

38 be a fundamental pillar towards changing the lives of women both in developing and
39 developed nations. Although the empowerment of women has been studied in many
40 dimensions, there is still one big gap in comprehending the specifics of understanding the
41 impact of economic support on the outcomes of the empowerment. However, the role of
42 financial resources, generation of income and access to economic opportunities has acquired
43 more and more importance in recent decades and is considered to be the result of the
44 increasing recognition of the intersection between economic policies and gender
45 empowerment programs (Kabeer, 2005; Duflo, 2012).

46 Economic empowerment as a route to greater gender equity is also highlighted through the
47 international initiatives, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United
48 Nations, in particular, Goal 5, which states that the achievement of gender equality and the
49 empowerment of all women and girls must be supported (UN, 2015). Nonetheless, existing
50 studies examining how economic assistance is related to the empowerment of women are
51 rather scattered, with studies typically focusing on a particular area or industry such as
52 microfinance, entrepreneurship, or access to education (Murthi et al., 1995; Hill et al., 2017).
53 This is why an elaborate analysis of how economic support can be empowering to women is
54 timely and crucial.

55 This paper seeks to fill this gap through carrying out a bibliometric analysis of the available
56 literature on the subject. In turn, bibliometrics, as the quantitative research method, permits
57 the systematic analysis of the development, tendencies, and influence of the scholarly
58 contribution regarding the matters of the economic support and feminine empowerment. This
59 study will give a comprehensive summary of how the economic support has been
60 conceptualized and researched in the literature by analyzing citation patterns, publication
61 trends as well as key research clusters. The results will provide meaningful information on
62 the role of economic interventions in empowering women and propose the directions on the
63 future research in this important field.

64

65 **2. Literature Review**

66 *2.1. Hypothetical Frameworks On Female empowerment and Economic Support*

67 Empowerment among women is a complex notion, which is usually determined in the form
68 of access to resources, autonomy of choice and social, political, and economical equality. It
69 does not just incorporate individual capabilities alone, but also communal strength in
70 communities. According to Kabeer (1999), the concept of empowerment is the increase of the
71 people ability to make strategic life choices in an environment where they lacked the ability
72 to make such choices. This definition focuses on the role of agency, resources, and the
73 successes of empowerment process.

74 Many theories on the issue of women empowerment exist, such as the Capability Approach
75 created by Amartya Sen, which defines empowerment as increasing the individual potentials

76 and freedoms (Sen, 1999). This framework points out that empowering women means giving
77 them the liberty to live the life they appreciate. Moreover, the social feminist theory of
78 empowerment assumes that the issue of power imbalance in social structures should be
79 resolved in order to empower women actually (Rossi, 2014). The concept of economic
80 empowerment in this context is mostly associated with the availability of resources that
81 enable women to gain control over their lives personally and in their careers.

82 In economic support dimension, it is theorized that economic support, whether in
83 microfinance or access to financial services, is an avenue through which women can become
84 more economically independent and socially mobile through economic support as per the
85 theory of financial intermediation (Diamond, 1984). Financial inclusion is regarded as the
86 important measure of closing gender inequalities providing women with the possibility to
87 earn money, receive education, and access healthcare (Agarwal, 2018).

88 *2.2. Women Empowerment Policies and Programs in the World*

89 The international policies have appreciated the fact that economic empowerment is closely
90 related to empowerment of women. As a women empowerment tool, especially in the
91 developing world, the use of microfinance programs where small loans are given to those
92 individuals who do not even have access to the traditional banking system has been highly
93 employed. One of the most famous examples of how microfinance can lead to economic
94 independence and empowerment of women in low-income areas is the Grameen Bank in
95 Bangladesh that is headed by the Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus (Yunus&Moingeon,
96 2010). Microfinance research has revealed positive effects on access to credit, income and
97 mobility of women (Pitt and Khandker, 1998).

98 Social welfare programs and financial inclusion initiatives have also been included in the list
99 of empowerment strategies in addition to microfinance. As an example, there are conditional
100 cash transfer programs that have been practiced all over the world to alleviate poverty and
101 gender inequality and such programs include BolsaFamilia in Brazil where women get
102 support in the form of cash in as much as they meet some conditions regarding child health
103 and education (Fiszbein and Schady, 2009). Financial inclusion programs, especially those
104 focusing on women, are designed to enhance access of women to banking services, credit and
105 savings products which in turn contribute to women becoming financially independent and
106 stable (Gonzalez-Vega, 2016).

107 There has also been intervention by governmental and non-governmental organizations
108 through policies that seek to minimize gender inequalities when it comes to accessibility of
109 economic resources. The United Nations Women (UN Women) program aims at empowering
110 gender equality by advocating policies, capacity-building, and strategic alliances. Among
111 others, the promotion of female economic involvement, both formally and informally, by
112 various means that support the equality of opportunities in the labor market and
113 entrepreneurial assistance has been seen as a key area of policy (UN Women, 2017).

114 *2.3.Past Bibliometric Studies in the Related Fields*

115 Bibliometric research provides a quantitative methodology of the analysis of the academic
116 literature about the support of women and their inclusion in the economic sphere. These
117 researches could offer the vision of the publication tendencies, leading scholars, and subject
118 areas, helping to define the gaps in the current studies and possible directions of the future
119 investigation. As an illustration, a bibliometric review of the existing body of research
120 conducted by Wang et al. (2020) revealed sections of the literature where the topic of
121 microfinance and women empowerment experienced a growing number of studies related to
122 the social consequences of microcredit especially regarding decision-making and welfare of
123 women.

124 Likewise, a bibliometric paper by Ferreira et al. (2017) analyzed the studies connected to the
125 gender and financial inclusion topic, and the significance of financial services in bridging
126 gender disparities in income and assets. Their work saw the growing importance of the role of
127 digital financial services, which can break access limitations in rural and underserved
128 locations. The attention to the study of gender and economic development in relation to
129 policy interventions and their effectiveness in enhancing the economic empowerment of
130 women has grown in other bibliometric studies published within the last two decades,
131 including the example provided by Li et al. (2019).

132

133 **3. Methodology**

134 *3.1.Research design*

135 The paper uses a bibliometric research to identify the changes, intellectual organization, and
136 theme formation of studies relating economic support and female empowerment.
137 Bibliometric analysis is based on two complementary aspects, as follows in compliance with
138 Scopus-indexed bibliometric criteria: (i) performance analysis (physical productivity and
139 pattern of impact over years, sources, authors, and documents) and (ii) scientific mapping
140 (visualization of collaboration through a network representation, conceptual connections, and
141 intellectual foundations). This hybrid bibliometric study method allows a strong and
142 repeatable general picture of the way the area has evolved along with the place of
143 contributions that are dominant and where the new themes are clustering.

144 *3.2. Data source and data retrieval process*

145 Scopus was chosen as bibliographic records because it has excellent coverage of peer-
146 reviewed journals, standardized indexing of metadata (authors, affiliations, keywords,
147 citations), and it is appropriate in network-based bibliometric mapping. The search was
148 carried out in February 2026 and limited to final-stage and English-language documents, in
149 order to be consistent and comparable to bibliometric indicators.

150

151 *3.3. Search query*

152 The exact Scopus advanced search string used to retrieve the dataset was:

```

153 "TITLE-ABS-KEY ( "women empowerment" ) AND PUBYEAR > 2019 AND PUBYEAR < 2027
154 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( DOCTYPE , "ar" ) )
155 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( LANGUAGE , "English" ) )
156 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "ECON" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "BUSI" )
157 OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "ARTS" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "SOCI" )
158 OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "MULT" ) )
159 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Empowerment" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Womens Status" )
160 OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Women Empowerment" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Women's Empowerment"
161 ) )
162 OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Women's Empowerment" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Gender Equality" )
163 OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "India" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Decision Making" )
164 OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Sustainable Development" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Microfinance" )
165 OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Womens Employment" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Gender Inequality" )
166 OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Entrepreneurship" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Socioeconomics" )
167 OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Financial Inclusion" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Socioeconomic
168 Factors" )
169 OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Women's Rights" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Self-help Groups" )
170 OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD , "Gender Equity" ) )
171 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( PUBSTAGE , "final" ) )"

```

172

173 *3.4. Inclusion and exclusion criteria*

174 To be in line with Bibliometric best practice and to be coherent in their analytic nature, the
175 following parameters were directly applied using the Scopus filters and pre-processing.

176 *Table-1: Inclusion and exclusion criteria*

<i>Inclusion criteria</i>	<i>Exclusion criteria</i>
Newer (PUBYEAR > 2019 and PUBYEAR < 2027).	Types of non-article documents (reviews, conference papers, book chapters, editorials).
Articles (DOCTYPE = ar) only.	Non-english and non-final-stage items
Publications written in the English language.	Articles not within the specified time span.
Publication stage = final.	Records that lacked necessary bibliographic metadata (e.g. incomplete information on authors or sources) and any that were left after exporting them.
Limited subject areas to ECON, BUSI, ARTS, SOCI and MULT	
Records that corresponded to at least one of the given EXACTKEYWORD terms in empowerment, gender equality and economic-support pathways.	

177 *Source: Researcher own compilation*

178 *3.5. Pre-processing and exporting of data*

179 Scopus was searched to obtain all records retrieved with full fields necessary to analyze them
180 bibliometrically, including: authors, affiliations, titles, abstracts, author keywords, indexed
181 keywords, source titles, cited references, and citation counts.

182 To increase the reliability of indicators and network maps, the pre-processing steps were
183 used:

- 184 1. *Deduplication*: the deduplication was done through DOI matching and title similarity.
- 185 2. *Standardization of author name*: any definite variation in initials/spellings was unified
186 when it was unambiguous to eliminate fragmentation in networks of co-authorship.
- 187 3. *Keywords harmonisation*: synonyms and orthonyms were combined (e.g., women
188 empowerment, women's empowerment, women's empowerment).
- 189 4. *Country normalization*: Country names based on affiliation were normalized so as to
190 have valid country collaboration mapping.

191 These precautions were required owing to the fact that bibliometric networks are very
192 sensitive to inconsistencies in naming conventions and variants of keywords.

193 3.6. *Performance analysis*

194 A performance evaluation was performed to summarize the productivity and scholarly impact
195 in the field with the help of classical bibliometric indicators:

- 196 1. Trends in annual publication: articles per year (2020-2026) to determine the growth
197 trends, highs, and lows.
- 198 2. Most relevant: journals sorted by the publishing rate, with the use of citation cues
199 where necessary.
- 200 3. Most relevant authors: both measures of author productivity:
201 a. Full counting (one credit per paper each co-author), and
202 b. Fractional counting (credit of each paper divided by number of co-authors),
203 with which collaboration-adjusted author contribution reporting is possible.
- 204 4. Most influential documents: quantified by the total citations, annual citations and
205 normalized citations (to eliminate the bias of the publication year and to allow more
206 equal comparisons across the years).

207 3.7. *Network and scientific mapping methods*

208 The research used various science mapping methods to unveil the form and development of
209 research topics:

- 210 1. *Co-authorship network (social structure)*: visualizes the patterns of collaboration
211 between authors and highlights cluster communities and key contributors.
- 212 2. *Country collaboration network*: applies the affiliation data to visualise the
213 international collaboration of research and knowledge-production networks.
- 214 3. *Bibliographic coupling (research front)*: links documents that are referenced
215 together, which means that there is a topical proximity and active streams of
216 research.

- 217 4. *Co-citation analysis (intellectual base)*: establishes author and works that are
218 commonly cited with other works, which indicate the theoretical and conceptual
219 underpinnings of the field.
- 220 5. *Keyword co-occurrence (thematic structure)*: is a type of model that thematically
221 clusters around recurring co-occurring keywords; clusters represent major themes,
222 including microfinance / financial inclusion, decision-making, entrepreneurship,
223 gender equality, linkages of sustainable development.
- 224 6. *Thematic mapping*: themes are placed in the Motor, Basic, Niche, and
225 Emerging/Declining quadrants, which can be interpreted as to thematic maturity and
226 relevance of the field.

227 3.8. *Software, counting method, and network settings*

228 Bibliometrix/Biblioshiny (R) was used to examine performance indicators and thematic
229 mapping and the VOSviewer to analyse network visualization and clustering (co-authorship,
230 co-occurrence, bibliographic coupling, and co-citation). Standard settings were used so that it
231 could be discussed and compared across maps.

232 3.9. *Limitations*

233 The drawbacks are still present in bibliometric research: The indexing of Scopus is not
234 representative of non-indexed regional sources and grey literature; the number of citations
235 should not to be regarded as the quality, but as a sign of the scholarly interest; and the most
236 recent year(s) might be less mature in terms of citation. In this regard, findings are regarded
237 as tracing the development and organization of the Scopus-indexed, peer-reviewed literature
238 at the nexus of economic support and women empowerment.

239

240 4. **Results**

241 The following section contains the results of the bibliometric analysis, which gives a full
242 picture of the research situation in the field of economic support and women empowerment.
243 The discussion has been organized into two major approaches and these are performance
244 analysis and scientific mapping. The analysis of the performance is done based on the trends
245 of publications, pattern of citation and identification of the influential authors and journals
246 that have influenced the discourse in this field. Assessing these quantitative metrics, we point
247 out the most influential researches and researchers, which allows illuminating the dynamic
248 character of research productions with time. This knowledge is further developed by the
249 scientific mapping approach that provides the visual depiction of how the main research
250 themes, including microfinance and financial inclusion, are related to each other. Such a
251 method also demonstrates the process of formation of the research themes and offers
252 information about the cooperation of authors, institutions, and states. Combined, these
253 approaches provide a subtle and graphic overview of the research situation, which adds

254 important lessons on how the support of the economy can promote the empowerment of
255 women.

256

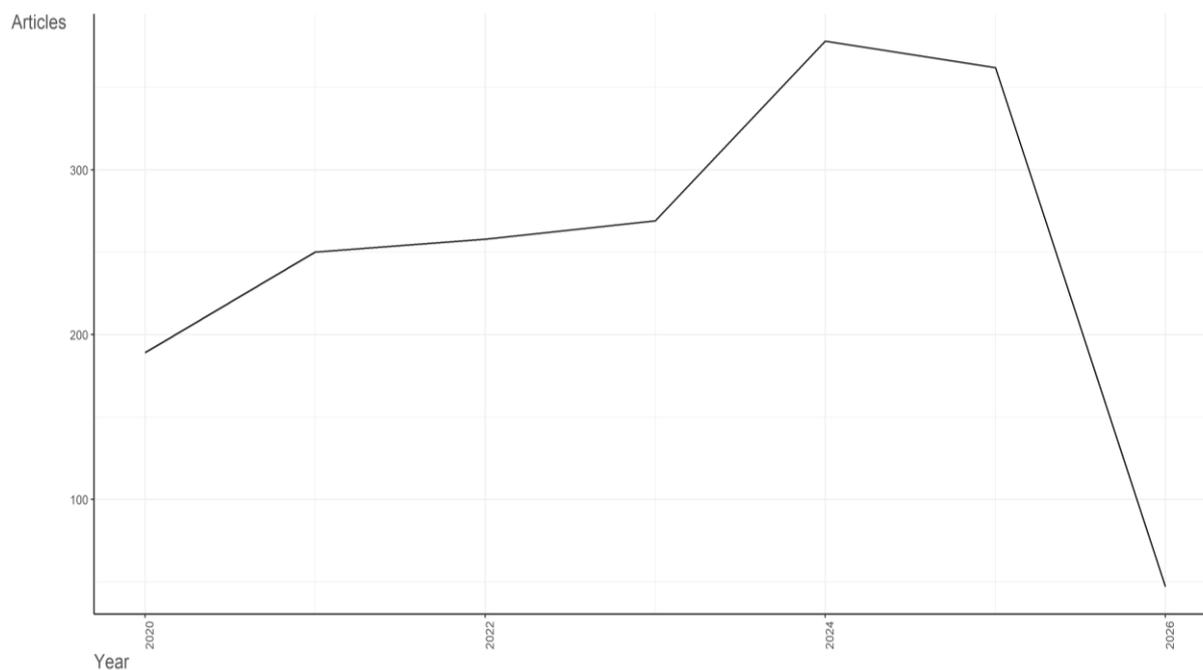
257 *4.1. Performance Analysis*

258 *4.1.1. Publication trend analysis*

259 The graph (*Figure-1*), shows how scientific outputs in the field are produced annually, starting
260 in 2020 or 2026. Taking into consideration the data, it can be concluded that the number of
261 published articles gradually increased between 2020 and 2024, with a significant change of
262 2024. This steep rise indicates a massive churn in research activity at that time perhaps due to
263 a particular occurrence, funding program, or area of research that captured interest in the
264 field. Nevertheless, the graph indicates an extreme drop in publication after 2024, which
265 could possibly indicate the change or a decrease in the scientific output beginning with 2025,
266 which may potentially reflect the shift of the focus of research or the accomplishment of the
267 significant projects.

268 The reduction in scientific output in the years 2024 and beyond is worth exploring. It can
269 indicate various aspects, including the decline in the financing, the decline in the scholarly
270 interest in the subject, or an excessive allocation in the past. The same trend may indicate that
271 the field is becoming saturated or that the scientists are attending more specific or niche
272 fields. The first wave followed by a sudden drop necessitates a further comprehension of the
273 forces behind the patterns in publication and the necessity to continue the research activities
274 to keep the movement going in the area of economic support and the empowerment of
275 women.

276



277

278

Figure-1: Annual publication trend since 2020

279

Source: Researcher own compilation using Bibliometrix R

280

4.1.2. Most relevant sources

281 *Table-2*, brings forward the most impacting journals in the area of women empowerment and
 282 economic aid with *PLOS ONE* top in the list containing 69 articles and *World Development*
 283 with 51 articles and *Sustainability (Switzerland)* with 47 articles in the rank. The journals
 284 play a significant role in the discourse in the academic field given that they are the main ones
 285 that publish research pertaining to the subject. This information indicates that the literature in
 286 the field is being actively published in high-impact, multidisciplinary journals and *PLOS*
 287 *ONE* is one among them. This is a sign that the subject has attracted the interest of various
 288 research disciplines, including social sciences, sustainability and development studies.

289 The fact that journals have become more prevalent such as *World Development* and
 290 *Sustainability (SWITZERLAND)* highlights that the aspect of economic support and women
 291 empowerment intersects with the rest of the general development of the world. The
 292 dissemination of articles in these sources indicates that gender empowerment has been
 293 incorporated into the development studies, environmental sustainability, and social sciences.
 294 This variety in publishing sources implies the existence of the multidimensionality of women
 295 empowerment studies and its applicability to the current policy debates on the worldwide
 296 level. Nevertheless, the domination of limited number of journals also indicates knowledge
 297 concentration, which may be accompanied by the lack of such research areas as alternatives
 298 and region-specific, as well as by niche research. Future studies ought to be in a bid to
 299 diversify the publication outlets and having a larger representation of studies in lesser
 300 mainstream but equally valuable journals.

Table-2: Most relevant sources

Sources	Articles
PLOS ONE	69
WORLD DEVELOPMENT	51
SUSTAINABILITY (SWITZERLAND)	47
JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDIES	33
WOMEN'S STUDIES INTERNATIONAL FORUM	25
SOCIAL SCIENCE AND MEDICINE	21
JOURNAL OF RURAL STUDIES	19
DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE	16
JOURNAL OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES	16
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL ECONOMICS	14
SOCIAL INDICATORS RESEARCH	12
SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES OPEN	12
COGENT SOCIAL SCIENCES	11
HELIYON	11
DISCOVER SUSTAINABILITY	10
FEMINIST ECONOMICS	10
FRONTIERS IN SOCIOLOGY	10
GENDER, WORK AND ORGANIZATION	10
WORLD DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES	10
DEVELOPMENT POLICY REVIEW	9
EMERALD EMERGING MARKETS CASE STUDIES	9
FOOD POLICY	9
JOURNAL OF GENDER STUDIES	9
LAND USE POLICY	9
REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS	9

302 Source: Researcher own compilation using Bibliometrix R

303 4.1.3. Most Relevant Authors

304 Table-3, has identified the top names in the literature of women empowerment and economic
 305 empowerment, of which Agnes R. Quisumbing has published 13 articles followed by Hazel
 306 Jean L. Malapit who published 9 articles. The number of articles fractionalized aids in
 307 evaluating the collaborative aspect of the work, with 3.18 and 1.73 of Quisumbing and Malapit
 308 respectively indicating that they greatly participated in collaborative research. Significant
 309 contributions are also demonstrated by authors such as Jessica Heckert and ElsLecoutere who
 310 have 7 articles each, although their fractionalized values are lower, indicating a weaker
 311 collaboration intensity, at 0.82 and 2.26, respectively. This is an indication of a vibrant
 312 scholarly network in which these authors are so active in group activities to promote
 313 knowledge on economic sustenance and empowerment of the woman.

Table-3: Most relevant Authors

Author	Articles	Articles Fractionalized
QUISUMBING, AGNES R.	13	3.18
MALAPIT, HAZEL JEAN L.	9	1.73
HECKERT, JESSICA	7	0.82

LECOUTERE, ELS	7	2.26
SEYMOUR, GREG	7	0.97
GALIÈ, ALESSANDRA	6	0.87
HODDINOTT, JOHN FREDERICK	6	1.15
MARTINEZ, ELENA M.	6	0.74
MEINZEN-DICK, RUTH S.	6	0.99
ROY, SHALINI	6	0.83

315

Source: Researcher own compilation using Bibliometrix R

316 The presence of several authors who have comparatively large numbers of articles suggests
317 the presence of critical individuals behind the research agenda in this discipline.
318 Nevertheless, the count fractionalization shows the significance of cooperative research in
319 this field that could result in a more varied range of opinions. Although few individuals
320 authors are identified as core to the literature, additional research on the number of citation
321 and influence of the authors would shed further light on the influence of the authors. On the
322 whole, this set of data reveals the interdisciplinary character of the field, as various authors
323 are involved in the formation of the discourse, and shows how these key researchers have
324 contributed to the advancement of the discussion on economic support of women
325 empowerment.

326

327 4.1.4. Most cited documents

328 *Table-4*, gives the information on the most widely used documents in the area, the title, the
329 DOI, the number of citations, the number of citations per year (TC per Year), and also
330 normalized total citations (Normalized TC). As an illustration, the article by Abou-Shouk
331 MA (2021) in the Journal Tourism Management Perspectives has been cited 139 times, a
332 citation rate of 23.17 per year and a normalized citation count of 7.99. Likewise, Raman R
333 (2022) published in Sustainability has 129 citations with a higher citation rate of 25.8 a year
334 and a normalized citation count of 10.06 meaning that it is still quite relevant. The impact of
335 citation is also significant in other papers such as the article by Chatterjee S (2020) and
336 Kumar N (2021), but with different yearly citation rates.

337 The data shows that the impact of some publications on the field is significant, especially the
338 ones that have a large number of total citations and high rates of citation. The normalized
339 total citations give an understanding of the relevance and influence of such papers in the
340 academic sphere over the long term. An additional insight into the constant interest in the
341 work is demonstrated by papers such as Raman R (2022), as the number of citations
342 normalized is more significant. This indicates that, besides being influential, these studies
343 still inform the present day research. Altogether, the list of articles proves that the chosen
344 documents had a considerable influence, some of which are still active and guide the
345 discussion on women empowerment and economic assistance, becoming the indispensable
346 sources in the field.

Table-4: Most Global cited documents

Paper	DOI	Total Citations	TC per Year	Normalized TC
ABOU-SHOUK MA, 2021, TOUR MANAGE PERSPECT	10.1016/j.tmp.2020.100782	139	23.17	7.99
RAMAN R, 2022, SUSTAINABILITY	10.3390/su14159160	129	25.80	10.06
CHATTERJEE S, 2020, TECHNOL FORECAST SOC CHANGE	10.1016/j.techfore.2020.120236	124	17.71	6.28
KUMAR N, 2021, WORLD DEV	10.1016/j.worlddev.2021.105579	122	20.33	7.01
ACOSTA M, 2020, J DEV STUD	10.1080/00220388.2019.1650169	110	15.71	5.57
ANNAN J, 2021, WORLD DEV	10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.105292	94	15.67	5.40
KABEER N, 2020, FEM ECON	10.1080/13545701.2020.1743338	94	13.43	4.76
DAHLUM S, 2022, WORLD DEV	10.1016/j.worlddev.2022.105822	93	18.60	7.25
KASSIE M, 2020, FOOD POLICY	10.1016/j.foodpol.2020.101957	91	13.00	4.61
HASSAN MK, 2021, GLOBAL FINANC J	10.1016/j.gfj.2021.100651	89	14.83	5.11
KIM K, 2022, J GENDER STUD	10.1080/09589236.2021.1884536	88	17.60	6.86
ELSHAER IA, 2021, TOUR MANAGE PERSPECT	10.1016/j.tmp.2021.100815	86	14.33	4.94
DUVENDACK M, 2020, J ECON SURV	10.1111/joes.12367	86	12.29	4.36
NJUKI J, 2022, GLOBAL FOOD SECUR	10.1016/j.gfs.2022.100622	82	16.40	6.39
MCGAVOCK T, 2021, J DEV ECON	10.1016/j.jdeveco.2020.102580	80	13.33	4.60
OPOKU EEO, 2021, TECHNOL FORECAST SOC CHANGE	10.1016/j.techfore.2021.121121	77	12.83	4.43
TANIMA FA, 2020, ACCOUNT ORGAN SOC	10.1016/j.aos.2020.101141	76	10.86	3.85
RUDHUMBU N, 2020, J INTL EDU BUS	10.1108/JIEB-12-2019-0058	75	10.71	3.80
PORTER G, 2020, INF TECHNOL DEV	10.1080/02681102.2019.1622500	73	10.43	3.70
AKHTER J, 2020, SUSTAINABILITY	10.3390/su12062275	71	10.14	3.60
QUISUMBING A, 2021, FOOD POLICY	10.1016/j.foodpol.2020.102001	70	11.67	4.02
DICKIN S, 2021, WORLD DEV	10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.105158	70	11.67	4.02
DEWITT S, 2023, J FAM BUS MANAG	10.1108/JFBM-01-2022-0013	69	17.25	7.62
PAL M, 2022, EQUAL DIVERSITY INCL	10.1108/EDI-04-2021-0113	69	13.80	5.38
KRISHNAPRIYA PP, 2021, ENERGY ECON	10.1016/j.eneco.2021.105456	69	11.50	3.97

Source: Researcher own compilation using Bibliometrix R

351

352 4.2. Scientific mapping

353 4.2.1. Co-authorship network

354 *Figure-2*, symbolizes a co-authorship network of the main researchers in the sphere of female
 355 empowerment and economic assistance. Here, the main node is the name of the author Agnes
 356 R. Quisumbing who is a leading figure in the field with all of her regular collaborators around
 357 her, including Greg Seymour, Ruth S. MeinzenDick and so forth. The nodes are marked
 358 using color codes that represent various groups of collaboration with the nodes that are
 359 closely related depicting close co-authorship relationships. As an example, the red group
 360 around Quisumbing indicates a good research network, which implies that there is a lot of
 361 cooperation in publishing and research development. The dissemination of nodes with
 362 different colors demonstrates that the study of this subject is very collaborative, which
 363 involves scholars in different parts and institutions.

364 The presence of authors in the network brings out several prominent clusters of research with
 365 some authors such as Jessica Heckert and ElsLecoutere constituting their smaller but equally
 366 interconnected groups with others such as Ruth S. Meinzen-Dick and Greg Seymour possibly
 367 making connections with a larger group of collaborators. This trend highlights diversity but
 368 interdependence of research on the topic. The fact that it is all centralized around Quisumbing
 369 and others who work with her implies that they have a significant role to play in determining
 370 the outcome of the academic discourse. It is an example of co-authorship network
 371 visualization that indicates the interdisciplinary and collaborative aspect of research in
 372 economic support and women empowerment whereby an author often collaborates with other
 373 authors in research across the regions and different research topics in order to enhance
 374 knowledge of the research field.

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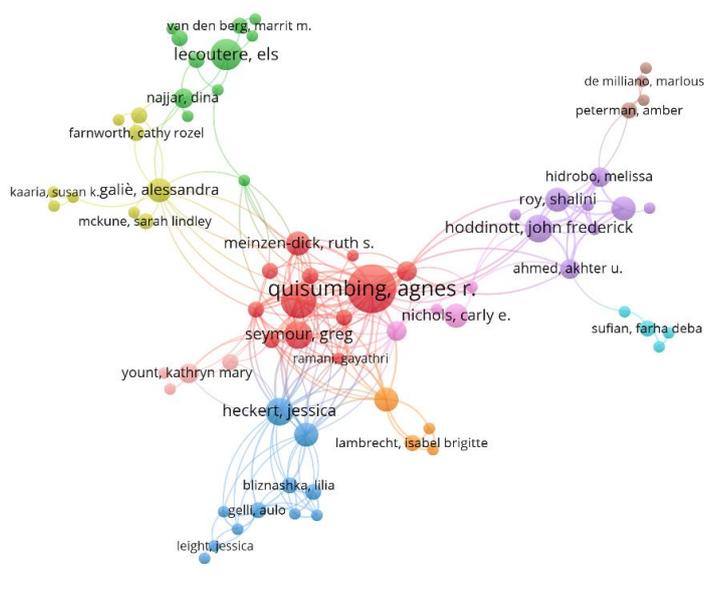


Figure-2: Co-authorship network

384

Source: Researcher own compilation using VOSviewer

385

4.2.2. The bibliographic coupling

386 The bibliographic coupling map (Figure-3), shows how closely a document is intellectually
 387 related with other documents via the shared references. The bigger nodes, including Kumar
 388 (2021), Acosta (2020), Dickin (2021), and Abou-Shouk (2021) are in the central nodes and
 389 this implies that they have high reference overlap and a strong level of coupling. This implies
 390 that these works are based on a shared theoretical and empirical base and belong to a research
 391 stream in the field. The thick congestion of the years 2020-2022 reflects the time of
 392 conceptual solidification, when numerous works develop on the same basis of references and
 393 strengthen the prevailing paradigms on empowerment, development, and economic inclusion.

394 More recent publications (2023-2024) seem to be better connected, either signifying new
 395 subthemes or theoretical grounding. The distribution of publication year color gradient
 396 indicates a time progression, with earlier research providing the structural basis of the
 397 network and the subsequent ones extending or branching out of existing clusters. In general,
 398 the map suggests that the field is characterized by average intellectual cohesion (based on a
 399 pre-existing body of literature) and, at the same time, tends to diversify thematic (with new
 400 studies adding different points of view and specialization).

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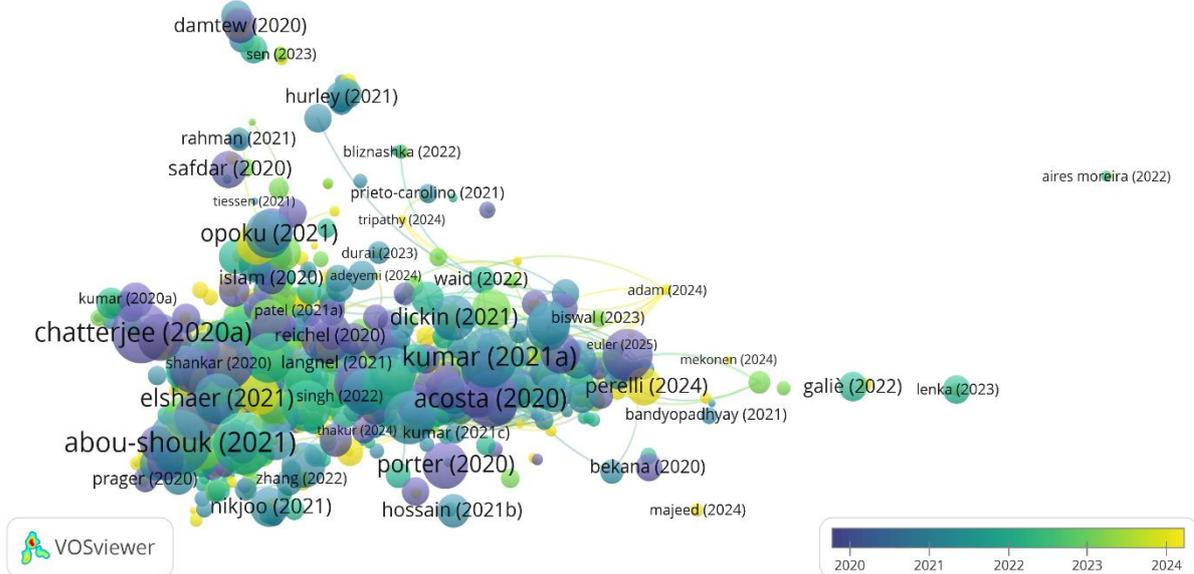
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Figure-3: bibliographic coupling

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Source: Researcher own compilation using VOSviewer

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Source: Researcher own compilation using VOSviewer

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447 4.2.4. The co-citation network map

448 The co-citation network map (Figure-5), shows the intellectual cornerstone of the field since it
 449 reveals those authors and works that are co-cited. Dominated central nodes like Kabeer,
 450 Naila, Alkire, Sabina, and Agarwal, Bina, are the participants of the first rank, which means
 451 that they form the basis of theoretical and conceptual orientations on women empowerment.
 452 Their close relationships indicate that the capability theory, resource-agency-achievement
 453 models, and gendered bargaining frameworks constitute a main intellectual framework of the
 454 field. The number of links between these authors is indicative of a solid theoretical
 455 foundation that informs the empirical and policy focused research. Others like Alsina,
 456 Anderson, and Abramsky are all pointers to the amalgamation of the economies, social
 457 norms, and gender-based violence interpretations into the empowerment discourse.

458 The different clusters denote thematic division in the field. The first cluster focuses on
 459 measurement and multidimensional indices of empowerment, the second on economic and
 460 financial indices, and the third one on social and institutional ones like norms and intra-
 461 household dynamics. Methodological consolidation is manifested in the existence of journals
 462 such as the Journal of Finance and Accounting and publications that deal with measurement
 463 approaches. In general, the network Buysse et al. (2016) may be viewed as having good
 464 intellectual cohesion based on a small circle of pioneering scholars, as well as intellectual
 465 extension to interdisciplinary areas. This proves that it is a conceptually mature field that is
 466 structurally integrated, but with definite theoretical foundations compatible with systematic
 467 empirical diversification.

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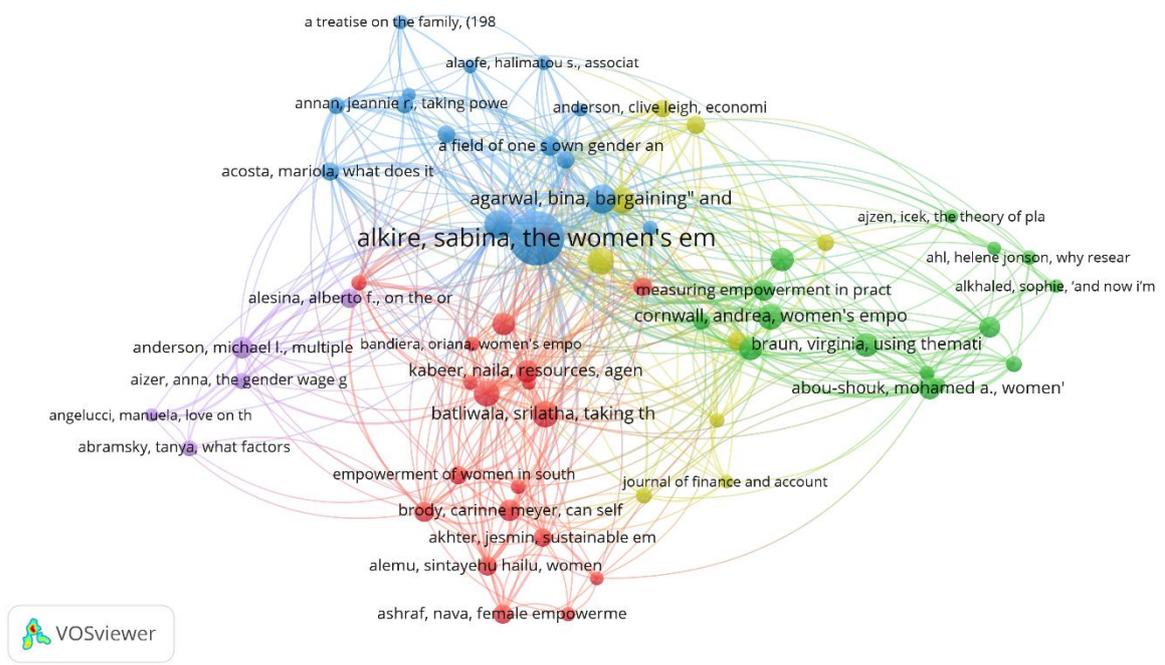
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Figure-5: Co-citation network

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Source: Researcher own compilation using VOSviewer

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4.2.5. Thematic map

480 The thematic map (Figure-6), organizes the themes in research based on their centrality
 481 (relevance) and density (development) into four quadrants, which are Motor Themes, Basic
 482 Themes, Niche Themes, and Emerging/Declining Themes. Some of the core terms used in
 483 this visualization include: empowerment, women empowerment, women status and the terms
 484 are found in the lower-left quadrant, where they are low density and low centrality. Such a
 485 location indicates that these themes are also basic and common themes, but they are not
 486 structurally developed at the present time into highly coherent subfields. Their disposition
 487 was an indication of conceptual breadth and a lack of thematic specialization, indicating a
 488 generalized use, and not a tight theoretical specialization.

489 On the other hand, such terms like female, human and article are located in the quadrant of
 490 Motor Themes with high centrality and high density. This suggests that social-centered and
 491 gender-oriented empirical studies are the impetus to the field, and are well-elaborated and
 492 associated with other themes. The lack of good clusters in the Niche and Basic quadrants
 493 would indicate the low level of specialization and development of transversal themes. In
 494 general, the map suggests an area that is based on general empowerment discourse but is
 495 operationally informed by more practical, people-centred studies with room to consolidate its
 496 concepts further and develop them theoretically.

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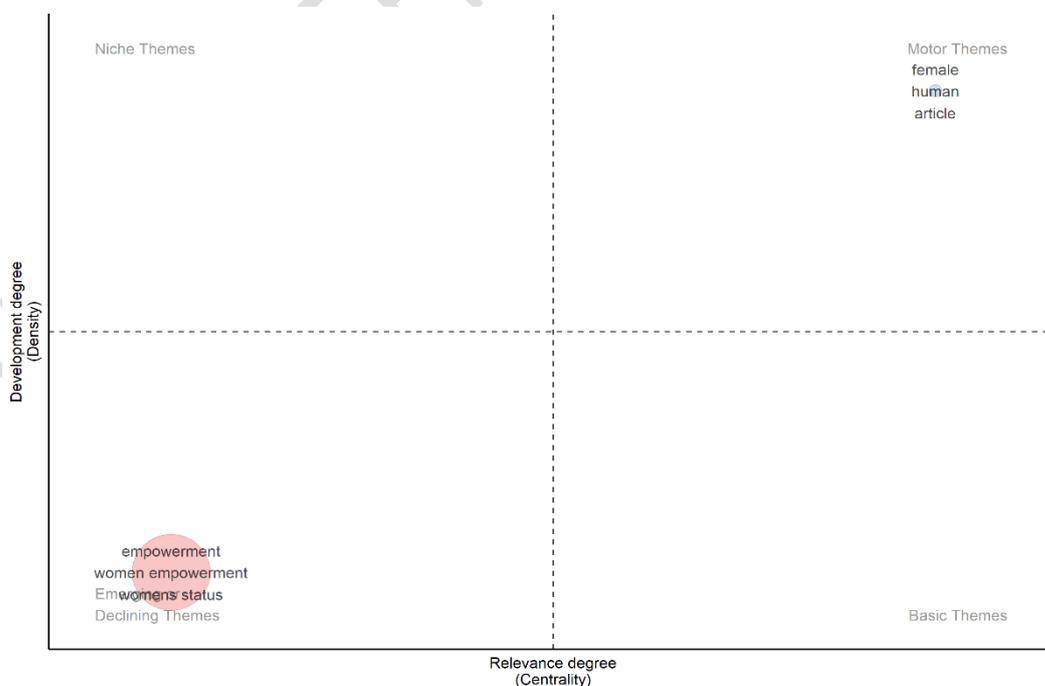


Figure-6: Thematic map

508 *Source: Researcher own compilation using own compilation using Bibliometrix R*

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510 *4.2.6. Global collaboration network*

511 Global collaboration network (*Figure-7*), shows the network of world research in the area of
512 women empowerment and economic support with emphasis made on the level of publications
513 and the linkages between countries by co-authorship. The darker countries like the United
514 States, India, Australia, China, and the United Kingdom show that there is greater research
515 output whereas the thick blue connecting lines are used to depict collaborating relationships.
516 The United States is seen to be a leading hub with far-reaching connections in Europe, Asia,
517 Africa, and Oceania with high centrality in research partnerships on the globe. India and
518 Australia also become important nodes, which can be seen as the active participation in the
519 cross-continental cooperation, especially with the Asian and African nations.

520 The geographic distribution shows that there is a North-South and South-South pattern of
521 collaboration particularly between South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and developed Western
522 countries. The South African countries and the East African states are observed to be visibly
523 integrated into the world net, indicating that African countries have become more active in
524 empowerment oriented development research. Nevertheless, there is still a high concentration
525 of collaboration within groups of a small group of countries with output, and this implies
526 structural asymmetry in the production of global knowledge. All in all, the map illustrates a
527 globally interrelated yet a hierarchically structured system of research where a limited
528 number of central countries set the pace of the coordination process but emerging economies
529 add more and more to the collaborative environment.

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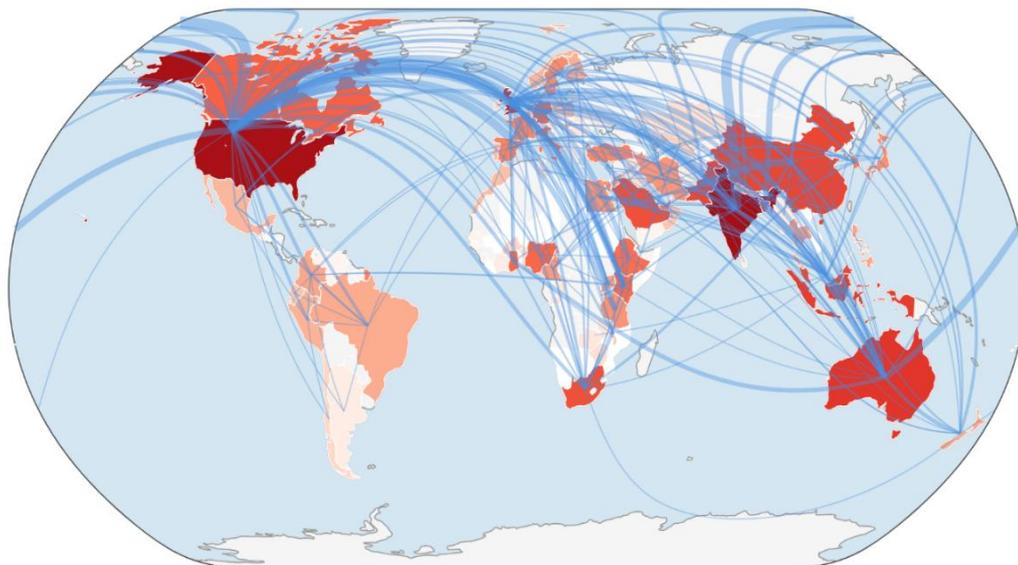


Figure-7: Global collaboration network

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Source: Researcher own compilation using own compilation using Bibliometrix R

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5. Discussion

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This bibliometric study offers a complex analysis of the intellectual, conceptual and structural development on research on economic support in the development of women empowerment. The analysis of the performance shows a significant increase in the scientific production in 202024, and then a stabilization period, which suggests the rapid thematization. The cumulative growth curve has validated the idea that most of the articles had been published in a comparatively short time, which is an indication of deepened academic interest and commitment to international development goals like the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations [UN], 2015). Such a trend is typical of the research areas that have witnessed policy-related momentum and increased international funding facilitation (Kabeer, 1999; Duflo, 2012).

553

The recognition of the most dominating journals, influential authors and most noted documents indicates a structurally unified interdisciplinary area. The theoretical bases of empowerment are established by such core contributors as Kabeer and Alkire based on the models of capability and multidimensional (Alkire, 2005; Kabeer, 1999; Sen, 1999). The co-citation network substantiates the superiority of the resource-agency-achievement paradigms and bargaining models in the development of the empirical study (Agarwal, 1997; Kabeer, 1999). Meanwhile, IP-based studies show that bibliographic coupling analysis reveals intellectual clustering relative to development economics, microfinance, and human-focused sustainability research, which implies that it has a predominant empirical orientation.

562

The co-occurrence mapping of keywords indicates that such words as empowerment, women empowerment, and microfinance are still core nodes, which supports the primary connection between financial inclusion and agency enhancement (Pitt and Khandker, 1998; Duflo, 2012). Nevertheless, thematic growth in the areas of health, agriculture, social norms and gender-based violence is an indicator of growing multidimensionalization. The location of the empowerment-related concepts in thematic map shows that the conceptual breadth is realized in emergent/consolidating quadrants, which implies the lack of conceptual depth in specific subfields. This implies that even though empowerment discourse is extensively taken up, it still needs more refinements in terms of theoretical details and methodological advancement.

571

Analysis of country collaboration shows a network of globalized research that is hierarchical. The United States, India, Australia, and the United Kingdom are major centers, where cross-continental relationships are made. The emergence of higher engagement of the Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia is an indicator that knowledge production is becoming more inclusive. However, structural asymmetries cannot be eliminated because high-income nations preserve the dominance of coordination. This trend fits a wider trend of the research imbalance in the world concerning development-related studies (World Bank, 2020).

577

578 In general, the results show that the industry has moved to consolidation. It is founded on the
579 previously established empowerment theories and is being empirically diversified in terms of
580 sectors and regions. The next problem is the problem of further integration of theory and the
581 increase in interdisciplinary synthesis.

582 *Future Research Directions*

583 There are three strategic directions that should be considered in future research. *To begin*
584 *with*, the concept of theoretically combining capability theory with bargaining models and
585 intersectionality frameworks is not yet developed. Better concept synthesis would enhance
586 explanatory strength and policy implications (Alkire, 2005; Sen, 1999).

587 *Second*, there is need to have methodological innovation. Although quantitative impact
588 analysis controls the literature, a mixed-method and longitudinal design is required that can
589 describe dynamic empowerment in the process, and intrahousehold negotiations as time
590 moves on. New possibilities of analyzing the data precisely appear due to emerging digital
591 data and geospatial analytics.

592 *Third*, geographic diversification will have to be intensified. Though both South Asia and
593 Sub-Saharan Africa are sufficiently represented, Latin America, Middle East and fragile-state
594 contexts have been relatively under-articulated. Moreover, studies must extend to other areas
595 other than economic indicators to environmental sustainability, digital inclusion and
596 intersections of climate vulnerability.

597 *Lastly*, altmetrics and policy citation tracking should be implemented in future bibliometric
598 studies to determine the impact of science beyond the academia.

599

600 **6. Conclusion**

601 This research paper presented a systematic mapping of the intellectual framework, thematic
602 development and joint roles of research on economic support and empowerment of women.
603 The results show a discipline that is experiencing a fast growth, theoretical convergence, and
604 interdisciplinary differentiation. Themes of integration with health, sustainability and social
605 norm change are emerging based on the foundational frameworks that are based on capability
606 theory and agency theory, even though they still influence empirical inquiry.

607 Although there has been an increase in the global collaboration, there still exists structural
608 asymmetry in the production of knowledge. The trend shows a cumulative growth, which is
609 maturation as there is a shift between expansion and consolidation. Theoretical enrichment,
610 diversification of methods and the integration of international collaboration will have to be
611 sustained in the future. One of the main pillars of empowerment discourse is economic
612 support, but in the future, its influence can only be determined by the integration of
613 multidimensions and new policy alignment.

614

615 *Practical Implications*

616 The results present a number of implications to policy-makers, funding organizations and
617 development workers. *To begin with*, microfinance and financial inclusion are the most
618 dominant in the literature, which validates their central role in the empowerment strategies.
619 There has been a growing integration with health, agriculture and social protection areas,
620 however, bibliometric evidence points in this direction. Multidimensional program designs
621 (financial access, social norm transformation, education, and institutional reform) should thus
622 be adapted by policy makers (Agarwal, 2018; UN Women, 2017).

623 *Second*, the research network is organized in a collaborative way, which implies that the
624 cross-national collaborations contribute to the spread of knowledge. South-South and North-
625 South research partnerships need to be reinforced by international entities in order to deal
626 with contextual diversity in empowerment delivery. The structural imbalances in knowledge
627 production may be minimized through funding mechanisms that focus on fair partnerships.

628 *Third*, the maturation process that is experienced in the cumulative growth curve suggests a
629 declining marginal innovation in conventional microfinance systems. To maintain
630 programmatic efficacy in the changing socio-economic contexts, practitioners are to put more
631 emphasis on digital financial inclusion, climate-resilient livelihoods, and intersectional
632 models of empowerment.

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