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A Legal Analysis of Gender Inequality in Access to Digital Financial Resources within the Regulatory Framework of Digital Financial Inclusion

Yohanna YR Watofa[1]*, Tuti Achmud Weripi[2], Yanto Irianto[3]
[1]Universitas Negeri Manokwari
[2]STIH Manokwari Papua Barat
[3]Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Cirebon
Corresponding Author: Yohanna YR Watofa, watofayohana129@gmail.com

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A B S T R A C T
Digital financial inclusion has become a strategic approach to expand access to formal financial services and enhance economic participation. Despite technological progress, women still face unequal access to digital financial resources due to structural, socio-economic, and regulatory barriers. This study analyzes gender inequality in access to digital financial resources within the regulatory framework of digital financial inclusion and assesses how current regulations uphold equality, justice, and non-discrimination. Using a Narrative Literature Review with a normative legal approach, data were drawn from legal documents, international policy instruments, scholarly publications, and reports from organizations such as the World Bank, OECD, UN Women, and the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion. Findings indicate persistent barriers including digital literacy gaps, limited technology access, financial capability constraints, socio-cultural limitations, and algorithmic bias. Existing regulations focus on formal equality but inadequately address substantive gender inequalities. The study concludes that gender-responsive regulations, inclusive policies, enhanced digital literacy, and stronger oversight of digital financial technologies are crucial for equitable digital financial inclusion for women

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INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has reshaped the global financial services landscape through the development of digital financial instruments such as mobile banking, digital wallets, fintech lending, and electronic payment systems that are increasingly accessible to the public. The emergence of digital financial technologies is widely regarded as a key mechanism for expanding access to formal financial services for populations previously excluded from conventional financial systems, thereby supporting sustainable financial inclusion (World Bank, 2024; OECD, 2024). In many developing countries, the digitalization of the financial sector is also viewed as a means to accelerate economic growth, improve transaction efficiency, and reduce the cost of accessing formal financial services (Molinier & Quan, 2019; GPFI, 2020). Nevertheless, the benefits of digital transformation have not been distributed evenly across all social groups, particularly women, who continue to face multiple barriers in accessing digital financial resources (World Bank, 2024; UN Women, 2025).

Despite significant growth in digital finance, a substantial body of research indicates that gender disparities in access to digital financial services remain a global concern. Women continue to constitute a disproportionate share of the unbanked and underbanked population due to limited access to technology, digital literacy, legal identification, and asset ownership that could be used as collateral (UN Women, 2015; World Bank, 2024). Furthermore, social norms, patriarchal structures, and economic inequality reinforce women's barriers to fully utilizing digital financial services (UN Women, 2019; World Bank, 2024). These findings suggest that financial digitalization does not automatically eliminate gender inequality unless accompanied by policies that are responsive to women's specific needs (World Bank, 2024; GPFI, 2020).

From a legal perspective, gender inequality in access to digital finance is not merely an economic issue but also concerns the fulfillment of human rights and the principle of non-discrimination. Various international instruments affirm that women are entitled to equal access to economic resources and financial services without structural or discriminatory barriers (UN Women, 2019; UN Women, 2025). In practice, however, many regulations are formally gender-neutral yet fail to accommodate women's specific circumstances, thereby producing unequal outcomes in implementation (World Bank, 2024). The absence of gender-responsive regulation risks widening disparities in access to digital financial services and undermining progress toward sustainable development goals related to gender equality and financial inclusion (World Bank, 2024; UN Women, 2026).

The rapid adoption of artificial intelligence–driven financial technologies and algorithmic credit systems also introduces new legal challenges concerning potential gender bias in credit assessment and service allocation. Although digital technologies may expand women's access to financing, algorithms that are not designed inclusively can reproduce inequalities already embedded in traditional financial systems (Smith, 2025). At the same time, regulatory frameworks governing consumer protection, data governance, and fintech supervision remain under development in many jurisdictions and are often insufficient to address the risk of gender-based discrimination in digital financial services (Lee, 2024). Consequently, a deeper legal analysis is required to assess the effectiveness of digital financial inclusion regulations in guaranteeing equal access for women (Lee, 2024; Smith, 2025).

The urgency of this research is amplified by the fact that unequal access to digital finance can impede women's economic empowerment and widen socio-economic disparities. Reports from international organizations show that women's access to digital financial services is closely associated with higher economic participation, business development, income generation, and poverty reduction (World Bank, 2024; GPFI, 2020). Conversely, unequal access to technology and digital finance may create new forms of exclusion within an increasingly digital society (UN Women, 2023). Strengthening gender-responsive digital financial inclusion regulation is therefore an urgent policy need to promote social justice and economic equality in the era of digital transformation (OECD, 2024; UN Women, 2025).

Previous studies have examined the relationship between digital finance and women's empowerment. Molinier and Quan (2019) found that digital finance has significant potential to enhance women's financial inclusion but continues to face structural and social barriers. Asim et al. (2026) demonstrated that the adoption of digital financial services positively influences women's financial inclusion, although cultural factors and technological access remain major constraints. Guo et al. (2024) also reported that the development of digital finance can reduce gender economic disparities by expanding entrepreneurial opportunities for women. However, most of these studies focus on economic and technological dimensions, whereas legal analyses specifically addressing gender inequality in access to digital financial resources within the framework of digital financial inclusion regulation remain relatively limited. This research gap warrants a comprehensive legal inquiry.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze gender inequality in access to digital financial resources within the framework of digital financial inclusion regulation and to evaluate the extent to which existing regulations uphold the principles of equality, justice, and non-discrimination for women. The study also seeks to formulate recommendations for strengthening gender-responsive regulatory frameworks in order to support fair and sustainable digital financial inclusion. In this way, the research is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of legal scholarship on the digital economy and practically to policymakers seeking to design digital financial inclusion regulations that are more inclusive of women.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Digital Financial Inclusion and Women's Economic Participation

Digital financial inclusion refers to the use of digital technologies to expand access to formal financial services, particularly for individuals and groups that have been excluded from conventional financial systems. The development of mobile banking, digital wallets, fintech lending, and digital payment platforms has created new opportunities for broader financial participation. Digital finance can reduce transaction costs, improve access to credit, and support economic activities among low-income groups and small entrepreneurs (Molinier & Quan, 2019; GPFI, 2020). In this context, digital financial inclusion is not only a technological agenda but also a development strategy aimed at improving economic opportunity and social welfare.

For women, digital financial inclusion has significant potential to support economic empowerment. Access to digital financial services can help women manage income, save money, obtain business capital, and participate more actively in the digital economy (World Bank, 2024a; UN Women, 2025a). Guo et al. (2024) explain that digital finance may reduce gender-based economic disparities by improving women's bargaining power and expanding entrepreneurial opportunities. However, the benefits of digital finance are not automatically distributed equally. Women often face structural barriers that limit their ability to access and use digital financial resources effectively (UN Women, 2023).

Gender Inequality in Access to Digital Financial Resources

Gender inequality in digital financial access remains a major concern in both global and national contexts. Women are still disproportionately represented among unbanked and underbanked populations because of limited access to technology, lower levels of digital literacy, restricted asset ownership, and unequal access to formal identification documents (UN Women, 2015; World Bank, 2024b). These barriers show that digital financial exclusion is not caused by technology alone. It is also shaped by social, economic, legal, and cultural conditions that affect women's ability to participate in formal financial systems.

In Indonesia, studies show that women continue to face unequal access to digital finance despite the growth of fintech and digital banking. Soekarno et al. (2020) found that women's participation in digital financial services is influenced by financial literacy, access to digital infrastructure, and socio-economic position. Pranitasari et al. (2026) also show that women-led MSMEs in Indonesia often recognize the importance of digital finance but still struggle to use it effectively because of limited skills, weak business legality, lack of collateral, and restricted access to formal financing. This condition indicates that the availability of digital financial platforms does not always guarantee equal access for women.

Digital Financial Literacy and Women's Financial Capability

Digital financial literacy plays an important role in determining whether wom en can benefit from digital financial inclusion. Digital financial literacy includes the ability to understand, access, evaluate, and safely use digital financial products. Mardhiyaturrositaningsih and Hakim (2022) emphasize that women entrepreneurs need digital financial literacy to manage business transactions, assess financial risks, and use fintech services more effectively. Without adequate literacy, women may have access to digital financial platforms but remain unable to use them confidently and independently.

Several studies also highlight that limited digital financial literacy increases women's vulnerability to financial risks. Syahnur et al. (2023) found that digital financial literacy and digital financial inclusion affect women's entrepreneurship empowerment. However, low understanding of digital lending, cybersecurity, investment risks, and financial fraud may expose women to harmful financial practices. Idris et al. (2025) further explain that women entrepreneurs face challenges in digital financial literacy because of limited training, socio-cultural expectations, and uneven access to learning opportunities. Therefore, digital financial inclusion must be supported by education, protection, and capacity-building programs.

Socio-Cultural Barriers and Women's Digital Financial Access

Socio-cultural factors remain a significant barrier to women's access to digital financial resources. Women often carry multiple responsibilities as business actors, workers, caregivers, and household managers. These responsibilities limit the time and opportunity needed to improve digital skills and participate in financial training programs. Panglipursari and Muliatie (2025) argue that women-owned MSMEs face difficulties in utilizing digital financial facilities because of social expectations, limited technological confidence, and unequal access to business support systems.

The gender gap in digital literacy also strengthens this inequality. Suryadarma et al. (2023) found evidence of gender differences in digital literacy across generations in Indonesia. This gap affects women's ability to adopt digital financial services, especially among older women, rural women, and women with lower educational backgrounds. As a result, digital financial inclusion may benefit women who already have sufficient resources, while leaving more vulnerable women behind. This condition shows the need for policy interventions that directly address gender-based social and digital inequalities.

Legal Framework, Equality, and Non-Discrimination

From a legal perspective, gender inequality in digital financial resources relates to the principles of equality, justice, and non-discrimination. Legal frameworks on financial inclusion often adopt a gender-neutral approach by providing equal rules for all users. However, formal equality does not always produce fair outcomes when women and men start from different social and economic positions. Fredman (2016) explains that substantive equality requires legal and policy responses that address structural disadvantage, not merely equal treatment in formal rules.

This view is relevant to digital financial inclusion regulation. If regulations only guarantee equal access without considering women's specific barriers, the result may still be unequal. For example, women who lack digital skills, collateral, legal business documents, or independent control over financial accounts may remain excluded even when digital finance is legally available. Putri and Hartono (2024) show that female-headed households in Indonesia experience lower financial inclusion than male-headed households because of differences in education, technology access, and labor market participation. This evidence supports the argument that legal equality must be strengthened through gender-responsive regulation.

Algorithmic Bias and Regulatory Challenges in Digital Finance

The use of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and algorithmic credit scoring in digital financial services creates new regulatory challenges. These technologies may improve efficiency and expand access to credit. However, they may also reproduce gender bias when the data used in decision-making reflect existing social and economic inequalities. Smith (2025) argues that AI-facilitated access to credit can create gendered outcomes when algorithms rely on historical financial data that already disadvantage women. This risk is important because women often have lower formal credit histories, lower asset ownership, and less access to formal employment.

Lee (2024) also notes that digital banks, alternative lenders, machine learning, and large language model integration create complex regulatory issues related to consumer protection, transparency, and fairness. In the context of gender equality, weak regulatory oversight may allow indirect discrimination to occur through automated financial systems. Therefore, digital financial inclusion regulation must include clear mechanisms for algorithmic transparency, accountability, and non-discrimination. Without these safeguards, fintech innovation may expand access in form but deepen inequality in practice.

Gender-Responsive Regulation in Digital Financial Inclusion

Gender-responsive regulation is needed to ensure that digital financial inclusion produces fair and sustainable outcomes for women. Gender-responsive regulation means that policies are designed by recognizing women's specific needs, barriers, and socio-economic conditions. UN Women (2025a) emphasizes that women's economic empowerment requires access to finance, digital tools, skills development, and supportive institutions. Similarly, the World Bank (2024c) highlights the importance of gender-sensitive approaches in improving access to finance and reducing structural barriers.

Policy responses should include digital literacy programs for women, affordable access to technology, gender-disaggregated financial data, inclusive product design, and stronger supervision of fintech providers. Pranitasari et al. (2026) argue that a gender-sensitive model of digital and financial inclusion is essential for supporting women-led MSMEs in Indonesia. OECD (2024) also stresses that digital transformation requires trust, connectivity, and inclusive governance. These perspectives show that gender-responsive regulation should not only focus on access but also on women's ability to control, use, and benefit from digital financial resources.

Research Gap

Previous studies have discussed digital finance, women's empowerment, financial literacy, and women-led MSMEs. Molinier and Quan (2019) examined the potential of digital finance for gender equality, while Guo et al. (2024) analyzed the relationship between digital finance and gender economic disparities. Studies in Indonesia have also examined women's digital financial literacy, fintech access, and financial inclusion among women entrepreneurs (Mardhiyaturrositaningsih & Hakim, 2022; Lestari et al., 2025; Pranitasari et al., 2026). However, most studies still focus on economic, technological, or entrepreneurship aspects.

Legal analysis of gender inequality in access to digital financial resources remains limited. Existing literature has not sufficiently examined whether digital financial inclusion regulations uphold substantive equality, justice, and non-discrimination for women. Therefore, this study fills the gap by analyzing digital financial inclusion through a normative legal approach. The study places gender inequality not only as an economic problem but also as a regulatory and human rights issue that requires gender-responsive legal reform.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs a Narrative Literature Review (NLR) with a normative legal approach to examine gender inequality in access to digital financial resources within the framework of digital financial inclusion regulation. Narrative Literature Review enables researchers to synthesize and interpret diverse legal, theoretical, and empirical literature to develop a comprehensive understanding of a research issue (Siddaway et al., 2019). The study adopts statutory, conceptual, and comparative approaches to analyze relevant legal frameworks, gender equality principles, and regulatory practices concerning digital financial inclusion (Hamzani et al., 2023).

Data Sources

The study relies exclusively on secondary data consisting of primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials. Primary sources include laws, regulations, policy documents, and international legal instruments related to gender equality and digital financial inclusion. Secondary sources comprise peer-reviewed journal articles, books, research reports, and publications from international organizations such as the World Bank, OECD, UN Women, and the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPFI). Tertiary sources include legal dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other supporting references relevant to the study (Hamzani et al., 2023).

Data Collection Technique

Data were collected through document analysis and literature searches conducted in major academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, ProQuest, HeinOnline, SSRN, and Google Scholar. The literature search employed keywords such as gender inequality, digital financial inclusion, digital finance, financial technology regulation, women's financial access, and gender-responsive regulation. Sources were selected based on relevance, credibility, and their contribution to understanding the legal dimensions of gender inequality in digital financial access (Siddaway et al., 2019).

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis. The analysis involved identifying, categorizing, coding, and interpreting recurring themes related to gender equality, digital financial inclusion, regulatory barriers, consumer protection, and gender-responsive financial regulations. The findings were then synthesized narratively to identify legal gaps, regulatory challenges, and policy implications concerning women's access to digital financial resources (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Nowell et al., 2017).

RESEARCH RESULTS

Gender Inequality in Access to Digital Financial Resources

The findings indicate that gender inequality in access to digital financial resources remains a persistent challenge despite the rapid growth of digital finance in Indonesia. Although digital financial services such as mobile banking, e-wallets, peer-to-peer lending, and digital payment platforms have significantly expanded financial outreach, women continue to experience unequal access, utilization, and benefits compared to men. Gender inequality in digital finance is not solely a technological issue but is deeply rooted in legal, social, economic, and cultural structures that influence women's ability to participate in the digital economy (Soekarno et al., 2020; Pranitasari et al., 2026).

A major factor contributing to this inequality is the digital divide. Access to smartphones, internet connectivity, and digital infrastructure remains uneven, particularly among women living in rural and economically disadvantaged regions. Research on women-owned Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia found that many women possess awareness of digital financial services but lack the practical skills and technological capacity necessary to adopt them effectively. Barriers such as limited digital literacy, lack of training opportunities, and inadequate technological support continue to hinder women's participation in digital financial ecosystems (Pranitasari et al., 2026; Mardhiyaturrositaningsih & Hakim, 2022).

This situation is particularly concerning because women constitute a dominant force within Indonesia’s MSME sector. Approximately 64 percent of Indonesian MSMEs are owned or managed by women, making them a critical driver of national economic development. Nevertheless, women entrepreneurs continue to face difficulties in accessing formal financing, digital credit, and fintech-based financial products. These challenges often arise from limited financial literacy, lack of collateral, restricted ownership of productive assets, and inadequate familiarity with digital financial technologies (Pranitasari et al., 2026; Lestari et al., 2025).

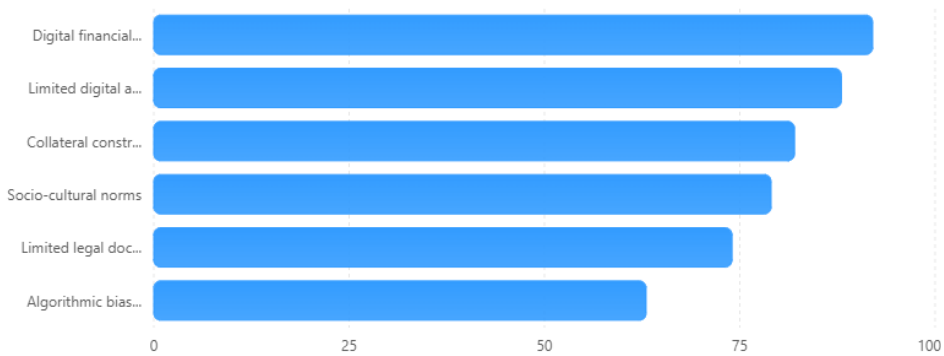

Figure 1. Main Barriers to Women's Access to Digital Financial Resources in Indonesia

A concrete example can be observed among women-owned MSMEs in West Java. Research revealed that although most respondents recognized the benefits of digital finance, actual utilization remained relatively low because many women lacked business legality documentation, formal financial records, and ownership of assets required by financial institutions. As a result, women often relied on informal financing channels despite the availability of digital financial services. This finding demonstrates that the existence of digital financial infrastructure alone is insufficient to guarantee equal access to financial resources (Pranitasari et al., 2026).

Beyond technological barriers, socio-cultural factors continue to reinforce gender inequality. Indonesian women frequently perform dual roles as income earners and primary caregivers within households. This dual burden limits the time available for acquiring digital skills, participating in financial training programs, and managing digital business activities. Studies on female entrepreneurs indicate that social expectations, traditional gender norms, and domestic responsibilities significantly reduce women's ability to maximize opportunities offered by digital financial services (Idris et al., 2025; Panglipursari & Muliatie, 2025).

Another significant issue concerns digital financial literacy. Several studies demonstrate that while women increasingly use digital payment platforms and fintech applications, their understanding of financial risks, cybersecurity, investment products, and digital lending mechanisms remains relatively limited. This creates vulnerability to online fraud, illegal fintech schemes, and predatory lending practices. Research conducted among women entrepreneurs in Indonesia found that digital inclusion levels were relatively high, but digital financial literacy remained low, increasing women's exposure to financial exploitation and cyber-related risks (Syahnur et al., 2023).

The legal dimension of gender inequality is also evident in the design of regulatory frameworks governing digital finance. Existing regulations generally adopt a gender-neutral approach, emphasizing equal treatment for all users. However, formal equality does not necessarily translate into substantive equality. Women and men often enter digital financial markets with different socio-economic conditions, levels of technological access, and financial capabilities. Consequently, regulations that fail to recognize these differences may inadvertently reproduce existing inequalities. This finding aligns with legal theories of substantive equality, which argue that equitable outcomes require differential policy responses to address structural disadvantages faced by marginalized groups (Fredman, 2016).

The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) and algorithmic credit-scoring systems introduces additional challenges. Fintech companies increasingly rely on automated systems to assess creditworthiness using behavioral and transactional data. While these innovations may expand financial access, they may also replicate historical biases embedded in datasets. International evidence suggests that algorithmic lending systems can unintentionally disadvantage women because the underlying data often reflect pre-existing economic inequalities, such as lower income levels, lower asset ownership, and less formal financial history among women (Smith, 2025). Although similar large-scale studies remain limited in Indonesia, the growing adoption of AI-driven fintech services suggests that regulatory safeguards against algorithmic discrimination will become increasingly important.

The findings further reveal that gender inequality extends beyond access to digital financial services and encompasses disparities in control and benefit. Many women possess digital financial accounts but lack full autonomy in financial decision-making within households. In some cases, digital financial services are accessed through family-owned devices or accounts controlled by male household members. Consequently, access alone cannot be considered a sufficient indicator of inclusion. Genuine digital financial inclusion requires that women possess the ability to independently use, manage, and benefit from digital financial resources to improve their economic well-being and bargaining power within society (Guo et al., 2024).

From a legal perspective, these findings suggest that the principle of non-discrimination has not yet been fully realized in Indonesia's digital financial inclusion framework. While existing regulations promote broad access to financial services, they have not adequately addressed structural barriers that disproportionately affect women. Therefore, achieving substantive gender equality requires a transition from gender-neutral regulation toward gender-responsive regulation that explicitly recognizes and addresses the unique challenges faced by women in accessing digital financial resources.

Evaluation of Existing Regulatory Frameworks

Indonesia has established various regulatory frameworks to promote digital financial inclusion, including the National Financial Inclusion Strategy, regulations issued by Otoritas Jasa Keuangan (OJK), and digital payment initiatives led by Bank Indonesia. In addition, Indonesia's ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) reflects the state's commitment to ensuring equal access to economic and financial resources for women (Soekarno et al., 2020). However, these regulations largely adopt a gender-neutral approach that emphasizes formal equality while paying limited attention to the structural barriers faced by women.

Evidence from Indonesia indicates that a gap persists between regulatory equality and practical outcomes. A study by Putri and Hartono (2024) found that female-headed households experience lower levels of financial inclusion than male-headed households due to limited access to mobile technology, lower educational attainment, and weaker labor market participation. Similarly, women-owned MSMEs in West Java continue to face obstacles in accessing digital finance because of inadequate digital literacy, lack of collateral, limited business legality documentation, and domestic responsibilities that constrain their economic activities (Pranitasari et al., 2026). These findings suggest that equal legal access does not necessarily translate into equal opportunities or outcomes.

Figure 2. Assessment of Indonesia's Digital Financial Inclusion Regulatory Framework

Digital literacy remains another major challenge. Research shows that women generally possess lower levels of digital literacy than men, reducing their ability to utilize digital financial services effectively and increasing vulnerability to financial fraud and digital risks (Suryadarma et al., 2023). Furthermore, the growing use of artificial intelligence and algorithmic credit-scoring systems in fintech raises concerns about indirect discrimination. Although no major legal cases have yet emerged in Indonesia, international studies suggest that algorithmic systems may reproduce existing gender inequalities through biased datasets and decision-making processes (Smith, 2025).

Overall, the findings indicate that Indonesia's digital financial inclusion framework has successfully promoted formal equality and prohibited explicit discrimination. Nevertheless, the principles of substantive equality and distributive justice have not been fully realized because existing regulations have not adequately addressed the specific barriers faced by women. Therefore, future reforms should incorporate gender-responsive policies, digital literacy programs, gender-disaggregated data collection, and stronger oversight of algorithmic decision-making to ensure fair and sustainable digital financial inclusion (Pranitasari et al., 2026; Smith, 2025).

Strengthening Gender-Responsive Regulatory Frameworks

Based on the findings of this study, several policy and regulatory measures are needed to strengthen gender-responsive digital financial inclusion and address persistent barriers faced by women in accessing digital financial resources.

Table 1. Policy Recommendations for Strengthening Gender-Responsive Digital Financial Inclusion Regulations

No.	Regulatory Issue	Recommended Action
1	Limited integration of gender perspectives in financial regulations	Conduct mandatory gender impact assessments during policy formulation and evaluation

2	Unequal access to digital infrastructure and digital identification	Expand affordable internet access, smartphone accessibility, and digital ID coverage for women
3	Low participation of women in digital finance	Require financial institutions and fintech providers to develop gender-inclusive products and services
4	Risk of algorithmic bias in fintech services	Establish transparency, accountability, and audit mechanisms for AI-based financial systems
5	Fragmented policy approach	Integrate digital financial inclusion policies with education, entrepreneurship, social protection, and gender equality programs

Table 1 summarizes the key regulatory reforms required to enhance gender-responsive digital financial inclusion. The findings suggest that achieving substantive equality requires more than equal legal access; it also demands targeted interventions that address structural barriers faced by women. Strengthening gender-sensitive regulations, expanding digital infrastructure, promoting inclusive financial products, regulating algorithmic decision-making, and integrating financial inclusion with broader gender equality policies are essential steps toward ensuring fair and sustainable access to digital financial resources for women.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of legal scholarship on the digital economy by demonstrating that gender inequality in digital finance should be analyzed not only through economic and technological perspectives but also through legal and human rights frameworks. The findings support the argument that substantive equality provides a more appropriate normative foundation for digital financial regulation than traditional formal equality approaches. Furthermore, the study expands existing discussions regarding the intersection between gender justice, digital governance, and financial regulation in the context of technological transformation.

Practically, the findings provide guidance for policymakers, financial regulators, and digital financial service providers seeking to create more inclusive financial ecosystems. Gender-responsive regulatory frameworks can enhance women's economic participation, reduce financial exclusion, and promote sustainable development. By integrating equality, justice, and non-discrimination principles into digital financial governance, policymakers can ensure that the benefits of financial innovation are distributed more equitably across society.

Overall, the analysis demonstrates that while digital financial inclusion has the potential to advance women's economic empowerment, its success depends largely on the effectiveness of legal and regulatory frameworks in addressing structural barriers and ensuring substantive gender equality. Consequently, the future of digital financial inclusion should be guided by regulations that are not only technologically adaptive but also socially just and gender-responsive.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study demonstrates that gender inequality in access to digital financial resources remains a significant challenge despite the rapid expansion of digital financial services. Women continue to encounter multiple barriers, including limited digital literacy, unequal access to technology, socio-cultural constraints, restricted financial autonomy, and inadequate access to formal financing. The findings further indicate that existing digital financial inclusion regulations primarily emphasize formal equality and broad access, yet they often fail to address the structural disadvantages experienced by women.

From a legal perspective, the current regulatory framework has not fully achieved the principles of substantive equality and non-discrimination. Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and algorithmic credit-scoring systems may also create new risks of indirect gender discrimination if not properly regulated. Therefore, strengthening gender-responsive regulatory frameworks is essential to ensure equitable access to digital financial resources. Policy reforms should focus on integrating gender perspectives into financial regulations, improving digital literacy, expanding digital infrastructure, promoting inclusive financial products, and enhancing oversight of algorithmic decision-making. Ultimately, a gender-responsive approach to digital financial inclusion is crucial for advancing women's economic empowerment, reducing financial exclusion, and promoting sustainable and equitable development in the digital economy.

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