per the pandemic. Thus, this article examines and summarizes the impact of the COVID 19 crisis on women entrepreneurs. The purpose of this study is to identify the real impact of COVID 19 along with the lockdown on women entrepreneurs who sought assistance from microfinance institutions.

Design/Methodology/Approach - The study followed the thematic analysis in the qualitative approach. Primary data adopted from 20 interviews resulted in four themes regarding the study. The population of the study was the women microentrepreneurs in the Kurunegala district of Sri Lanka who was benefited from micro-financial services. Primary data was collected through 20 structured interviews from the same population.

Findings: The result of this study indicate how women entrepreneurs deal with COVID 19 pandemic in running their business activities. Accordingly, four main themes have identified the impact on business performance, financial difficulties faced by the effect of micro-credit, and the impact due to support from the government.

Conclusion: The study concluded that the majority of the women entrepreneurs believed that they were disadvantaged by the COVID 19 pandemic mainly due to lockdown and curfew in the country. However, entrepreneurs engage in online businesses found that they were usefully managed their operations during the lockdown and curfew period.

Keywords: *Women entrepreneurship, microfinance, government support COVID 19 and Sri Lanka.*