

Timeline

December 2022-April 2023

Study Type

Randomized Evaluation

Research Implemented by IPA

Yes

Engaging Women in Mobile Money Markets in Bangladesh

Researchers

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Abstract

Women are underrepresented as both providers and users of mobile money services: they account for a small fraction of agents, and in Bangladesh, only 10 percent of women, compared to 32 percent of men, had mobile money accounts as of 2017 (Global Findex). The underrepresentation of women is an issue particularly in the context of COVID-19, where a vast majority of transfer payments have been made digitally. In this project, researchers are working with IPA to evaluate an intervention that aims to increase the supply and demand for mobile financial services, especially among women.

The research team will work with BKash to identify businesses willing and able to hire mobile money agents and randomly provide a 6-month subsidy to hire either a male or female employee. The study will measure the effects of employing women as mobile money agents on the economic outcomes of the small businesses, attitudes towards women's labor force participation, and whether the availability of female mobile money agents increases the use of mobile money by female customers. These results will be particularly relevant in the context of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and bringing women back to the labor force in a situation of low vaccination rates, continued reliance on social distancing, and existing biases in hiring women employees.

The project was developed in collaboration with BKash, IFC, World Bank, and the Central Bank of Bangladesh and these results would be relevant to them as they consider ways to expand the participation of women in mobile money markets as both consumers and agents.

This project is a part of the Women's Work, Entrepreneurship, and Skilling (WWES) Initiative.

Project Outcomes of Interest

Effect of subsidies on female labor participation; economic outcomes of small businesses employing women; business owners' and customers' attitudes towards women's labor force participation; usage of mobile money by female customers.

Partners

BKash, Central Bank of Bangladesh, International Finance Corporation, World Bank

Impact Goals

- Improve women's health, safety, and economic empowerment

Results Status

No Results Yet

Link to Questionnaire

Engaging Women in Mobile Money Markets in Bangladesh (Questionnaire)