UNIFIED PAYMENT INTERFACE (UPI)- A REVOLUTION TOWARDS CASHLESS PAYMENT

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ABSTRACT

In the era of digitalization and technological advancement, technology has become an integral partof our life. Technology is a major factor in shapingthe new global economy and producing rapidchanges in society. In the past decade, newtechnology has fundamentally changed the waypeople communicate and work. It is a well-known factthat digital India is the outcome of many innovationsand technological advancements. These transform thelives of people in many ways and will empower thesociety in a better manner."Your phone is your wallet," *said Bill Gates in 1996. It* *sounded right out of the soon-to-be launched Harry Potter fantasy-fiction series!.Payment systems in India have undergone rapid changes during the past few years. The Vision Document on Payment Systems released by the Reserve Bank of India states several measures for building a 'less cash' society. The adoptions of mobile and card payment systems are two key components of this initiative. This paper highlights a drastic change in mode of payment system. The aim of the Research is to study UPI Payment System and it also tries to explore its key features, how UPI becomes a secure platform of transaction over cash payment.UPI has played a vital role in developing India into cashless economy.*

KEYWORDS : *E-wallet, mobile banking, one touch payment, user friendly apps.*

1. INTRODUCTION
UNIFIED PAYMENTSINTERFACE

UPI, expanded as Unified Payments Interface, is gaining popularity and is becoming one of the most preferred methods of digital transactions in India. There are many apps that provide users this facility and apart from this, many banks have tied up with UPI and customers can use this platform through bank apps as well. UPI is being offered by many chat platforms and mobile wallets in the market.

UPI is a digital payment system through which a user can both send and receive money through a Virtual Payment Address (VPA). The money will be directly debited from the customer's bank account. UPI or Unified Payments Interface is an immediate real-time payment system that helps in instantly transferring the funds between the two bank accounts through a mobile platform. Hence, UPI is a concept that allows multiple bank accounts to get into a single mobile application. This idea was developed by the National Payments Corporation of India and is controlled by the RBI and IBA (Indian Bank Association).

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II.KEY FEATURES OF UPI
Some of the features of UPI are listed below:
- Instant transfer of fund through Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) which is faster than NEFT.
- Since it is completely digital, one can use UPI 24 hours and on all public holidays.
- Single mobile application for accessing various bank accounts.
- Uses Virtual Payment Address which is a unique ID as given by the bank.
- Uses Account Number with IFS Code and Mobile Number with MMID or Mobile Money Identifier.
- MPIN or Mobile Banking Personal Identification number is required to confirm each payment.
- Also available on USSD service where users can use the service just by dialing *99# and choose the services like fund transfer, send money, request money, non-financial services, balance Enquiry, change MPIN etc. (Service charge of ?0.50 is applicable)
- Every bank provides its own UPI for different platforms of Android, Windows, and IOS. The banks or may not charge for the UPI service.
- Bill Sharing facility.
- Best for doing merchant payment, utility bill payments, in-app payments, OTC payments, Barcode based payments.
- One can file a complaint from Mobile App directly.

III. WHAT MAKES UPI A SECURE PLATFORM
UPI is a unique payment system that lets you link your bank account to a mobile application and make transactions safely using just the UPI ID of the receiver. The transfer is direct to and from your bank account, making it the perfect way to send and receive money in these testing times.

UPI is one of the most secure platforms for cashless transactions and is supported by certain safety features, like:
1. Your mobile number is verified during the registration. It attaches your bank account to your number, making it a point of identification. If your phone gets lost, you can block this number as a safety net against identity threats. If you change your number, you will have to re-initiate the verification all over again.
2. You need to set up a 4 or 6-digit UPI PIN which will need to be entered for each transaction. This UPI PIN should not be shared with anyone, and that way, you can prevent someone else from making a transaction using the UPI app on your phone.

So, while the platform provides a safe and secure environment to keep your money safe, it also places immense power in the hands of its users, with the ability to keep themselves safe.For accessing the UPI service, the users need to create a Virtual Payment Address or VPA of their choice. They need to link the VPA to their bank account. This VPA becomes the users' financial address and they need not remember the details like beneficiary account number, IFSC codes, or net banking user id and password for sending or receiving money. This virtual address of the customer for Pull & Push helps in creating an additional security. The customer need not punch in these details over again and there is no credential sharing.

IV. UPI PAYMENT APP
UPI, expanded as Unified Payments Interface, is gaining popularity and is becoming one of the most preferred methods of digital transactions in India. There are many apps that provide users this facility and apart from this, many banks have tied up with UPI and customers can use this platform through bank apps as well. UPI is being offered by many chat platforms and mobile wallets in the market.

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Apps with UPI Feature in India
Below is the list of App that provides UPI Feature:
A. PhonePe:-
This is one of the most popular payment apps that allows users to transact using the UPI interface. This is considered to be one among the most preferred apps for UPI. The app was founded in 2015 and is powered by Yes Bank.
B. Paytm:-
This mobile wallet app company has also collaborated with the UPI platform to provide customers the facility to transact and transfer funds in an easier manner. Customers can add money into their Paytm wallets with the UPI ID. Along with other payments options such as debit/credit card, net banking, etc., UPI is also one among them. Customers can also initiate collect money requests through Paytm with UPI. After the remitter accepts the payment request, the money is added to the Paytm wallet.
C. BHIM App:_
The BHIM (Bharat Interface for Money) app has been developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). This app is known for its simplicity. It also offers a very secure interface. The payment interface comes with all the essential features and is known for its good user experience. Funds transfers can be initiated either through VPA, QR code or bank account number and IFSC Code.
D. MobiKwik :-
This Indian payments network also joined the UPI interface. All Mobikwik customers can use UPI to add money into their wallet. They already provided various services such as fund transfer using debit/credit card, net banking, cash pickup and cash deposit. The e-wallet service provider also has tied-up with various e-commerce merchants.
E. Google Tez :-
Launched by technology giant Google, the Tez app is one of the other apps that will provide customers the facility of using UPI. What makes this app different is that it is available in many Indian languages such as Telugu, Tamil, Marathi, Kannada, Gujarati, Bengali, and Hindi.
F. Uber :-
Now, Uber has included UPI as one of the modes of payment. You can pay for your Uber rides with this interface.
G. SBI Pay :-
This is a State Bank of India (SBI) app that is specially built for UPI requirements. The main advantage of this app is that even those who do not hold an account in SBI can use the app to send and receive money using a VPA. The app is very simple to use and one can easily register for the service after downloading the app.
H. iMobile :-
The UPI interface can be used through the iMobile and Pockets app offered by ICICI Bank. The app can be downloaded from Google Play store. To send money through this app, you have to go to the 'Funds Transfer' option and click on the UPI method.
I. Axis Pay:-
Axis Bank is one of the other banks that has launched a UPI enabled platform for its customers. This comes with a very user-friendly interface and various other features.

V. CONCLUSION
Several structural and technological challenges such as cyber-frauds, transaction costs, communication infrastructure, awareness and adoption need to be overcome to bring about the true realization of the potential for cashless economy. Besides thistransactions under Unified Payments Interface hit a record high of 456 crores in December 2021 surpassing the earlier high of 421 crore seen in October 2021. The total value of transactions in December was also a new record at Rs 8.27 lakh crore.

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In calendar 2021, there were 3800 crore UPI transactions amounting to Rs 73 lakh crore. The National Payments Corporation of India, which runs the UPI platform, expects the volume to hit one billion a day when the Reserve Bank of India operationalises the use of UPI wallet for low-value offline transactions. This will enable payments to be made without putting pressure on the core banking system of banks.

On Mar 08, 2022:Reserve Bank of India launches (a) UPI for Feature Phones (UPI123pay) and (b) 24x7 Helpline for Digital Payments (DigiSaathi).

The Reserve Bank has launched two key initiatives today – (1) UPI123Pay – Option to make Unified Payments Interface (UPI) payments for feature phone users, and (2) DigiSaathi - a 24x7 Helpline to address the queries of digital payment users across products. While launching the two initiatives, RBI Governor Shri Shaktikanta Das highlighted the importance of these initiatives in enhancing the diversity, utility and transformational power of digital innovations in the country. These initiatives will further deepen the digital ecosystem and financial inclusion. The Governor also stated that the RBI stands committed to providing an enabling environment for this. Hence,the UPI payments has played a vital role to change mode of payment system and also system has cut across the Indian socio-economic digital divide amazingly.

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