

# From Financial Access to Financial Management: A Bibliometric Analysis of Rural Women's Entrepreneurship Research



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## Abstract

Rural women entrepreneurship plays a very important role in fostering inclusive economic growth, reducing poverty, and empowering gender, yet access to finance and effective financial management remain persistent challenges. Despite a growing body of literature on rural women entrepreneurship and financing, existing research is shattered across themes, methodologies and region, limiting a comprehensive understanding of the field. To address this gap, this study employs a bibliometric review to map the intellectual structure, research trends, and emerging themes in rural women entrepreneurship and rural financing research. Using data mined from the Scopus database, Bibliometric techniques, including citation analysis, co-authorship analysis, country-level analysis, and keyword co-occurrence analysis, were conducted using VOSviewer. The findings reveal a growing scholarly interest in the field, with India emerging as the most productive country, while the United States and China demonstrate higher citation impact and stronger international collaboration networks. Keyword clustering identifies dominant research themes related to financial literacy, financial behaviour, sustainability, rural household finance, and behavioural finance. However, the analysis highlights limited collaboration among authors and a significant lack of empirical studies focusing on practical financial management aspects such as bookkeeping, working capital management, debt handling, and revenue planning. The study concludes that future research should adopt more collaborative, region-specific, and practice-oriented approaches to bridge the gap between financial awareness and effective financial management, thereby strengthening the sustainability of rural women entrepreneurship.

**Keywords:** Rural women entrepreneur, Financial management, Bibliometric analysis, Finance

## Introduction

Rural women entrepreneurship has gained more attention from researchers and policymakers because of its important role in promoting economic growth, reducing poverty, and advancing gender equality. Women entrepreneurs in rural areas largely affect local economies through small businesses in agriculture, processing, crafts, trade, and services. However, these entrepreneurs still face numerous challenges. They often struggle with limited access to funding, insufficient business skills, weak market connections, institutional barriers, and social norms that impede their growth. In the last twenty years, research on rural women entrepreneurship has broadened across fields like economics, management, development studies, and sociology. This increasing body of work looks into various topics, including empowerment, access to loans and microfinance, self-help groups, adopting innovations, digital inclusion, and policy measures. There is a lack of consistency in focus, methods, geographical areas, and theoretical approaches. This makes it difficult to gain a complete understanding of the key ideas, main contributors, important journals, and new trends in this area.

Bibliometric analysis has become an objective way to systematically review and evaluate extensive scientific literature. By using methods like citation analysis, co-authorship analysis, co-citation analysis, and networks of keyword occurrences, bibliometric techniques assist to identify research clusters, gaps in knowledge, and how scholarly conversations have changed over time. In the field of rural women entrepreneurship, bibliometric analysis provides meaningful insights into its development, the dominant themes in the literature, and the areas that need more attention. This review uses bibliometric analysis to thoroughly examine current research on rural women entrepreneurship. By extracting data from popular databases, the study looks at publication trends, key authors and institutions, leading journals, collaboration networks, and thematic patterns within the literature. By mapping out the intellectual landscape of this research area, this study aims to offer a clear summary of existing knowledge and highlight emerging topics and future research opportunities. The results of this bibliometric review are expected to benefit both academic discussions and policymaking. They will provide a cohesive overview of the research area,

helping researchers plan future studies, guiding policymakers in creating evidence-based programs, and aiding development practitioners in developing strategies to strengthen the entrepreneurial environment for rural women.

### Review on literature

Ghouse et al. (2017) investigated problems that rural women entrepreneurs face in Oman and reported that it was mainly impeded by sociocultural norms, a lack of access to finance, a lack of training, and poor market linkages. Kumari, Ghosh, & Rath (2025), it is observed that entrepreneurial interactions related to mushroom growing, goat rearing, dairy, and stitching have been contributing towards women's social & agro-economic empowerment in rural Bihar, where innovativeness, education, decision-making competence, & planning skills have been playing a substantial role in such women's empowering processes. Uduji et al. (2024) examine the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects undertaken by multinational oil corporations in Niger Delta and their impact on the capacity development of female small-scale business owners. Haram, Gohar, and Abrar (2025) examine the reasons for the attraction of women entrepreneurs to this creative industry in rural Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and find that its informal, low-cost, flexible, and non-traditional nature serves the rural women's socio-economic context best. Nayak and Nayak (2025) analyze how perceived capability, social perception, and personal competencies affect individual intentions to undertake sustainable entrepreneurship among rural women in India, proving that psychological and social factors play an essential role in influencing intentional outcomes related to sustainable entrepreneurship.

(e.g., PreK-12 and higher education), systematically reviews existing systematic reviews to map how artificial intelligence has been applied across diverse educational settings and to highlight research gaps in the field. It finds three major themes of AI's impact on teaching, learning, and administration, and suggests some future research directions to deepen the understanding of AI in education. has systematically analyzed 201 publications between 2005-2024 to analyze the application of AI, IoT, big data, blockchain, and digital twins in reducing GHG emissions in the global ship industry. Xiao, G., Pan, L., & Lai, F. (2025) has emphasized that there has been a spur in literature on digital technologies, has pointed to hotspots in speed optimization, emission forecasts, autonomous ships, and has discussed future literature directions to improve the process of digital-based GHG reductions in the maritime transportation industry. Liao, J., Wu, M., Du, P., Filieri, R., & He, K. (2025) The paper "The past, present, and future of AI in hospitality and tourism: a bibliometric analysis" applies bibliometric approaches to more than 2,000 published articles from 1976 to 2024 to analyze how the field of artificial intelligence in

terms of its developments and underlying theories in research in the hospitality and tourism industry has evolved. The authors also focus on prominent trends and emerging areas in terms of customer experience and service automation and their relationship to future advances in AI in hospitality and tourism. The article, "The application of bibliometric analysis: disciplinary and user aspects," discusses how bibliometric analyses are practiced within various scientific fields and how scientists and non-scientists alike make use of these analyses to gain insight into scientific production and citations. The article emphasizes how bibliometric analysis is a crucial technique utilized to analyze scientific literature and its links within scientific fields.

### Research Gap

Despite the growing interest in rural women entrepreneurship, the existing literature is quite dispersed, irregular, and biased in terms of themes. Financial literacy, empowerment, behavioral finance, and sustainability studies have enjoyed major attention in the previous literature, while the areas of bookkeeping, management of working capital, management of debt, and management of revenues remain relatively less explored.

Further, bibliometric data explains: there is little co-authorship among writers, hence fragmented rather than cumulative theory building through knowledge creation. Moreover, there is disparities among regions – emerging countries contribute to number but not citation impact, developed countries drive intellectual influence.

### Research Methodology

In this review paper, a bibliometric review methodology is used to critically analyse the literature related to rural women entrepreneurship studies. Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative research methodology that helps to objectively assess a voluminous number of published article in academic literature, the findings from which can help to interpret the structure and development patterns of a particular field of study. This study uses bibliometric analysis to present a holistic understanding on the development patterns of rural women entrepreneurship studies.

The bibliographic information of this study has been extracted from a Scopus search. It is well-known that a Scopus features high-quality articles that are carefully reviewed by peers. This research has been conducted by making use of proper keywords like Rural women entrepreneur, Financial literacy, financial management

The search was restricted to articles available in scientific journals that were in English language in order to establish consistency and academic validity. The last three years' time period has been taken for searching in order to establish novel areas in that stream of study.

The results from the initial search were sifted for

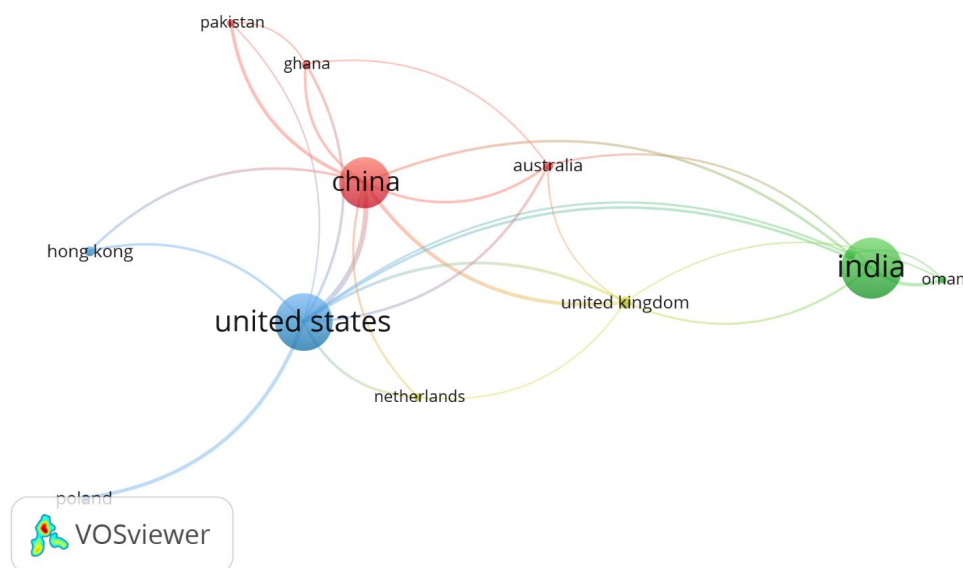
relevance according to predefined criteria for inclusion and exclusion. Duplicated articles were removed, and the article title and abstracts were sifted for relevance to the broad theme of rural woman entrepreneurship. After completing the sift and clean procedure, a final set of 382 articles was chosen for bibliometric analysis. The bibliometric data, such as authors, article titles, abstracts, keywords, authors, citations, and bibliographic links, was downloaded in a compatible format for analysis

using bibliometric tools.

The analysis was performed by the aid of VOS viewer, which is a popular bibliometric mapping tool for the production of bibliometric maps for research purposes. It has been utilized to produce network maps on the basis of citation data, authors, co-citation, and keyword data. The software has the ability to showcase research themes, research highlights, and thematic associations within the research literature.

### Analysis

| Country        | Articles/ papers | Citation | Total link strength |
|----------------|------------------|----------|---------------------|
| United States  | 135              | 1983     | 40                  |
| China          | 111              | 1439     | 37                  |
| India          | 146              | 1199     | 16                  |
| United Kingdom | 10               | 290      | 15                  |
| Australia      | 6                | 181      | 10                  |
| Malaysia       | 7                | 133      | 10                  |
| Ghana          | 5                | 50       | 8                   |
| Oman           | 5                | 58       | 7                   |
| Pakistan       | 5                | 52       | 7                   |
| Hong Kong      | 7                | 120      | 6                   |
| Netherland     | 5                | 17       | 6                   |
| Poland         | 6                | 79       | 6                   |



**Figure 1 Country-wise Publication and Citation Analysis**

### The country-wise

The country-level bibliometric data analysis demonstrates a set of disparities within the number of researched documents, citation power, and collaboration ability on rural financing topics. The 12 nations exceeded the minimum number of five documents, which reaches a level of moderate concentration with a global dissemination.

In terms of productivity, the country that stands out as the most productive is India, with 146 research works. This emphasis on research related to rural women entrepreneur might have been triggered due

to its relevance to policy-making or due to the number of rural populations they have or because they have numerous programs related to financial inclusions or rural developments. In spite of being the most productive, its number of citations with 1,199 stands second to the US and China.

The United States has the second-largest number of publications (135 documents) but has the most citations (1,983 citations) and total links (40). This shows that not only have rural women entrepreneur, scholars in the United States produced influential works but that these works are also heavily

connected in international collaboration networks.

The case of China represents a prominent entry with 111 publications, 1,439 citations, and a very strong total link strength of 37. The contribution of China indicates its active involvement in academia related to rural women entrepreneur, reform of rural finance, and rural digital finance concepts.

The number of contributions by the UK is lower (10 documents), but the number of citations (290) and link strength (15) are quite high, implying that research carried out by the UK has great influence

and is widely cited despite the low number of contributions.

Other participating countries that have relatively low levels of publications include Australia, Malaysia, Ghana, Oman, Pakistan, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, and Poland. Although the number of publications is not very high, these participating countries are important vertices of the research network. These participating countries may often provide research studies on a specific region and its policies

Table 2

| Author                     | Documents | Citation |
|----------------------------|-----------|----------|
| Lusardi, Annamaria         | 5         | 302      |
| Mitchell, Olivia S         | 6         | 29       |
| Chhatwani, Malvika Nandlal | 5         | 49       |
| Korankye, Thomas           | 5         | 33       |
| Maji, Sumit Kumar          | 5         | 56       |

mitchell, olivia s.

chhatwani, malvika nandlal

maji, sumit kumar



korankye, thomas

The above table and the network shows the Co-authorship analysis. Out of 382 article only 5 were found to have repeated papers article in the above research area.

Observation from the above table and network:

Mitchell, Olivia S. has the more number of publications (6), this shows high productivity in research area. Lusardi, Annamaria has high citations of 302 with only 5 article, this shows the depth of the article. Chhatwani, Malvika Nandal, Korankye, Thomas, and Maji, Sumit Kumar have moderate citation

### Cluster Interpretation

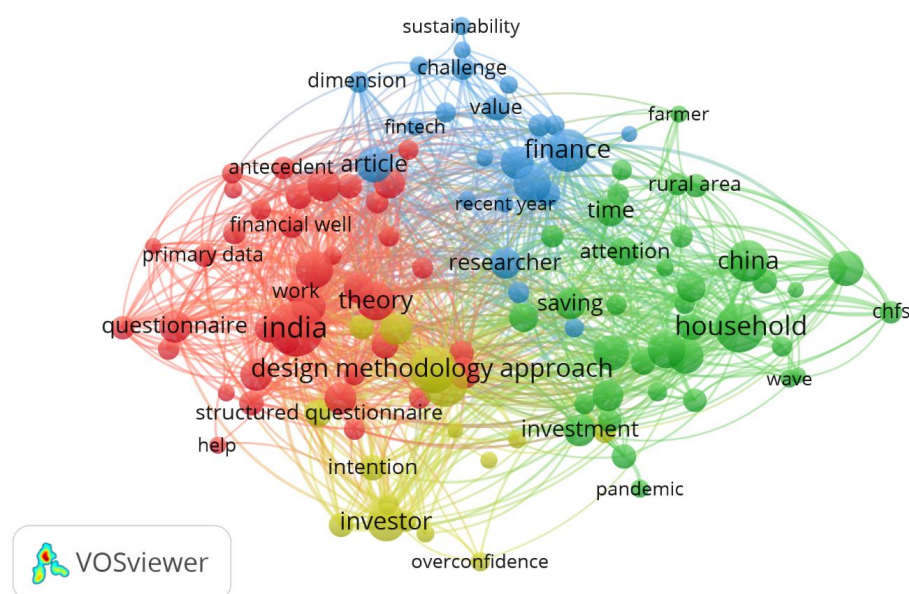
The red cluster of Mitchell, Olivia S., is the only one to show any co-authorship relationship, reflecting

### Cluster 3

Based on the co-occurrence of keywords

that there is a small but more discernible level of collaboration between the authors in this dataset. Further, the clusters representing green, yellow, and blue-Chhatwani, Malvika Nandal, Maji, Sumit Kumar, and Korankye, Thomas-are single nodes, without much co-authorship connection between them. Their isolation in their respective nodes essentially suggests these authors contribute as single entities either through their own contributions or collaborating less than required by the threshold values considered in the dataset. Overall, the clustering pattern simply reinforces an individual-centric research landscape wherein the scholarly output is more driven by independent authors rather than cohesive or connected research teams, evidencing limited collaboration within the domain.





## Cluster analysis and Interperation

The above network contains 115 keywords that have been grouped into four clusters and have total links of 4,043. The above keyword network shows the different links of the various keyword and highlights the mostly used keywords.

The red cluster predominant keywords such as are financial behaviour, financial well-being, financial literacy level, questionnaire, design methodology approach, theory, response, and India. This identified cluster represents studies related to financial decision-making, financial literacy, and financial behaviour based on theoretical paradigms.

The blue cluster is centered on keywords such as finance, sustainability, challenge, dimension, value, use, and researcher. This cluster represents the big picture, underlining the most relevant areas of finance systems, sustainable finance, and broader analytical dimensions. Strong interconnections show that sustainability and finance are increasingly related topics and put forward an evolutionary shape of financial research toward long-term value creation.

Key terms in the green cluster include household, rural area, farmer, saving, investment, risk, china, pandemic, and covid. The research reflected in this cluster is about micro-level financial behavior, being set in rural and household contexts with a strong geographical orientation toward emerging economies. Crisis-related keywords, such as pandemic and COVID, point to the growing scholarly focus on issues related to financial resilience, vulnerability, and risk management throughout the course of economic shocks.

The yellow cluster centres on the nodes investor, intention, overconfidence, and lower level. This theme explicitly focuses on behavioural finance and investor psychology, including cognitive biases in intention-driven financial decisions. Although it is

small in size, this cluster is closely related to the financial literacy and behaviour cluster, and thus there is strong conceptual spill over between literacy, psychology, and investment behaviour.

## Findings

It can be seen from the results of the bibliometric analysis that although the concept understanding and behavioral aspects of rural women entrepreneurship have been well explored, there is room for further research in practice-based financial management.

Coupled with a lack of prominent authors in individual fields, a lack of collaboration further narrows the scope of interdisciplinary theory development. As has been established in bibliometric theory, a lack of network density is typically associated with disjointed research trajectories instead of a knowledge base.

Bibliometric analysis of 382 Scopus-indexed articles reveals that rural women entrepreneurship and rural financing have gained considerable research attention in recent years. India appears as the most productive country for the number of publications, but the United States and China lead in citation impact and international collaboration, respectively, meaning stronger research influence and networking from these countries.

Limited Collaboration Among Authors Co-authorship analysis indicates a very individualistic pattern of research. With the exception of the small collaborative cluster led by Mitchell, Olivia S., the most influential authors tend to operate in isolation, hence leading to weak research collaboration and fragmented knowledge development in this domain.

**Analysis of keyword co-occurrence reveals four main themes:**

Personal financial literacy and financial behavior  
( Dominant cluster, particularly in the Indian scenario)

a. Sustainability and finance systems  
 b. Rural finance, risk, and household resilience amidst the COVID-19 pandemic: A household-level  
 c. Behavioural finance and psychology of investors  
 Clustering these keywords indicates that the majority of the research has emphasized awareness, behaviour, and macro financial matters and is less likely to be concerned with operational financial management practices.

### Strong Emphasis on Literacy, Weak Emphasis on Practice

Though financial literacy and empowerment are topics that are heavily researched, topics such as bookkeeping, working capital cycles, debt, and income planning are some of those that are less researched empirically.

### Conclusion

The bibliometric review sets the broad picture of the intellectual structure and evolution of research on rural women entrepreneurship and rural financing. Academic interest is strongly growing, a few countries and authors are dominant. There are more articles on the related topic found in US which has more citation compared to other countries. India has relatively high article count in the area but has less citation. With this we can analyse that India can put efforts on enhancing citation. We could identify commonly used keywords such as financial literacy, sustainability, and behavioural finance. However, the study also shows some areas not covered in detail, particularly empirical research relating to practical financial management, challenge faced by rural women entrepreneurs. There is limited collaborative efforts among researchers across different countries, few region-specific studies, and rather less focus on financial practices. This highlights the requirement for applied, context-driven research. We can see more. Addressing these gaps will help bridge the divide between financial awareness and effective financial management, thereby supporting sustainable rural women entrepreneurship, especially in regions such as Bengaluru Rural.

According to observation there is a shift that focus from literacy to practice on bookkeeping, cash-flow management, debt structuring, and revenue planning among rural women entrepreneurs.

Scope for Strengthen collaborative and cross-country research networks in order to enhance theoretical integration and comparative insights. Develop context-specific financial management models matching rural and informal entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Integrate digital finance and fintech perspectives, particularly in the context of emerging economies, to assess how these kinds of financial services can improve financial resilience.

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