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Digital Risk Management and Client Protection in Microfinance Institutions: Exploratory Data from Cameroon

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Abstract: This study examines the digital risks affecting client protection within second-tier microfinance institutions (MFIs) in Cameroon, against the backdrop of the rapid growth of mobile money. While digitalization promotes financial inclusion, it also creates significant operational and cybersecurity challenges. Using an interpretive qualitative approach, a thematic analysis conducted in NVivo 12 of 19 semi-structured interviews with MFI executives highlights five key factors: data confidentiality is the most critical factor, followed by authentication methods, encryption techniques, information disclosure, and institutional responsiveness. The results confirm the theoretical relevance of Moor's model of confidentiality and resource dependence theory, while underscoring the urgent need to establish a rigorous framework for information security governance in Cameroon.

Keywords: Digital Risk, Financial Crime, Financial Innovation, Customers Protection, Mobile Money

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