

Balancing separateness and jointness of money in relationships: The design of bank accounts in Australia and India

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Abstract. Personal bank accounts are an important way of signaling the separation, ownership, control and management of money. They are however a blunt instrument for balancing the separateness and jointness of money in relationships. This paper draws on the author's research on money and banking in Australia and India to describe the ways in which middle-income urban families in Australia and India use bank accounts in personal relationships. The paper points to ways that bank account holders can retain control by setting the limits to which information and money in the account can be shared with a designated person for a set time limit. It is submitted that having this partial shared account, together with existing personal accounts, will fit social practice, and help reflect the changing balance of separateness and jointness of money across a person's life stage.