

**IMPACT OF COVID-19 MOVEMENT BLOCK AND ROLE OF  
DIGITALIZATION ON SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES  
IN KURUNEGALA DISTRICT**

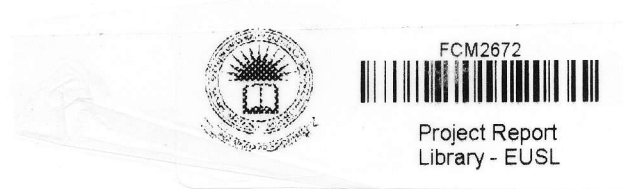


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## ABSTRACT

Coronavirus outbreak is the latest world tragedy that have affected all sectors in economy. The lockdown, confinement, limited movement order and social distancing are amongst the preemptive governments' effort to safeguard the public health. While recognizing the importance of the national order in preventing the immense spread of the virus, the authors contend that there are certain undiscovered impacts of the COVID-19 movement block and role of digitalization on small and medium enterprises in Kurunegala District.

The objectives of this research are to explore the impact of the COVID-19 movement block on small and medium enterprises in Kurunegala District and the role of digitalization in small and medium enterprises during COVID-19 in Kurunegala District. The study applies qualitative approach conducted through telephone-based interviews with fifteen selected SMEs' owners during from August 08, 2021 to August 31, 2021. Collected data were analyzed using NVivo 10 through Thematic Analysis.

In summary, the impacts of COVID-19 Movement block on SMEs are classified by five themes namely employee absenteeism, raw materials, price hike, demand for products, and investments. And also, for role of digitalization, the researcher used three built-in themes namely as online business, work from home, communication. The research recommends few suggestions for future research work, business development agencies and entrepreneurs.

**Keywords: Covid-19, Movement Block, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), Lockdown, Digitalization**

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