

## **Women Empowerment Led by Online SME: Untapped Potential for Growth**

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Today, Women empowerment through women entrepreneurship is a common feature in most developing countries. It plays a major role in poverty eradication and economic growth. Unfortunately, in the Sri Lankan context the women-led online SMEs face number of constraints that impede their sustainable growth. This paper aims to investigate the current context of online SMEs led by women, challenges they encounter, future prospects, and directing policymakers towards effective policy implications in this regard. Data was collected using the snowball sampling method. Qualitative methods such as semi-structured interview questionnaires focus group discussions were used to collect primary data. Findings related to their motivation, approach, and creativity into business, competition, marketing methods are significant to novel comers and policymakers to design an effective policy background. Further, they encounter several challenges due to gender disparities, lack of financial support, and the legal system. The capacity development programs through the public-private partnerships are highlighted along with the provision of financial support under the lower interest rates that need to be encouraged. The article emphasizes how they have achieved national and international markets through a lower amount of capital and labor and it's an eye-opener for the whole economy to tap the untapped potential for growth. Inadequacy of precise secondary data was an obstacle in generalizing the results to the whole economy. The selection of the western province and the southern province as the sample have been done after an online survey. E-Commerce is a resource that can be spreader all over the country by giving proper guidance and training which leads to enhance the standard of living. Future research studies can be conducted upon shedding light on the designing procedure of Private-public partnership in capacity development and learning by comparison with other countries in the region who have gained successful impacts on their way towards sustainable economic growth

**Keywords:** Online businesses; SME; Women empowerment; Women entrepreneurs