

EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF COMMUNITY-BASED WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A CASE OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN HANDICRAFT COMMUNITIES IN GALLE, SRI LANKA

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Abstract

Community-based entrepreneurship (CEB) involves collaborative initiatives and shared decision-making among community members. It contemplates as a solution for developing the livelihood of small communities in developing countries. In recent days, entrepreneurship among women has been understood as a rising economic force that contributes to the economy's growth and development. The existing literature acknowledges the economic potential of community-based entrepreneurship (CEB) and its role in empowering women, yet limited attention has been directed towards understanding the unique challenges, opportunities, and socio-cultural aspects influencing women entrepreneurs in the handicraft sector. The handicraft industry plays a major role in community development and is also considered a small-scale industry. The industry is spread throughout the country mainly in rural and urban areas, almost exclusively among women. Although the government and development authorities are aiming to empower women and their entrepreneurial journeys, the researcher found a gap between women's employment and recognizing the sector dynamics to cater to community-based women entrepreneurship. Despite the sector's significant contribution to the national economy and its role in employing women, there is a shortage of in-depth studies that delve into the nuances of community-based entrepreneurship within this industry. Therefore, the researcher utilized a qualitative research approach. The research involved conducting 20 interviews with handicraft women entrepreneurs living in Galle, Sri Lanka. The Purposive sampling technique was utilized as the sampling technique. Results were analyzed employing thematic analysis. This study presents several challenges that must be addressed for the sustainable development of Sri Lanka. The results will inform policymakers and stakeholders on how to support and promote community-based women entrepreneurship within the handicraft industry. This study further encourages promoting a women's entrepreneurial culture and fostering the development of sustainable communities while empowering the women's community to establish handicraft enterprises to address the issue of growing unemployment.

Keywords: community-based entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurship, sustainable development, handicrafts

1.0 Introduction

Women often play various roles in society. Most of the time, women prioritize their natural roles as homemakers, caregivers of their families, and in some cases running home-based micro-enterprise activities. The micro-enterprise activities involve selling local food, tailoring, or making crafts to provide for their family's household income (Bakar & Osmar, 2014). The women who engage in micro-enterprise activities belong to the informal sector (Edirisinghe, 2016). According to the Department of Census and Statistics report, the total female population in Sri Lanka was reported as 11,009,05.6 in the year 2022. It is 51.8% of the total population. Women in Sri Lanka represent more than half of the population. In Sri Lanka, about 8.1 million individuals are being employed during the year 2021 accounting for the employment-to-population of 47.4% (Labor Force Survey Report, 2021). Out of that 66.7% amounting 5.4 million are males and 33.3% amounting to 2.7 million are females. The number of unemployed individuals is estimated at 439,783 during the year 2021. Out of this 52.9% are females. The contribution of women to the economy is relatively low. According to Madurawala, 2018, The gap has been evident, especially in rural regions where the unemployment rate is recorded above 7% among rural women. According to Wijewardhana and Dias (2022), sustainable development goals (SDG), women's economic empowerment is crucial for economic growth, and it matters for individual women, families, regions, and their countries.

In recent days, the entrepreneurship of women is understood as a powerful source for the economy's growth and development. Promoting entrepreneurship among women is an effective way to revitalize an economy (Osman & Bakar, 2014). The economic empowerment of rural women is fundamental to the sustainable socioeconomic development of all countries in the overall process of realizing gender equality. When considering women's entrepreneurship opportunities, community-based entrepreneurship is a vital factor. Community-based entrepreneurship (CEB) involves collaborative initiatives and shared decision-making among community members (Peredo & Chrisman, 2006). It has the potential to enhance economic empowerment and preserve cultural heritage. Community-based entrepreneurship (CEB) contemplates as a solution for developing the livelihood of small communities in developing countries.

The handicraft industry in Sri Lanka is an example of a community-based industry with significant potential for contributing to the country's economy (Export Development Board [EDB], 2020) while uplifting and sustaining the livelihood of the handicraft artisans who have engaged in the field. The industry is spread throughout the country mainly in rural and urban areas. The wealth of cultural diversity has enhanced the abilities of local artisans, with ancestral expertise passed down through generations within their families. According to the labor force survey report (2021), craft and related trade worker categories are highly consistent with informal employment. Informal female employment generated through craft and related trades work in the year 2021 amounted to 299,096. In Sri Lanka, handicrafts are highly merchandised products in quality and volume. They are a major source of freight earnings (Dissanayake, 2018 cited in Teo et al., 2020). However, the research on women entrepreneurs in community-based contexts is relatively new and limited in numbers. According to Bano (2016), the country

focuses on the development of the handicraft industry, to strengthen the economy. Though the Handicraft Industry in Sri Lanka is considered a cottage industry, it has evolved as one of the major revenue generators over the years (Teo et al., 2020). The EDB's industry capability report of the Sri Lankan Craft Sector (2020) demonstrates the fact that, as a result of numerous initiatives undertaken by the government and various stakeholders, the sector has experienced significant growth in both the local high-end market and the international market, particularly in the niche export segment. There has been consistent growth of 15% over few years and the industry has evolved as one of the major contributors to export and foreign revenue generation (Teo et al., 2020). This sector of craft businesses is fast-growing, and as per the EDB in 2021, has the highest number of women entrepreneurship engagements.

This Research was based in Galle as it has been identified as one of the popular cities for handicrafts (EDB, 2020). EDB's industry capability report of the Sri Lankan Craft Sector (2020) has identified geographical clusters in Galle for specific handicraft products such as handloom, beeralu (bobbin) lace (Magalle in Galle district), wooden masks (Ambalangoda in Galle district), coconut and kithul (based wooden products), batik, and paper-based products.

While there is a growing recognition of the importance of women's entrepreneurship, particularly in community-based contexts, existing research predominantly focuses on broader aspects of women's economic participation and entrepreneurial activities. A noticeable research gap exists in the specific investigation of the dynamics and challenges faced by women engaged in community-based entrepreneurship, with a particular emphasis on the handicraft industry in Sri Lanka. Despite the sector's significant contribution to the national economy and its role in employing women, there is a dearth of in-depth studies that delve into the nuances of community-based entrepreneurship within this industry.

The existing literature acknowledges the economic potential of community-based entrepreneurship (CEB) and its role in empowering women, yet limited attention has been directed towards understanding the unique challenges, opportunities, and socio-cultural aspects influencing women entrepreneurs in the handicraft sector. Additionally, while the overall growth of the handicraft industry in Sri Lanka is evident, there is a lack of comprehensive research that specifically explores the experiences of women entrepreneurs within this sector, particularly those operating at the community level.

Moreover, the research conducted in Galle as the provincial-level unemployment rate of Galle is 7.0%. Southern province has the highest unemployment rate of 7.3%. There is a gap in understanding the specific contextual factors that influence women's participation and success in entrepreneurship within this city. Addressing this gap is crucial for developing targeted policies and interventions that can effectively support and empower women engaged in community-based entrepreneurship, ultimately contributing to the sustainable socioeconomic development of both Galle and similar regions. Therefore, further research is needed to bridge this gap and provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs in the handicraft industry within community-based contexts in Sri Lanka.

Therefore, this paper aims at addressing the following main research questions (Q1) followed by the sub-research questions (Q2 and Q3)

How can the handicraft communities in Galle Sri Lanka help in understanding the dynamics of community-based women's entrepreneurship?

What are the opportunities and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in the handicraft sector?

The purpose of the study is to investigate the different aspects of community-based women's entrepreneurship in contributing to sustainable nation-building, with a specific focus on the handicraft communities in Galle Sri Lanka by examining the role of women entrepreneurs in these communities. The study aims to explore and examine opportunities and strategies that can enhance the sustainable development of community-based women entrepreneurship within handicraft communities in Galle, Sri Lanka.

The main objectives of this research project are as follows:

- i. to analyze the case of handicraft communities in Galle, Sri Lanka as a context for understanding the dynamics of community-based women entrepreneurship.

Therefore, this study further encourages promoting a women's entrepreneurial culture and fostering the development of sustainable communities while empowering the women's community to establish handicraft enterprises to address the issue of growing unemployment.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Community-based Entrepreneurship & Women Entrepreneurship

The concept of community-based entrepreneurship (CBE) has been defined by Peredo and Chrisman (2006, p. 310) as cited in Peredo & Chrisman, 2006 as "a community acting corporately as both entrepreneur and enterprise in pursuit of the common good." The research field of CBE emerged in 1975 with a focus on implementation issues in rural development programs. However, there has been a significant increase in research on CBE since the early 2000s (Pierre 2017). According to Matthew et al. 2020, Community-based enterprises are commercially oriented organizations that are established, owned, and governed to generate economic, social, and/or ecological benefits primarily for the members of the communities in which they are located. Therefore, Parwez (2017), mentioned that CBE is identified as a group approach, mutual trust, and motivation towards economic activities encouraged by institutional support. However, Smith et al. (2010), elaborated that failure to address the dignity, creativity, and potential of community members can lead to long-term inadequacies. Torri (2009), argued that, given the growing interest in entrepreneurship and sustainability as tools for local development, CBE could be significant for policymakers and practitioners. Understanding the dynamics and outcomes of CBE can inform effective strategies for fostering entrepreneurship and sustainability within communities (Wanniarachchi, Dissanayake & Downs, 2018). However, there is a lack of empirical studies showing how this operates in industry-based contexts where women play a major role which this research helps to fill. Scholars revealed that CBE is an integral part of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in a country (Parwez 2017; Ratten 2014). Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in accelerating economic development by

identifying new users of available resources and maximizing their utilization (Littlewood & Holt, 2018, p. 526). This function necessitates the creation of Community-Based Entrepreneurship (CBE) as part of local economic development initiatives. According to Peredo and Chrisman (2006, p. 310), CBE refers to a process where a group of community members acts corporately as both entrepreneurs and enterprises for the common good. Community-based entrepreneurship contributes to advancing governance, productivity, and the implementation of cooperatives as a means to create jobs, generate income, and alleviate poverty (Purusottama et al., 2018).

Schumpeter (1934) describes entrepreneurship as the economic outcome-based concept, that an entrepreneur creates value by carrying out new combinations causing discontinuity. The development of Community-Based Entrepreneurship (CBE) functions as an effective tool for reducing the development gap between rural communities and urban centers, thus mitigating rural-urban migration (Purusottama et al., 2018). In line with this perspective, Parwez (2017), asserts that CBE is a crucial instrument for unlocking the potential of marginalized and deprived communities, fostering social upliftment by integrating them into the mainstream economy. Originating from the imperative of promoting sustainable local economic development, particularly among the poor in rural areas, community-based entrepreneurship involves establishing cooperative relationships to exchange resources and create value for all parties involved (Peredo & Chrisman, 2006, p. 309; Purusottama et al., 2018, p. 430). Governments worldwide recognize the merits of CBE, acknowledging its capacity to bring about societal transformation and enhance the quality of life for the populace (Ratten & Welpel, 2011, p. 285).

Another area of discussion in literature envisages entrepreneurship has often been identified as a potential solution for rebuilding indigenous communities (Murphy *et.al.*, 2020). In Sri Lanka, women's entrepreneurial endeavors are constrained by limited access to skills and training. Moreover, they have fewer opportunities to explore market potential and enhance their entrepreneurial abilities, hindering their growth as entrepreneurs (Madurawala et al., 2016; Handaragama and Kusakabe, 2021). Furthermore, women face gender-specific obstacles when starting their ventures (Surangi, 2022).

2.2 Sri Lankan Handicraft Industry

Handicrafts serve as a distinctive means of expressing a nation's identity, heritage, and culture, with their significance deeply rooted in the skills and use of traditional and local materials during manufacturing. As noted by Koswatte (2020), these crafts play a vital role in various countries, acting as key income generators due to their consumption patterns appealing to both local and international tastes. Though the handicraft industry in Sri Lanka is considered a highly labor-intensive, cottage industry, it has evolved as one of the major revenue generators over the years (Teo et al., 2020). According to the EDB's industry capability report of the Sri Lankan Craft Sector (2020), the range of products includes ceramic wear, wood crafts such as masks, and handloom products such as bags, table mats, coasters, wall hangings, porcelain ornaments, terra – cotta pots & vases, paper crafts, hand embroidery, beeralu/bobbin lace products, candles, wrapping papers and packaging, wellness & spa products, etc. The

combination of traditional skills and modern technology results in unique and exclusive products, crafted with expert skill. These artisans create innovative products while considering modern trends, offering internationally competitive prices and items of beauty with utility. Koswatte (2020), mentioned though Sri Lanka has strong cultural roots embedded in society to develop traditional industries such as the handicraft sector, the industry is struggling to overcome the challenges.

3.0 Methodology

Judging the appropriateness of the methodologies that have been used in previous research, an interpretive research philosophy was adopted for this research as it helps determine the underlying and perhaps controversial assumptions of the research (Walliman, 2010). Alongside this, the researcher employed inductive reasoning to gain insights into the research questions. The study was further conducted as a case study to examine the existing situation and recognize the opportunities and challenges to community-based women entrepreneurship within the handicraft community in Galle, Sri Lanka.

The subject study undertook both primary and secondary accumulating data, providing an in-depth view of the study. Secondary analyzed through previous academic literature such as books, journal articles, company websites, annual reports, newspaper articles, and magazines. The literature review was developed on secondary data. The primary data for this study were collected using semi-structured interviews on a one-on-one basis. As the researcher guided the interview toward the satisfaction of research objectives, certain questions were prepared before the data collection. The rationale for using the semi-structured interview was that this research is on community-based women entrepreneurship. To conduct the research in a meaningful manner the researcher needed to find out respondents' perspectives, what they think, and how they feel about it. However, the respondents were given the freedom to address their thoughts freely, which contained important aspects that were useful as they were open-ended questions.

For this research samples congregated through Purposive sampling. It is a non-probability sampling technique where each element in the population doesn't have a fixed probabilistic chance of being selected for the sample (Dash & Malhotra, 2016). Purposive sampling is the fundamental principle for selecting cases and individuals in qualitative research conducted concerning the objectives of the research units of analysis are selected in terms of criteria that will allow the research questions to be answered. The data was gathered by conducting 20 interviews with women handicraft entrepreneurs living in Galle, Sri Lanka. The interviews were conducted in Sinhala and lasted for more than an hour each. Subsequently, the interviews were transcribed, summarized, and organized into themes following the methodology

Study Area

Galle is the capital of the Southern Province. Galle is located 117 km away from Colombo (Figure 1). Galle Municipal Council area is bounded by the Bope-Poddala Pradeshiya Sabha area from the North, the Habaraduwa Pradeshiya Sabha area from the East, the Hikkaduwa Pradeshiya Sabha area from the West, and the Indian Ocean from the South. Galle has been identified as one of the popular cities for handicrafts (EDB, 2020). EDB's industry capability

report of the Sri Lankan craft sector (2020) identified geographical clusters in Galle for specific handicraft products such as handloom, beeralu (bobbin) lace (Magalle in Galle district), wooden masks (Ambalangoda in Galle district), coconut and kithul (based wooden products), batik, and paper-based products. The sample was selected using the purposive sampling technique. The results were analyzed employing the Thematic analysis.

Figure 1: Map of Galle district



Source: (<https://www.news.lk/news/business/item/6901-special-development-project-for-galle>)

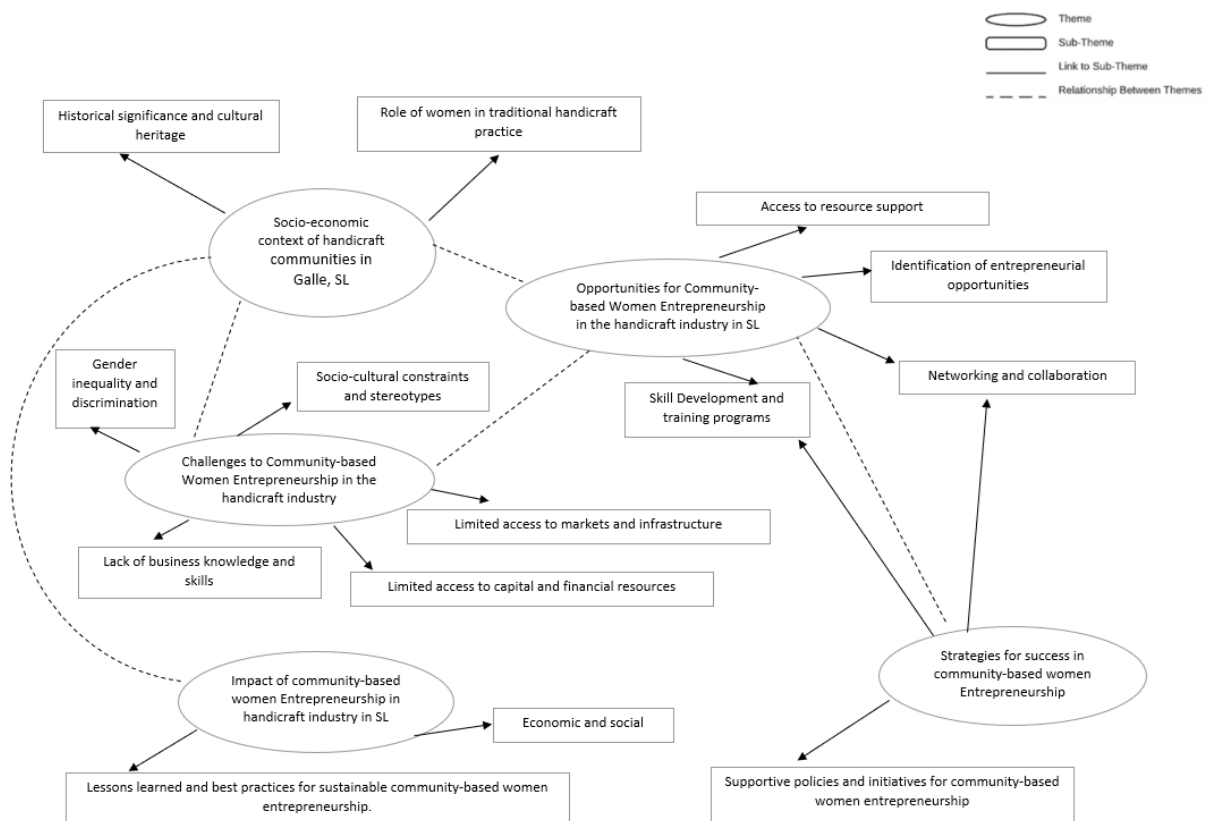


Figure 2: Thematic network of dynamics of community-based women entrepreneurship for handicraft communities in Galle, Sri Lanka

4.0 Data Analysis and Discussion

As explained previously, thematic analysis was utilized to present the primary data and transform them into information. The results were obtained from interviews conducted with 20 women entrepreneurs in handicraft communities in Galle, Sri Lanka. According to the data of the sample, five main themes and sub-themes were identified as the dynamics of community-based women's entrepreneurship. Results were analyzed and summarized as shown in Table 1. After analyzing data with the literature, the researcher was able to identify the relationships between each dynamic which is one of the most important results discovered through the study (Figure 2). In answering RQ1, the study was able to identify the main themes generated, as the dynamics of the community-based women entrepreneurship for handicraft communities in Galle, Sri Lanka namely, the socio-economic context of handicraft communities in Galle, SL, opportunities for community-based women entrepreneurship in the handicraft industry in SL, challenges to community-based women entrepreneurship in the handicraft industry, impact of community-based women's entrepreneurship and strategies for success in community-based women's entrepreneurship. After analyzing the data, an interdependency was evident. For instance, the socioeconomic context of handicraft communities is directly linked to the opportunities for community-based women entrepreneurship (sub-themes such as historical significance and cultural heritage) and challenges (sub-themes such as the role of women in traditional handicraft practices) to community-based women entrepreneurship in the handicraft industry.

Further, the researcher identified certain opportunities and challenges. Challenges identified as gender inequality and discrimination, lack of entrepreneurial skills and business knowledge, limited access to infrastructure, limited gain for capital and financial resources, and market access. The study reveals a finding aligned with Edirisinghe (2016), that the lack of social protection systems and societal perceptions hinder the propensity for the thriving of women's economic empowerment within the boundaries of handicraft business.

Table 1- Summary of data analysis

Theme Label	Sub Theme	Significant statement Example	Participants contributed Extracts on this theme	Linked to the literature
Socio-economic context of handicraft communities in	Historical Significance and Cultural Heritage	<i>“If you take the traditional handicrafts in SL They have a rich history of over 2,500 years, deeply rooted</i>	P1, P4, P5,P12,P14 , P18,P19,P20	Teo et al., 2020

Galle, SL		<p><i>in the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka it has a history of over 2,500 years for example these crafts be found in the tales of the Ramayana.”</i></p> <p><i>”past it was these crafts were associated with different caste systems and passed down through generations”</i></p> <p><i>“Some people say it is influenced by Indian crafts, yes a little bit but actually we have our own indigenous crafts, and it is there in written history and in folk history,”</i></p>		
	Role of women in traditional handicraft practices	<p><i>“The authorities are mentioning that there are more than 26,000 craftsmen who are currently registered with the National Crafts Council and 75 percent of it is women.”</i></p> <p><i>“...women are doing this as a home-based industry most of the time as a main livelihood while taking care of the</i></p>	P16 P3, P6, P7,P13,P14	Export Development Board Industry Capability Report of the Sri Lankan Craft Sector (2020) (Bakar & Osmar, 2014). (Edirisinghe, 2016) ,Al-Qahtani et al. (2022b), (Wijewardhana and Dias, 2022)

		<i>family and upbringing...we must ensure, that social problems, don't happen in the future. We make these industries more popular for women to work from home.</i>		
Opportunities for Community-based Women Entrepreneurship in the handicraft industry in SL	Access to resource support	<p><i>"We have craft training programs conducted by the craftsmen who have learned this traditionally through generations and they have a lot of knowledge."</i></p> <p><i>"...we need new equipment to make these new designs, and craft villages used to provide that..."</i></p>	P1, P2, P3, P8, P9,P20	Dissanayake, 2018 cited in Teo et al., 2020) & (National Crafts Council, 2023)
	Market Demand and Potential	<p><i>"Most of us don't have mobile phones or don't know how to use them to search for new things National Design Centre helps us to get to know the designs for our crafts."</i></p> <p><i>In the last few years, especially after the war, there is a lot of enthusiasm and a lot of interest in the arts</i></p>	P6, P10,P11,P13,P15, P18,P19,20	Export Development Board Industry Capability Report of the Sri Lankan Craft Sector (2020),(Dissana yake, 2018), Madurawala et al., 2016 & . Handaragama and Kusakabe, 2021) &

		<p><i>and crafts sector but with covid it crippled and now it's blooming with the development of the Tourism sector....</i></p> <p><i>Most of the authority people encourage us to sell our products to foreigners and focus more on environmentally friendly products.</i></p> <p>Participants mentioned that. Former visitors and hotel owners continued to order new prints. maintain a niche market for handicraft designs</p>		<p>Koswatte (2020)</p> <p>(Wanniarachchi, Dissanayake & Downs, 2018).</p>
	<p>Networking and Collaborations</p>	<p>“We sometimes have workshops with local and foreign craftsmen as an exchange program. We have participants from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, and Malaysia those people visit us and encourage us(women) to involve in Craft making “</p> <p><i>We have women’s communities that are involved in making handicrafts we</i></p>	<p>P1, P4, P5, P12,P14, P18,P19,P20</p>	<p>(Peredo & Chrisman, 2006)</p> <p>Parwez (2017),</p>

		<i>sometimes go for the Shilpa Shaba Exhibitions Together'</i>		
	Skill development and training programs	<p><i>participants commented on the craft village development program conducted by the National Craft Council in 2016 and the Shilpa Saviya program launched in 2017.</i></p> <p><i>Through organizations like the National Enterprise Development Authority (NEDA), we get training – in accounts, marketing, and sales there are helpful to help us carry out our business activities independently.</i></p>	<p>P16, P12, P4, P7</p> <p>P16</p>	<p>(Murphy <i>et.al</i>, 2020) and Export Development Board Industry Capability Report of the Sri Lankan Craft Sector (2020) & (National Crafts Council, 2023)</p> <p>Export Development Board Industry Capability Report of the Sri Lankan Craft Sector (2020)</p>
Challenges to Community-based Women Entrepreneurship in the Handicraft Industry	Gender inequality and discrimination	<p><i>“People in my village are not used to seeing women take leadership.”</i></p> <p>Participants mentioned that the lack of support and encouragement for female entrepreneurs is evident, stemming from the belief that women cannot succeed as entrepreneurs while</p>	Almost every participant	(Surangi, 2022) & Al-Qahtani <i>et al.</i> (2022b)

		fulfilling their roles as mothers. Women always get limited access to decision-making. However, based on research and experience, women possess a greater capacity to handle emotions, and stress, and multitask, challenging these stereotypes and emphasizing their entrepreneurial potential.		
	Limited access to capital and financial resources	<i>Getting loans and support from investors is often more challenging for us entrepreneurs. There is Government support as well as other systems that strive to provide support, but this is also limited given the scale of female entrepreneurs in need of support, not just within the craft sector but as a whole</i>	P1,P2,P5,P6,P7,P9,P16	Handaragama and Kusakabe, 2021)
	Lack of business knowledge and skills	Participants commented on Limited awareness of business planning and financial management, Insufficient marketing and	P3, P4, P10, P12, P14,P15,P16,P17	Madurawala et al., 2016 & . Handaragama and Kusakabe, 2021) & Koswatte (2020)

		branding expertise, Lack of knowledge in product development and innovation		
	Socio-cultural constraints and stereotypes	<p><i>“Compared to males, it is observed that women entrepreneurs often prioritize their families and family responsibilities over long-term business planning.”</i></p> <p><i>“Consequently, they tend to maintain businesses at a domestic level, focusing on generating daily income that fulfills their immediate needs. This inclination towards smaller-scale operations is influenced by a lack of support from their families to expand their businesses, increase their workforce, and seek investment for growth”</i></p>	P16 and P20	Madurawala et al., 2016. & Wanniarachchi, Dissanayake & Downs, 2018
	Limited access to markets and infrastructure	<p><i>“Many have no access to the internet, so they are not aware of the latest designs. demand for our designs is sometimes low, and this is</i></p>	P1, P2,P5,P6,P 7,P9,P16	(Wanniarachchi, Dissanayake & Downs, 2018).

		<p><i>mainly because the designs are not attractive enough or up to date with the times.”</i></p> <p><i>“The pandemic has drastically reduced our income. It has also made it difficult for us to access food, and medicine due to shortages of essential supplies in the economy”.</i></p> <p><i>“... many entrepreneurs across all sectors suffer because of changing market levels, changing prices, ballooning labor costs, scarcity of raw materials.....”</i></p>		
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Source: Researcher’s work for data analysis purposes only

The other themes identified are the Impact of community-based women’s entrepreneurship and Strategies for success in community-based women’s entrepreneurship. These sub-themes emerged in the insights the participants shared on the impact of community-based women’s entrepreneurship. Similar to Wijewardhana and Dias (2022) and Osman and Baker (2014), participants of this research agreed that the handicraft sector is fast-growing and has the highest number of women entrepreneurship engagements. The researcher was able to identify the correlation of each dynamic with community-based women’s entrepreneurship. Importantly, the study reveals that compared to other sectors, the handicraft industry shows slow growth and limited contribution to the economic development of the country.

the study emphasizes the establishment of streamlined marketing channels, connecting community sales directly to customers under a community brand, and providing enterprise education to interested community groups and advocacy of the government (especially to address issues related to infrastructure such as transportation of raw materials/ finished goods, and access to extended network) as key strategies to be employed for the sustainable growth of community-based women entrepreneurs in the handicraft sector.

5.0 Conclusion

Community-based entrepreneurship (CEB) involves collaborative initiatives and shared decision-making among community members. It contemplates as a solution for developing the livelihood of small communities in developing countries. In recent days, entrepreneurship among women has been understood as a rising economic force that contributes to the economy's growth and development. The existing literature acknowledges the economic potential of community-based entrepreneurship (CEB). This article depicts the contribution of the handicraft community and women's empowerment, community behavior, and sustainable rural tourism development through community-based entrepreneurship. The study reveals 5 main dynamics including challenges, opportunities, and strategies that would help advance the livelihood and prospects of the handicraft communities and consequently contribute to the country's economy. Further research can delve into each of the dynamics brought forth in the research and conduct an in-depth investigation.

This study intended to investigate the dynamics of community-based women's entrepreneurship in contributing to sustainable nation-building, with a specific focus on the handicraft communities in Galle Sri Lanka by examining the role of women entrepreneurs in these communities along with exploring the factors related to community-based women entrepreneurship within handicraft communities and identify strategies for its enhancement.

The research investigates the different aspects of Community-Based Entrepreneurship (CBE) under main themes and sub-themes in advancing the livelihoods of handicraft communities. It reveals that these communities possess globally demanded products and that CBE could empower them to control their destiny. The study underscores the opportunity for CBE within craft communities, emphasizing the need for supportive operational capabilities, basic resources, and a collaborative team approach. However, it acknowledges barriers such as a lack of entrepreneurial skills and limited access to enterprise education programs. Overcoming these obstacles requires streamlining marketing channels, providing education, and addressing infrastructural challenges with government support and policy initiatives, including duty concessions. Facilitating CBE initiatives would foster economic and non-economic goals for craft communities.

The study contains significance for policy initiatives, including duty concessions that are essential for fostering CBWE among craft communities by supporting capital investments that enhance the economic and non-economic goals of these communities. CBE can thrive among craft communities, leading to sustainable economic growth and development.

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