



Microfinance Institutions and Female Entrepreneurship in Ethiopian Communities, 2009

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Abstract

Microfinance institutions (MFIs) have been a significant development in the provision of financial services to small-scale entrepreneurs and particularly to women in developing countries. A qualitative approach was employed through participant observation, semi-structured interviews with MFI clients and staff, and document review. Data were analysed using thematic analysis. MFIs provided an average of \$500 in loans to female entrepreneurs, with a notable increase in business activities such as food retailing and small-scale manufacturing following financial support. This study highlights the potential of MFIs in supporting women's economic empowerment by addressing financial barriers and fostering entrepreneurial skills. MFIs should expand their services to include training programmes, mentorship opportunities, and market linkages to enhance female entrepreneurs' success rates.

Keywords: *African Geography, Microfinance Institutions, Ethnographic Study, Female Entrepreneurship, Development Economics, Gender Studies, Qualitative Research*

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