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Abstract: Financial inclusion has emerged as a strategic solution for empowering marginalized communities in Indonesia, who often face significant barriers in accessing formal financial services. Challenges such as low financial literacy, limited infrastructure, and unstable income hinder their ability to utilize financial products effectively. Financial Self-Efficacy (FSE), defined as an individual's belief in their capacity to manage financial matters, plays a crucial role in enhancing their engagement with financial services. A financial inclusion approach that integrates financial literacy, digital technology, and institutional support has proven effective in improving both access to and the usability of financial services for these populations. This study synthesizes various strands of literature to identify best practices in promoting financial inclusion among marginalized groups in Indonesia. The findings highlight that technology-driven financial education programs, inclusive financial products, and collaborative efforts between the government and private sector yield significant positive outcomes. Furthermore, improvements in financial literacy and FSE are associated with healthier financial behaviors, such as consistent saving habits and responsible debt management. An integrated strategy for financial inclusion can reduce socio-economic disparities, enhance individual well-being, and contribute to inclusive economic growth. The study recommends a holistic approach that encompasses education, innovation, and cross-sector collaboration as key strategies to advance financial inclusion in Indonesia.

Keywords: financial inclusion; marginalized communities; unbanked populations; financial self-efficacy; financial behavior; financial knowledge

Introduction

The economic empowerment of marginalized communities, particularly low- to middle-income groups, has become a central focus in social and economic development agendas. In Indonesia, these groups consist of individuals and families with limited access to formal financial services, constraining their capacity to manage finances, invest, or expand small enterprises (Afnan et al., 2020; Chang et al., 2023). According to the World Bank Global Findex (2019), a significant portion of Indonesia's population remains unbanked, underscoring persistent challenges in achieving financial inclusivity (Ariefianto et al., 2022).

Financial inclusion is broadly defined as the process of ensuring access to affordable financial services for all segments of society, particularly those traditionally excluded such as marginalized communities (Zulfa Sari & Falianty, 2021). In Indonesia, both public and private financial institutions—such as Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI) and Bank Mandiri—have implemented diverse initiatives to promote inclusion. These include microcredit schemes, group-based financing, and financial literacy outreach programs specifically designed for underserved populations (Mule et al., 2021; Firmansyah et al., 2022).

Beyond facilitating access to financial resources, financial inclusion is conceptually tied to economic empowerment frameworks, enabling individuals to enhance financial capability and participate more actively in productive activities (Chang et al., 2023). Globally, it is recognized as a powerful means for poverty reduction, economic equity, and social stability. However, despite extensive global and national attention, existing research shows fragmentation—few studies concentrate explicitly on the impacts of financial inclusion on marginalized demographics in

Indonesia. This fragmented understanding highlights a clear literature gap that calls for a systematic synthesis of evidence (Afnan et al., 2020).

Marginalized populations in Indonesia encounter interrelated barriers such as income instability, low financial literacy, and limited access to information. In this context, financial inclusion emerges as a viable pathway to improve their economic resilience. Conventional banks play a crucial role by offering inclusive financial products—ranging from zero-fee accounts to unsecured microloans and financial education programs (Zheng et al., 2023; Abubakar et al., 2020). Expanding such services not only benefits individuals but also strengthens community-level economic robustness (Bede Uzoma et al., 2020).

Therefore, this review aims to synthesize existing research on financial inclusion and the economic empowerment of marginalized populations in Indonesia. Originality in this paper lies in its integrative approach—identifying consistent patterns, highlighting fragmented or contradictory findings, and mapping gaps that remain unexplored—particularly within the Indonesian context. By consolidating diverse evidence, this review seeks to advance conceptual understanding, identify best practices, and propose actionable policy directions for fostering inclusive growth (Koomson et al., 2023).

Literature Review

Delving into Financial Inclusion

Financial inclusion remains a central pillar in promoting equitable growth and reducing socio-economic disparities. However, in many parts of the world, including Indonesia, the realization of inclusive finance faces persistent barriers rooted in socio-economic, cultural, and infrastructural limitations. One of the key challenges lies in the lack of physical access to financial institutions, particularly in rural and remote areas where traditional banking systems often deem expansion unprofitable due to high operational costs and low returns (Ariefianto et al., 2022). This spatial exclusion is exacerbated by social and cultural factors such as gender norms and low literacy levels. Women, for instance, are statistically less likely than men to own a bank account due to both structural and cultural constraints that restrict autonomy in financial decision-making (Chang et al., 2023).

In addition to structural barriers, affordability and convenience further determine the accessibility of formal financial services. High transaction fees, minimum balance requirements, and complex account procedures often discourage participation from low-income populations (Zulfa Sari & Falianty, 2021). Limited financial literacy compounds these difficulties by hindering people’s ability to assess, select, and optimally utilize available financial products. These challenges highlight the continued need for adaptive and context-sensitive inclusion strategies that address the multidimensional realities of the financially excluded (Mule et al., 2021).

Financial inclusion plays a transformational role in enhancing economic resilience and poverty reduction. Equitable access to financial tools such as savings and credit enables individuals to invest in education, health, and entrepreneurship, thereby improving quality of life and fostering productive economic engagement (Firmansyah et al., 2022). It also strengthens households’ capacity to withstand economic shocks by enabling access to risk protection mechanisms like insurance, effectively reducing vulnerability to crises (Ariefianto et al., 2022).

The Role of Financial Self-Efficacy in Economic Empowerment

The economic empowerment of marginalized communities through financial inclusion is a growing priority within development agendas. Yet, many initiatives falter due to individual-level barriers—chief among them low financial literacy and limited confidence in managing finances (Priyanto et al., 2022). In this context, the concept of **Financial Self-Efficacy (FSE)** provides a valuable lens to explain behavioral differences in the adoption and utilization of financial services. Grounded in Bandura’s theory of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Kandpal, 2024), FSE refers to an individual’s belief in their ability to manage financial resources effectively and make informed financial decisions (Lown, 2011).

While financial inclusion focuses on providing access to formal financial institutions—through savings, credit, or literacy programs (Zulfa Sari & Falianty, 2021)—access alone is insufficient. The degree to which individuals benefit from these services depends largely on their sense of financial competence and confidence. Studies have demonstrated that individuals with higher FSE are more likely to engage in responsible financial behaviors such as maintaining savings, managing debt prudently, and applying for microcredit to support productive activities (Lown, 2011; Afnan et al., 2020).

High FSE not only facilitates better financial behavior but also strengthens psychological empowerment—enhancing self-control, decisiveness, and resilience in unstable income contexts (Chang et al., 2023). Marginalized groups in Indonesia, often affected by inconsistent earnings, limited education, and constrained access to financial information, therefore require inclusive policies that integrate FSE-building strategies (Firmansyah et al., 2022). Such strategies may include (1) targeted financial education emphasizing both knowledge and confidence, (2) personalized mentorship programs offering practical guidance, and (3) inclusive financial products—such as no-fee savings and collateral-free microloans—that lower entry barriers and foster sustained engagement.

Financial Behavior as a Strategic Element in Financial Inclusion

In addition to self-efficacy, Financial Behavior—the observable actions individuals take in managing resources such as saving, spending, budgeting, and borrowing—plays a decisive role in determining financial outcomes. The relationship between FSE and financial behavior is reciprocal: while FSE influences the likelihood of engaging in positive financial actions, such behaviors in turn reinforce self-efficacy, creating a virtuous cycle of empowerment (Lown, 2011; Afnan et al., 2020).

Empirical findings suggest that individuals with higher levels of FSE display sound financial habits, including consistent savings, cautious borrowing, and deliberate budgeting. Conversely, low confidence or avoidance tendencies lead to risky or passive financial behaviors (Afolabi, 2020). This underscores the need for inclusive financial programs that address not only access but also behavioral transformation. Effective approaches could include targeted financial literacy curricula emphasizing behavioral reinforcement, mentorship fostering consistent habits, and adaptive financial products promoting saving and responsible credit use (Yang & Masron, 2024; Falaiye et al., 2024; Lu et al., 2021; Suprapti et al., 2024).

Integrating FSE and financial behavior frameworks within financial inclusion programs provides a multidimensional understanding of economic empowerment (Liu & Walheer, 2022). FSE affects individuals' readiness to use financial services, while financial behavior determines long-term sustainability and impact. Thus, designing interventions that simultaneously enhance both aspects is crucial for achieving meaningful financial inclusion (Lee et al., 2023). Financial institutions and policymakers should develop inclusive products that encourage habitual saving and small-scale investment while implementing monitoring systems to evaluate both self-efficacy and behavioral outcomes (Al-Slehat, 2023; Myeni et al., 2020).

Financial Knowledge: A Catalyst for Change in Financial Inclusion

Financial literacy serves as the foundational enabler connecting access, confidence, and behavior. Marginalized communities in Indonesia—often disadvantaged by educational gaps and limited infrastructure—remain underrepresented in the formal financial system, perpetuating inequality and exclusion (Tufail et al., 2022). Financial knowledge, defined as the ability to understand and utilize financial information effectively (Myeni et al., 2020), empowers individuals to make informed decisions regarding savings, credit, insurance, and investment.

According to the Financial Services Authority (OJK) Survey (2022), Indonesia's financial literacy rate reached 49.68%, while inclusion stood at 85.10%. This disparity signals that access alone does not guarantee comprehension or effective usage of financial tools. Barriers such as low literacy, bureaucratic complexity, and distrust toward financial institutions continue to impede full participation (Abubakar et al., 2020). Enhancing financial knowledge can thus serve as a catalyst for overcoming these structural and psychological barriers.

To address this effectively, financial literacy programs must be context-sensitive—considering local languages, delivery methods, and cultural norms. Strategies include community-based education using social and religious gatherings, technology-enabled inclusion through fintech platforms that simplify digital financial management, multi-stakeholder collaboration involving government, banks, fintech, and civil society organizations, and robust monitoring systems to ensure program effectiveness.

Improved financial literacy directly contributes to greater confidence and responsible engagement with financial services. It enables marginalized communities to move away from informal, often exploitative financial systems, and towards sustainable participation in formal mechanisms of saving, investing, and risk management. In the long term, strengthening financial knowledge not only improves individual well-being but also enhances national economic resilience. Thus, investment in inclusive and adaptive financial education must become a strategic priority for advancing financial inclusion and empowerment in Indonesia.

Method

A systematic literature review methodology was adopted because it enables a structured and transparent process for identifying, selecting, and synthesizing relevant studies. This approach ensures that the review is traceable, replicable, and aligned with established reporting standards. The review process involved three key stages: identification of relevant studies, application of inclusion and exclusion criteria, and synthesis of the extracted data. To enhance methodological rigor and consistency, this review adheres to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework.

The inclusion criteria for this review were defined a priori as follows:

Peer-reviewed journal articles, institutional reports, and case studies published between 2014 and 2024.

Research focusing on financial inclusion among marginalized groups in Indonesia.

Studies examining the role of conventional financial institutions in promoting financial inclusion.

The literature search was conducted in major academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. Keywords and keyword combinations such as "financial inclusion", "marginalized groups", "microcredit", and "Indonesia" were used to identify relevant studies. The search strategy was refined through iterative screening of titles, abstracts, and keywords to ensure alignment with the research focus. The subsequent section presents the distribution of studies on financial inclusion published between 2014 and 2024.

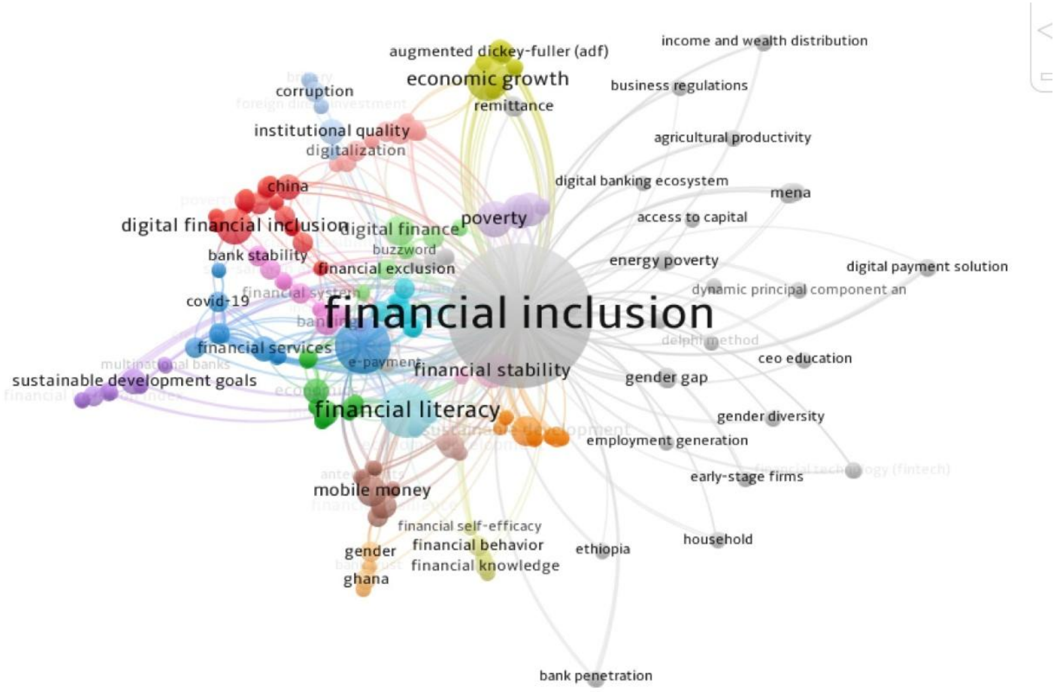

Figure 1. Distribution of Financial Inclusion Research Data Over the Past Decade (2014–2024)

Source: Processed data (2024)

Figure 1 presents a conceptual map that visualizes the interrelationships among key themes associated with financial inclusion. In this visualization, financial inclusion is positioned at the center as the core construct, with related concepts represented as surrounding nodes connected through lines indicating conceptual linkages. The size of each node reflects the relative prominence of the theme in the reviewed literature, where larger nodes denote more frequently discussed concepts. Within this map, financial self-efficacy, financial behavior, and financial knowledge appear as smaller, more peripheral nodes, indicating that these themes, while relevant, are comparatively less emphasized in the current body of research.

These three themes emerged through a thematic reading and conceptual clustering of the included studies. Financial self-efficacy is understood as an individual's belief in their ability to manage personal finances effectively and make sound financial decisions. This confidence is particularly critical for marginalized communities, as it underpins trust in and willingness to engage with formal financial services, including digital savings and microloan products. Financial behavior reflects actual financial practices, such as spending, saving, investing, and credit usage, and captures both habitual and situational responses to financial opportunities and constraints. Financial knowledge refers to the level of understanding individuals possess regarding financial products and concepts—such as savings, investments, insurance, and credit—which forms the foundation for informed decision-making.

Within this review, these themes were identified based on the recurrent focus of studies and the co-occurrence of concepts across the literature. The analysis involved grouping findings that discussed psychological factors (e.g., confidence, perceived control) under financial self-efficacy, studies emphasizing decision-making and routine practices under financial behavior, and works that addressed understanding of financial concepts under financial knowledge. The relationships among these three themes and financial inclusion were further synthesized into a conceptual mind map, presented in Figure 2, to illustrate how they interact within the broader framework of economic empowerment for marginalized groups.

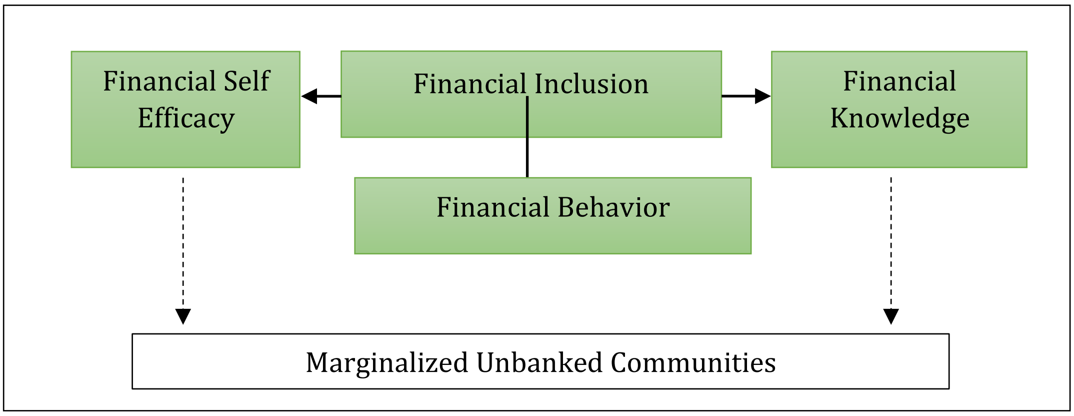

Figure 2. Research Mind Map

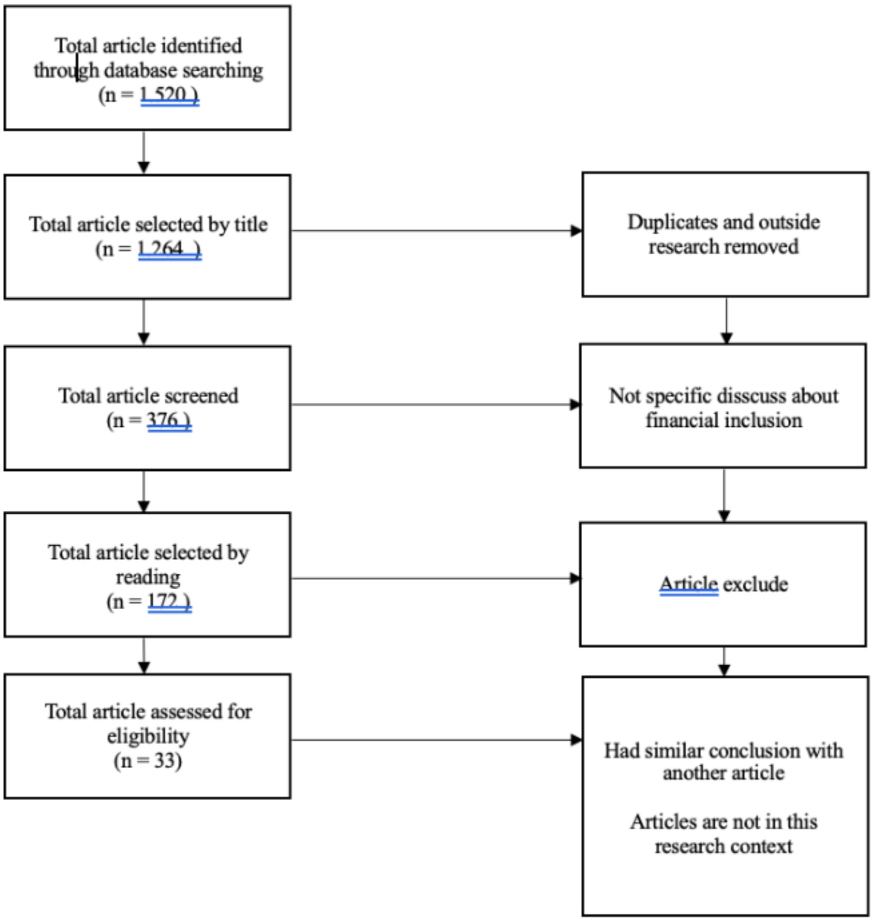

Figure 3. Article Selection Flowchart for the Study

The research flow is visualized in Figure 3, which outlines the stepwise selection of studies. An initial search identified 1,520 articles related to financial inclusion over the past ten years from databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science (WoS). Of these, 1,264 articles were successfully retrieved in full text. Title-based screening was then conducted to focus on studies within the domains of management, economics, and accounting, resulting in 376 articles. Subsequent screening based on relevance to financial literacy, financial self-efficacy, financial knowledge, and financial behavior yielded 172 studies. Notably, only 33 articles specifically addressed financial literacy among marginalized groups during the last decade, underscoring a significant gap in the literature and informing the thematic emphasis of this review.

The development of Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3 was guided by a methodological intention to provide a visual summary of the key findings emerging from the systematic review. First, thematic synthesis was employed to identify and cluster recurrent themes in the literature, particularly those related to financial inclusion, financial self-efficacy, financial behavior, and financial knowledge. Second, the results of this clustering were translated into conceptual maps and flow diagrams through the authors' interpretation, with the aim of clarifying the logical relationships between variables and the dynamics of the processes that are not always explicitly articulated in individual studies. Third, Figure 3 was designed to visualize the review workflow (number of records at each search and screening stage), thereby enhancing transparency and traceability of the methodological process in line with principles of systematic review practice. Thus, the figures function as conceptual synthesis tools that complement the narrative presentation rather than as independent quantitative analyses.

Result and Discussion

The Role of Financial Self-Efficacy in Economic Empowerment in Indonesia

This review identifies three interrelated thematic pillars within the literature on financial inclusion and economic empowerment in Indonesia: financial self-efficacy, financial knowledge (literacy), and financial behavior, particularly among marginalized groups. Across the studies reviewed, these themes appear consistently as underlying mechanisms that shape how individuals' access, use, and benefit from formal financial services, even though they are not always positioned as central variables.

Financial Self-Efficacy in Economic Empowerment

The literature consistently highlights financial inclusion as a key strategy for promoting economic and social development in Indonesia, especially for marginalized communities such as rural populations, informal workers, and women, who face multiple barriers including geographic isolation, low financial literacy, and economic constraints (Rahadjeng et al., 2023). Within this context, Financial Self-Efficacy (FSE) emerges as a recurrent psychological construct that strengthens the impact of financial inclusion initiatives.

Several studies emphasize that limited geographic access—in remote regions such as Papua and East Nusa Tenggara—reduces direct contact with formal financial institutions and compels individuals to seek alternative channels, including fintech-based solutions (Maity, 2023). In these settings, higher FSE is associated with greater willingness to explore and adopt non-traditional financial services, helping individuals overcome psychological barriers to engagement. Visual evidence from field-based programs, such as Inclusion Day events in Eastern Indonesia, further illustrates how community-level activities are used to build confidence and familiarity with financial tools.

Figure 4. Community Empowerment in Financial Inclusion: A Case from Waingapu City, Eastern Indonesia

Source: https://www.waingapu.com/ (diakses, Desember 2024)

Figure 4 depicts a gathering of marginalized communities from Eastern Indonesia during an *Inclusion Day* event aimed at empowering people through the management of natural resources and the adoption of relevant technologies

Financial Literacy and Financial Knowledge

Survey data from the Financial Services Authority (OJK) show that Indonesia's financial literacy rate reached 49.68% in 2022, while financial inclusion reached 85.10%, indicating a significant gap between access and understanding. This gap is echoed in studies that point to low trust in formal financial institutions, often due to past experiences with high costs, complex procedures, and inflexible products. In this thematic context, FSE is repeatedly described as a factor that enables individuals to interpret financial information, evaluate products such as savings and microcredit, and feel more confident in dealing with formal providers (Urueña-Mejía et al., 2023).

Across studies, higher FSE is linked to greater utilization of financial services, better management of irregular income, and reduced dependence on exploitative informal lending. This is particularly evident in programs such as Kredit Usaha Rakyat (KUR), where the success of credit schemes depends not only on access but also on people's confidence to apply for, manage, and repay loans responsibly (MacHdar, 2020; Kurniasari et al., 2021). In addition, several works suggest that FSE plays a role in advancing women's economic empowerment, as women with higher self-efficacy are more likely to use microcredit and contribute to household financial decision-making (Roy & Patro, 2022; Esquivias et al., 2020).

A second dominant theme concerns financial knowledge and literacy as foundational conditions for inclusive economic growth. The literature consistently reports that relatively low financial literacy remains a structural barrier to effective use of formal financial services, especially among marginalized communities (Bhatter & Chhatoi, 2023). OJK data underline this pattern: while financial inclusion in Indonesia has reached 85.10%, financial literacy is only 49.68%, indicating that many individuals have access but lack the competence to use financial products optimally.

Studies converge on several key barriers: a persistent knowledge gap regarding investment risks and debt management, unequal access to financial information between urban and rural areas, and the limited reach of financial outreach programs in remote regions (Singh et al., 2022; Tufail et al., 2022). As a result, a substantial portion of the population continues to rely on informal mechanisms such as loan sharks, arisan, and community-based lending, despite their higher risk and cost (Sethy & Goyari, 2022).

The literature also points to promising strategies for strengthening financial knowledge. Community-based education through cooperatives, social savings groups, and local organizations is reported to improve contextual relevance and acceptance of financial education. Digital technologies—such as financial management apps and online educational platforms—are described as expanding reach, particularly among younger cohorts and geographically dispersed communities. Embedding financial literacy into school curricula, from primary through secondary levels, is frequently proposed as a long-term strategy for cultivating responsible financial habits (MacHdar, 2020; Esquivias et al., 2020; Ali et al., 2020; Sedera et al., 2022).

Overall, the literature suggests that financial knowledge enhances household stability, reduces reliance on informal lenders, increases local economic productivity through small-scale entrepreneurship, and broadens participation in formal financial systems. Programmatic examples such as KUR, Simpanan Pelajar (SimPel), and fintech-based training by platforms like Amartha illustrate how financial literacy components are increasingly integrated into credit and savings initiatives targeting MSMEs and students.

Figure 5 illustrates the "Ayo ke Bank" initiative, a government-supported campaign implemented in partnership with a private bank in Indonesia, reflecting a practical effort to promote financial inclusion.

Figure 5. Indonesian Government's Financial Education Program: "Ayo ke Bank"

Source: https://koran-jakarta.com/ (diakses Desember, 2024)

The presence of Financial Self-Efficacy (FSE) can significantly influence various aspects of individual and societal financial well-being. One key impact is the improvement of personal financial stability. Individuals with strong financial literacy and high FSE are better equipped to avoid unproductive debt and instead focus on secure investment opportunities. Moreover, FSE contributes to reducing economic inequality. When supported by adequate financial literacy, FSE enables marginalized groups to better understand their rights and access to financial services, helping to close the financial inclusion gap. As more individuals confidently engage with formal financial systems, the national economy stands to benefit from increased stability and inclusiveness, fostering more equitable and sustainable economic growth.

Financial Behavior and Financial Inclusion Strategies

A third recurring theme concerns financial behavior, defined as the concrete habits and actions individuals take in managing income, spending, savings, credit, and investments. Among marginalized groups in Indonesia, financial behavior is often shaped by low literacy, limited access to safe financial products, and income volatility (Saraswati et al., 2020; Rahadjeng et al., 2023).

Several studies outline how low financial literacy leads to suboptimal behaviors, such as avoiding formal institutions, maintaining cash-based savings at home, or resorting to high-interest informal lenders. At the same time, empirical findings indicate that targeted financial education—often termed Financial Socialization Education (FSE in the sense of socialization)—can shift behaviors toward more productive patterns, including opening savings accounts, purchasing insurance, and using microcredit for income-generating activities (Rumbogo et al., 2021).

National survey data and policy documents show that financial inclusion has become a priority agenda, yet gaps in physical infrastructure and service availability persist in remote areas (Fauzan et al., 2020; Ciptarianto, 2022). The literature highlights the growing role of financial technology (fintech) and government programs such as Kartu Prakerja, which combine vocational training with financial education components, as strategic tools to influence financial behavior at scale (Al-shami et al., 2024). Private-sector initiatives by banks and fintech firms—such as tailored training for market vendors, farmers, and informal workers—are likewise documented as promising in improving day-to-day financial practices.

Across these sources, there is a broad convergence that improving financial behavior requires an integrated approach: combining education, inclusive product design (e.g., no-fee accounts, low-ticket insurance, microloans), and multi-stakeholder collaboration involving government, financial institutions, NGOs, and local communities. Healthy financial behavior, in turn, is consistently associated with greater financial resilience, reduced vulnerability, and contributions to macro-level economic growth (Rahadjeng et al., 2023). Financial behavior refers to the habits and actions individuals take in managing income, expenditures, savings, and investments. In Indonesia, particularly among marginalized populations, financial behavior is often shaped by limited knowledge and restricted access to formal financial services (Saraswati et al., 2020). Within this context, Financial Socialization Education (FSE) serves as a key driver in fostering healthy financial behavior.

Low levels of financial literacy remain a major barrier preventing individuals from understanding and effectively utilizing formal financial products. According to a financial literacy survey conducted by the Financial Services Authority (OJK), only around 38% of Indonesians were classified as financially literate in the most recent survey. This highlights a significant gap between the availability of financial products and the population's capacity to use them effectively. Figure 6 illustrates the economic disparity present in Indonesia.

Figure 6. Economic Disparities in Indonesia

Source: Processed data (BPS, 2024)

Figure 6 highlights the persistent economic disparities in Eastern Indonesia. Financial Socialization Education (FSE) functions as a strategic solution by equipping individuals with foundational knowledge on money management, saving, investment, and risk management. Through proper education, individuals gain greater confidence in making financial decisions, such as opening savings accounts, purchasing insurance, or investing in capital markets (Rumbogo et al., 2021). A significant portion of the Indonesian population, particularly those in the informal sector, faces the challenge of irregular income. This uncertainty often leads them to avoid financial risks and rely on traditional methods of saving, such as keeping money at home, rather than utilizing formal banking services. FSE can help address these challenges by enhancing understanding of the benefits of formal financial services. For instance, using a savings account provides greater security compared to conventional cash storage. Moreover, access to financial services such as microcredit can support individuals in managing income fluctuations more effectively.

Although financial inclusion has become a national priority, many communities in remote areas of Indonesia still lack access to banking services (Fauzan et al., 2020). A key barrier is the absence of physical infrastructure, such as bank branches and ATMs. However, the advancement of financial technology (fintech) offers a promising alternative by providing digital solutions accessible via smartphones. The Indonesian government has launched various initiatives to improve both financial literacy and inclusion. One such initiative is the Kartu Prakerja program, which not only offers vocational training but also includes financial education components (Al-shami et al., 2024). This program helps participants understand the importance of money management not only for daily expenses but also for long-term financial planning.

On the other hand, the private sector also plays a crucial role. Banks and fintech companies can develop targeted financial education programs for specific segments of the population. For instance, specialized training for market vendors, farmers, or other informal workers can have a direct impact on improving their financial behavior. The government likewise holds a central role in fostering an inclusive financial ecosystem. Key measures include expanding the reach of financial infrastructure in remote areas, integrating financial literacy into the national education curriculum, and providing incentives for banks and fintech firms to serve underserved communities (Ciptarianto, 2022).

Local communities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) possess deep insights into the specific needs of the population. As such, they can serve as strategic partners in implementing financial literacy programs, ensuring that the messages conveyed are relevant and easily understood.

Improving healthy financial behavior in Indonesia requires a holistic approach one that integrates education, product innovation, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Financial Socialization Education (FSE) plays a critical role in shaping financial mindsets and habits within society. With well-designed strategies such as technology-based education, government-led initiatives, and innovative financial products Indonesia can achieve broader financial inclusion. Ultimately, fostering healthy financial behavior not only enhances individual well-being but also contributes to overall national economic growth (Rahadjeng et al., 2023).

Cross-Cutting Patterns and Under-Researched Areas

Taken together, the literature reviewed suggests several converging patterns:

- Financial self-efficacy, financial knowledge, and financial behavior repeatedly appear as core enablers that determine whether financial inclusion translates into genuine economic empowerment.
- Data from OJK and related studies consistently show a gap between financial inclusion and literacy, indicating that access alone is insufficient without psychological readiness and adequate knowledge.
- Integrated programs that combine access, education, and behavioral reinforcement tend to report more positive and sustainable outcomes than initiatives focusing on access only.

At the same time, several under-researched and fragmented areas are evident:

- Relatively few studies examine these three constructs (FSE, knowledge, behavior) simultaneously within one analytical model, especially among marginalized groups in Indonesia.
- Empirical evidence on longitudinal changes in FSE and financial behavior following specific interventions (e.g., fintech usage, government campaigns, or school-based programs) remains limited.
- There is a scarcity of research focusing specifically on remote regions and highly vulnerable segments, despite their frequent mention in policy narratives (e.g., Eastern Indonesia).

These thematic results form the empirical and conceptual basis for the subsequent Discussion, where the implications of financial self-efficacy, financial knowledge, and financial behavior for financial inclusion strategies in Indonesia are examined more deeply in theoretical, practical, and contextual terms.

Conclusion

Financial inclusion is a crucial strategy for promoting economic and social development in Indonesia. This study indicates that marginalized communities in the country continue to face significant barriers in accessing formal financial services. The main challenges include low financial literacy, limited infrastructure in remote areas, and a general lack of trust in formal financial institutions. Financial Self-Efficacy (FSE) has been shown to play a vital role in empowering these communities. Individuals with higher levels of FSE are more capable of managing irregular income, saving, and accessing formal financial services such as microcredit and insurance. Moreover, strong financial literacy enhances individuals' ability to understand and utilize financial products effectively, thereby contributing to greater household economic stability.

Technological innovation also plays a significant role in advancing financial inclusion, particularly through digital platforms that facilitate access to financial services for rural populations. Collaborative efforts among the government, private sector, and financial institutions are essential to ensure that financial services are inclusive and responsive to the needs of marginalized groups. Key elements in addressing these challenges include relevant financial education programs, innovative financial products, and cross-sectoral collaboration.

This study reaffirms that financial inclusion not only enhances individual well-being but also contributes to overall national economic growth. Through a holistic approach involving all stakeholders, Indonesia can establish a financial system that is inclusive, equitable, and sustainable.

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