

The volatility of the CNY/BYN exchange rate (2020–2024) highlights critical challenges for Belarus-China value chain integration. To mitigate currency risks, enhancing financial cooperation – through SME-tailored hedging tools, bilateral currency swaps, and shared forecasting platforms – is essential. Prioritizing high-tech collaborations (e.g., semiconductor production, AI logistics) and expanding blockchain-based payment systems, as demonstrated by the Belarusbank-ICBC pilot, can streamline transactions and strengthen resilience. These measures, aligned with BRI objectives, foster sustainable economic ties and reduce dependency on volatile external currencies, ensuring robust value chain efficiency amid global uncertainties [4].

Literature

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Does Economic Empowerment Equal Gender Equality? Rethinking Microfinance

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Introduction. Microfinance has become a cornerstone of development policy, with women comprising 80% of clients globally [1]. While promoted as a tool for both poverty reduction and gender equality, feminist scholars question whether financial inclusion alone can address structural inequalities [2]. This study investigates the complex relationship between economic empowerment and substantive gender justice.

Key Findings. The convergent parallel mixed-methods approach combines:

Table 1. – Research design components

Component	Data Sources	Analysis Focus
Quantitative	World Bank Findex (15 countries)	Gender parity indices and microfinance penetration
Qualitative	40 interviews (Bangladesh, Kenya, Bolivia)	Lived experiences of empowerment
Institutional	3 MFI case studies	Organizational norms and incentive structures

Fixed-effects regression models control for GDP, social expenditure, and education levels. Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic coding in NVivo 12.

Three critical findings emerge from our analysis:

The Responsibility-Autonomy Paradox shows that while 72% of women gained decision-making power in household expenditures, 58% faced increased restrictions on mobility. As one Bolivian respondent noted: “The bank wants me to run a business but my husband won’t let me take the bus to market”.

Metric Myopia reveals how institutional focus on repayment rates (averaging 98%) creates perverse incentives. Loan officers are trained to prioritize financial discipline over empowerment outcomes, with one Kenyan manager stating: “Our best clients are those who pay, not those who challenge norms”.

Intersectional Blindspots demonstrate how microfinance programs often ignore overlapping marginalizations. Dalit women in India and indigenous Aymara women in Bolivia faced compounded discrimination that standard empowerment metrics failed to capture.

Our analysis reveals three fundamental paradoxes in microfinance’s empowerment claims. The Responsibility-Autonomy Gap emerges as quantitative data shows 72% of women gain educational decision-making power, while qualitative findings reveal 58% face increased mobility restrictions [3]. This aligns with Anne Marie Goetz and Rina Sen Gupta’s findings of patriarchal accommodation in Bangladesh [4].

Metric Myopia appears through institutional prioritization of repayment rates (98% average) over empowerment outcomes. Loan officer incentives reinforce financial discipline, exemplified by a Dhaka manager’s statement: “A good client pays on time, not one who leaves her husband” [1].

The Intersectional Blindspots become evident as Dalit and Aymara women experience compounded discrimination unaddressed by standard programs [5, 6]. This supports Deniz Kandiyoti’s “patriarchal bargain” framework, where limited economic gains maintain traditional roles [7]. Regression analysis confirms no significant microfinance impact on intimate partner violence ($\beta = 0.07$, $p = 0.34$) or marital equality ($\beta = 0.12$, $p = 0.18$) [8].

These systemic issues reflect what [9] identifies as the depoliticization of gender inequality through financialized solutions, where structural barriers remain unchallenged despite individual economic participation.

Conclusion. Our findings suggest microfinance alone cannot achieve gender equality. We recommend: integrating gender education into financial services; developing feminist evaluation metrics; linking microfinance to broader social justice movements. As [10] argues, true empowerment requires transforming the structural conditions that make microfinance necessary in the first place.

Literature

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Artificial Intelligence in Educational Process

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Traditional educational methods often fail to meet the diverse needs of modern students, who seek more personalized and engaging learning experiences. The integration of AI can enhance the effectiveness of education by automating processes and providing individualized feedback, thus making learning more efficient