



THE IMPACT OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF VIDATHA PROGRAMME, SRI LANKA

Dambugolla D.W.C.P.

Research Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka

dambugolladw@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Every aspect of the world is changing rapidly; political and economic transformations seem to arise every nook and corner in the world. Countries tend to demand their economies; dictatorships convert into democracy while creating new institutions and agencies. Due to the changes in economic pathways for women, those who intend to start and operate their own businesses. When women gradually start their own businesses with a view to contribute a large portion in national economy, the unique skills of women entrepreneurs are yet to recognize. In this context, this research examined women's entrepreneurial characteristics in Sri Lanka mainly based on the environmental factors. The case study focused the VIDATHA program which initiated by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Research in mid-2000. This study aimed to investigate the effect of environmental factors on women entrepreneurial characteristics in Western Province, Sri Lanka. A regression model was developed to identify the relationship between entrepreneurial traits and environmental factors in terms of Women Entrepreneurship Development. The questionnaire was use to collect the primary data. A survey carried out among women entrepreneurs in VIDATHA program, Ministry of Science Technology and Research in 2015. The result of this analytical study indicated that there are similarities and differences in experiences of women entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka and women entrepreneurs were able to run their businesses and reached successes, despite the work-family conflicts. The outcome of the women's engagement in business proved that the support for service of the companies and competitiveness are significantly correlated with the environmental factor which main source for availability of funding for development of women entrepreneurship. The factors influence women to be at risks of businesses could easily be improved through the activities of business support services, followed by independence, self-confidence and internal locus of control. The business support service is the main factor influenced the development of female entrepreneurship. Competitiveness and government policies were given a negative impact on developments of women entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurial Traits, Environmental Factors, Women's Entrepreneurial Characteristics, VIDATHA Project