



Microfinance Influence on Women Entrepreneurs' Business Viability in DRC: An Action Research Study

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of microfinance on the business viability of women entrepreneurs in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a country with significant economic challenges and gender disparities. An action research approach was employed, involving interviews with 50 female entrepreneurs who participated in microfinance initiatives over a two-year period. Data collection included questionnaires on business outcomes and semi-structured interviews to explore qualitative aspects. Microfinance has notably improved financial stability for women entrepreneurs, evidenced by an increase of 42% in average monthly income reported among participants compared to pre-intervention levels. The findings suggest that microfinance not only supports economic empowerment but also enhances the resilience and sustainability of female-owned businesses in DRC's challenging socio-economic environment. Policy makers are encouraged to integrate microfinance into broader development strategies, particularly focusing on enhancing access to financial services for underserved women entrepreneurs.

Keywords: *Democratic Republic of Congo, Microfinance, Gender Studies, Empowerment Programmes, Community Development, Action Research, Economic Empowerment*

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