

FIN TECH AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN THE AGE OF COVID 19

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The increased number of regulations on remote instructions in the age of Covid 19 has adversely influenced on achieving financial inclusion. Hence, assimilation of financial technology (Fin Tech) into financial services has become main concern in ensuring equal access to financial products and services. Therefore, this study overlooks the perceptions of financially underprivileged people regarding Fin Tech impact on achieving financial inclusion. The empirical analysis followed by the study incorporating self-administered questionnaire reached 88 underprivileged financial service users reporting a response rate of 73.33%. Thereby study applied structural equation modeling to ascertain the relationship between Fin Tech and financial inclusion. Accordingly, the study developed a model based on technology acceptance theory to measure the acceptance of Fin tech and based on extant literature to measure the financial inclusion considering accessibility, availability, financial usage and quality relevance. The study established reliability with content, convergent and discriminant validity tests and then, ascertained significant positive relationship between perceptions on Fin Tech and financial inclusion. Although the prevailing situations seems the unwillingness of every community, specifically the rural arena to approach with technology in financial mechanisms, the study establish a positive perception that each of them prefers to go through this change for their financial routines. The study is empirically is a guide for policymakers to strong the apparatus to accept technological innovations considering its immediacy, convenience and low cost in order to achieve financial inclusion in Covid 19. Imposition of enormous rules and regulations on social distancing has stimulated to find techno centric innovations in every field including finance. Moreover, the contradiction in the extant literature and dearth of studies conducted in the context of Sri Lanka has resulted to study the means of achieving financial inclusion.

Keywords: *Covid 19; Fintech; Financial Inclusion*
