



Gender Equality and Microfinance Programmes Among Women Entrepreneurs in Islamic Microfinance Institutions of Cairo, Egypt

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Abstract

Islamic microfinance institutions (MFIs) in Cairo, Egypt have been pivotal in providing financial services to women entrepreneurs who face significant gender disparities. This mixed methods study employed both qualitative interviews (

$n=30$) \wedge quantitative surveys ($n=150$) $\frac{\text{conducted}}{a}$ period $i \cdot i$, targeting female entrepreneurs who utilised microf

ered by Islamic MFI institutions in Cairo. The sample included women operating in various sectors such as agriculture, retail, and manufacturing. Findings indicate that while the majority of participants reported improved financial stability (85%), there was a notable disparity in empowerment levels across different sectors and age groups. Women aged under 30 years old showed higher levels of self-confidence compared to older entrepreneurs. The study reveals mixed outcomes, with some women experiencing significant economic benefits but still facing barriers related to social norms and discrimination within the community. Islamic MFI institutions should implement targeted programmes addressing gender-specific challenges faced by female entrepreneurs in Cairo. Policies aimed at promoting inclusivity and breaking down traditional gender roles are recommended. microfinance, women entrepreneurs, Islamic microfinance institutions, gender equality, empowerment

Keywords: Cairo, Egypt, Islamic finance, qualitative research, quantitative analysis, gender studies, microfinance effectiveness

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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