

Is there any Digital Gender Divide? Exploring challenges faced by Female Technopreneurs in Sri Lanka

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The tech industry will continue to bring change in habits and behaviours and will create significant wealth. However, female entrepreneurs remain severely underrepresented in the world of technology. The absence of female entrepreneurs in the tech sector will lead to a digital world being designed for the 21st century without female leadership, leading to a significant blow to closing the gender gap. This research investigates the problems and challenges facing high-technology female entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka. The qualitative research method, particularly a narrative design, was adopted to collect and analyze data through the lens of feminist theory. Three female technopreneurs were purposively approached and interviewed. The findings show that women considered the most critical challenges, such as lack of technologically innovative business ideas, lack of digital resources, lack of business network, and fear of online safety. In addition, socio-cultural thinking discourages women from setting foot in the tech sector. Extending digital knowledge and access and providing connected devices to lower-income females will be impactful. Regulations should be placed to have companies introduce a minimum quota for women hired. Findings should lead to a generation of benchmark data in addressing gender gaps. The study ensures SDG 05: achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

Keywords: *Digital, Female Entrepreneurs, Gender, Narratives, SDG, Technopreneurs*

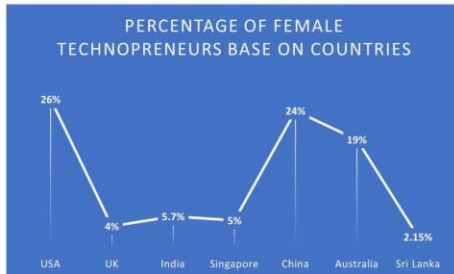
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Bridging The Gender Digital Divide

Introduction

- Women are a clear minority in the technology sector.
- Female entrepreneurs remain severely underrepresented in the world of technology Percentage of Female Technopreneurs, 2019



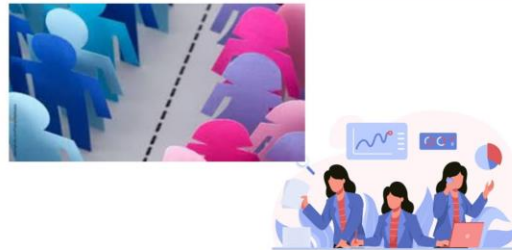
- Sri Lanka's tech sector is predominantly male

Research Problem

Is there any Digital Gender Divide in the technology sector?

Research Objectives

Investigates the problems and challenges facing high-technology female entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka



Findings - Challenges

- Lack of technologically innovative business ideas,
- Lack of digital resources,
- Lack of business network,
- Fear of online safety.
- Socio-cultural thinking discourages women from setting foot in the tech sector.

Contribution

- Extending digital knowledge and access and providing connected devices to lower-income females will be impactful.
- Regulations should be placed to have companies introduce a minimum quota for women hired.
- Findings should lead to a generation of benchmark data in addressing gender gaps.

Methodology

Research design: Qualitative: Narrative

Sampling: Purposive sampling

Sample: 3 Female technopreneurs in Sri Lanka

Data collection: Interviews and observations

Analysis: Thematic

Impact

The study ensures SDG 05:

Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.