



Microfinance and Technological Upgrading for Female Tailors in Cairo: A Mixed Methods Study

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Abstract

Microfinance programmes and technological training initiatives have been employed to empower marginalized groups in urban settings. This study focuses on female tailors in Cairo who are part of these interventions. This mixed methods study employs a combination of qualitative interviews with 30 female tailors (including focus groups) and quantitative data from a survey of 150 tailor businesses. Data collection is conducted through face-to-face meetings, online surveys, and secondary sources such as government records. Female tailors reported significant increases in their business income following the introduction of microloans, with an average increase of 37% over a year. Technological upgrades were associated with improved efficiency but also led to increased competition from digital platforms. The findings suggest that while microfinance and technological training can enhance the economic resilience of female tailors in Cairo, they must be tailored to fit local contexts and complemented by policies aimed at reducing market barriers. Policy makers should consider providing continuous financial support and fostering a supportive business environment for female tailors. Additionally, developing digital literacy programmes could help mitigate the negative impacts of technological adoption on traditional businesses.

Keywords: *Cairo, Empowerment, Microfinance, Technological Change, Gender Studies, Qualitative Research, Quantitative Analysis*

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