2. Pallavi, R., Deepa, R., & Devaki, C. S. (2020). A Study on Assessment of Nutritional Status and Nutritional Knowledge of Working Women Residing in Hostels at Mysuru City. *J Food Process Technol*, *11*, 841.
3. Kumar, D. (2016). Health and Well Being of Working Women: A Sociopsychological Study. *International Journal of Engineering Science*, *2073*.

Mohsin Showkat, Razia Nagina
LPU (Phagwara, India)

DIGITAL FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND WOMEN; GENDER DISPARITY IN THE DIGITALIZATION OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

The McKinsey Global Institute (2016) report states that digital finance has the potential to give 1.6 billion people in emerging economies – of which more than half are women – access to financial services. Likewise, Demirguc -Kunt et al. (2017) apparently demonstrate that there is persisting gender divide in account ownership, with women being less likely to possess a formal account than men. Three persuasive arguments are made in favour of women having access to finance: first, for its "intrinsic worth," since it helps women feel empowered and well-off (Narain, 2009). The second argument focuses on macroeconomic variables and the welfare benefit of women having access to financing. According to Pitt and Khandker (1998), a woman's ability to acquire credit had a mostly favourable and statistically significant effect on the nutritional health of both her male and female children. The final argument discusses the financial benefits of giving more women access to credit. This justification is the most recent defence of women's financial access. Women are seen as a lucrative and expanding market, and their development is hampered by a lack of access to capital. Women repay loans at higher rates than males do, according to a Grameen Bank evaluation study conducted in Bangladesh (Morduch, 1999). Also, encouraging women's entrepreneurship and ensuring equitable access to finance would boost the GDP and lower unemployment (Lagarde, 2019).

Besides the significance of financial inclusion, particularly for women, there is still a significant gender disparity. The issue of women's financial exclusion is highlighted in the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI, 2015) report. According to Herbert (2017), digital development has the potential to alter development patterns, particularly for women. Digital technologies have the potential to address gender gaps in labour force participation, improve public delivery system accessibility, and lower costs. Examining the connection between female autonomy and the use of digital financial services is the main goal of the current study.

Our investigation shows that a woman's decision to utilise a digital means of transaction might be influenced by her income and age. A woman's liberty in managing household finances can be ensured and improved by her smartphone ownership.

Curiously, the survey found that the biggest barriers to accepting and using digital methods of transaction were societal norms, a threat to security and privacy, and a lack of digital proficiency. As a result, this implies that the issue is fairly pervasive and that boosting women's access to smartphones cannot be achieved just by raising their income.

REFERENCES:

1. Narain, S. (2009). Gender and access to finance. *The World Bank*.

2. Pitt, M. M., & Khandker, S. R. (1998). The impact of group-based credit programs on poor households in Bangladesh: Does the gender of participants matter? *Journal of political economy*, *106*(5), 958-996.

3. Morduch, J. (1999). The microfinance promise. *Journal of economic literature*, *37*(4), 1569-1614.

4. Mohanty, D. (2015). Report of the committee on medium-term path on financial inclusion. *Reserve Bank of India*, 1-102.

5. Yadav, H., Paliwal, M., & Chatradhi, N. (2022). Entrepreneurship Development of Rural Women Through Digital Inclusion: Examining the Contributions of Public Programs. In *Inclusive Businesses in Developing Economies: Converging People, Profit, and Corporate Citizenship* (pp. 287-309). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

6. Women, C. (2019). The mobile gender gap report 2019. *GSMA, London Retrieved from https://www. gsmaintelligence. com/research*.

7. Sultana, A. M. (2011). Factors effect on women autonomy and decision-making power within the household in rural communities. *Journal of Applied Sciences Research*, *7*(1), 18-22.

8. Buvinic, M., & Jaluka, T. (2018). Mindful Saving: Exploring the power of savings for women. *Center for Global Development*.

9. Duflo, E. (2012). Women empowerment and economic development. *Journal of Economic literature*, *50*(4), 1051-1079.

10. Field, E., Pande, R., Rigol, N., Schaner, S., & Troyer Moore, C. (2021). On her own account: How strengthening women's financial control impacts labor supply and gender norms. *American Economic Review*, *111*(7), 2342-2375.

Sauliha Kirmani, Tanima Dutta
LPU (Phagwara, India)

THE EFFICIENCY OF BANKS IN INDIA: WHAT DOES THE FUTURE ENTAIL?

Banks are the cornerstone of every economy that facilitate the transformation of savings into investments, convert deposits to loans and ensure that money flows from the surplus to the deficit. A healthy, growing economy demands a healthy and efficient