Fintech Adoption and Financial Inclusion in Nigeria: Trends, Patterns, and Emerging Dynamics

Cornelius Babatope Adewoye

University of Lagos

DOI: https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.1015EC0066

Received: 08 June 2026; Accepted: 13 June 2026; Published: 29 June 2026

ABSTRACT

Financial technology (FinTech) has revolutionized the way financial services are delivered and used in Nigeria, opening new opportunities for financial access and participation. Although the growth is observed, there are concerns that financial inclusion levels are not fully achieved and adoption rates of key digital financial channels in the country. The trends and patterns of FinTech adoption and financial inclusion in Nigeria were studied and the major FinTech channels that showed the highest level of FinTech adoption from 2018 to 2024 were identified. This study employed descriptive research design and secondary data sources were sourced from Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Electronic Payment Statistics and Access to Financial Services (A2F) Revised 2023 Dataset. The analysis of the data was done by descriptive statistical techniques such as frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations and trend analysis.

The results showed significant uptake of FinTech in the study period, in particular the Mobile App and Point of Sale (POS) channels. Mobile App transactions had the highest average transaction value (ATV) of ₦96.84 trillion while POS transactions came in at ₦38.87 trillion. Consumers continued to use ATM and USSD transactions but with comparatively lower adoption. The study also revealed that about 70.5% of Nigerian adults had access to one or more financial service; 29.5% were financially excluded. The main channel of financial inclusion was the formal banking systems, which reached 50.4% of the adult population.

The findings of the study show that there has been substantial increase in DFS uptake and financial inclusion in Nigeria. But high levels of financial exclusion reveal the need to tailor policy interventions to promote access to digital financial services for financially excluded target groups. The study urges further investment in digital payment systems, financial education initiatives, and inclusive financial policies to enhance the financial participation and promote sustainable financial sector growth.

Keywords: FinTech Adoption, Financial Inclusion, Digital Finance, Transactions via Mobile App, POS Transactions, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

The global financial sector has been revolutionized over the past two decades, largely as a result of the swift development and usage of financial technology (FinTech). The mobile money platforms, digital wallets, point-of-sale (POS) systems, and services through USSD have become effective means of providing financial services, especially in developing economies where traditional banking systems are not widely accessible. These technologies have decreased the costs of transactions, lowered the barriers to inclusion, and allowed people who were excluded in the past to join the financial system (Mashoene, 2025; Goswami, 2025). Financial inclusion has therefore become part of the mainstream of global development agendas and is considered as one of the key enablers of poverty reduction, economic empowerment and sustainable development.

As the most populous country and the largest economy in Africa, Nigeria is an interesting country for examining the intersection of FinTech adoption and financial inclusion. Nigeria has historically been a predominantly cash-based economy with financial exclusion rates remaining high and has made significant strides in the growth of digital financial services in recent years. This has provided an enabling environment for FinTech growth in the

country, owing to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) cashless policy to promote cash-based transactions, the launch of the Nigeria Inter-Bank Settlement System (NIBSS), and the various national financial inclusion strategies. Together with high penetration of mobile phones and growing Internet access, these initiatives have given a boost to electronic payment transactions. CBN records showed that e-payment transaction volumes have increased dramatically from 2018 to 2025 and in some cases, transactions conducted using the Point of Service (POS) machines have increased by triple-digit percentages (CBN, 2025). The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated this rapid digitisation, as the pandemic has driven consumer behaviour towards contactless and remote financial services.

Notwithstanding these achievements, there is still some level of financial inclusion in Nigeria that remains incomplete and is unevenly spread. Although there is a high level of formal financial inclusion (around 57%, or as revised in some estimates, higher), there still exists a large segment of adults, especially women, rural residents, and those with low incomes, who depend on informal financial mechanisms, or are completely unbanked (EFInA, 2023). Non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs), including FinTech firms, are filling this gap more and more, and their share of formal inclusion has grown significantly from 2020 to 2023. But there are also key differences in demographic and geographic adoption patterns: Younger, urban, and tech-savvy populations are more likely to use FinTech services, while older adults, women, and those in rural or remote areas may encounter ongoing challenges with the adoption of FinTech services, such as digital literacy, trust, infrastructure, and product design (Uzoegbunam, 2025).

With the changing dynamics of Nigeria's FinTech sector, the need for ongoing analysis is highlighted. One side of the coin is the innovations that are pushing the lines of inclusion, including agent banking networks, embedded finance, open banking frameworks and the increasing adoption of artificial intelligence in credit scoring and customer service. One side of the coin is innovations that continue to push the lines of inclusion further, including agent banking networks, embedded finance, open banking frameworks and the increasing use of artificial intelligence in credit scoring and customer service. Digital diaspora remittances have also significantly increased, enhancing household resilience and foreign exchange earnings. However, the sector is also grappling with several emerging pressures such as increased cybercrime, the privacy of data, uncertainty with regulations, and the potential for over-leveraging by new customers of digital credit products. The landscape is complex and dynamic, with the link between financial inclusion and FinTech adoption not necessarily linear or consistent.

To be aware of these trends, patterns and dynamics is thus timely and necessary. In Nigeria, the existing literature on FinTech and financial inclusion has focused on various aspects of FinTech and financial inclusion in the country, but most of the studies have been based on data before the latest digital push and regulatory changes. A thorough examination of existing trends in adoption, demographic and geographic differences, and the relationship between technological innovation and inclusion outcomes could be useful to inform policy, regulatory, financial service providers, and development partners. This is crucial to inform the development of strategies to maximise the inclusive potential of FinTech while minimising its risks.

This study aims to fill this gap by systematically analyzing the trends, patterns, and emerging dynamics of the adoption of FinTech and financial inclusion in Nigeria, utilizing different secondary data and recent empirical evidence.

Statement of the Problem

Financial technology (FinTech) has revolutionized financial services delivery and usage globally, and is growing at a fast pace. The use of digital payment channels including Mobile Apps, Point of Sale (POS) terminals, Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) and Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) platforms have helped drive the digital financial ecosystem in Nigeria. These innovations have improved the convenience, speed and accessibility of financial transactions and the opportunities for financial participation for individuals and businesses.

In spite of the impressive growth of FinTech services in Nigeria, there are still some questions about the impact of the innovations on financial inclusion across the country. The usage of digital fintech has grown more and more accessible, but a substantial part of the population in Nigeria is still not part of the formal financial system.

This may indicate that increased share of digital financial transactions does not always mean that financial services are being accessed more equitably by all population groups.

Moreover, existing research on FinTech in Nigeria have been mostly on its effect on the economy, performance of the banking sector, customer satisfaction, or financial inclusion with specific technologies or limited data sets. Therefore, a need for newer empirical evidence that will at the same time look at the pattern of financial inclusion, the adoption of major FinTech channels, and the trend in FinTech adoption for the Nigerian context is still present.

The ongoing growth of digital financial service offerings and the ongoing financial exclusion of a significant proportion of the population have made it more pertinent than ever to better understand the changing nature of the link between the adoption of FinTech and financial inclusion. The current study therefore aims to analyse the trend and pattern of FinTech adoption in Nigeria, determine the extent of financial inclusion among Nigerian adults and the major channels of FinTech that have moved into the highest level of adoption in Nigeria from 2018 to 2024.

Purpose of the Study

This study aim to investigate the trends and patterns of FinTech adoption and financial inclusion in Nigeria within the context of the country's rapidly evolving digital financial landscape. As digital financial technologies continue to transform the delivery and utilisation of financial services, there is a growing need to understand the extent to which these innovations have been adopted and how they relate to broader efforts aimed at promoting financial inclusion. The specific objectives are to;

1. Examine the trends and patterns of FinTech adoption in Nigeria.
2. Assess is the level and pattern of financial inclusion among adults in Nigeria.
3. Discuss the rate of adoption of the major channels in FinTech for Nigeria

Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the trends and patterns of FinTech adoption in Nigeria?
2. What is the level and pattern of financial inclusion among adults in Nigeria?
3. What was the rate of adoption of the major channels in FinTech for Nigeria ?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between financial technology (FinTech) and financial inclusion has received significant academic interest in the past few years, especially given the recent strong growth of digital financial services in developing countries. There is an increasing body of literature that looks at how FinTech innovations such as mobile money, digital wallets, point-of-sale (POS) and USSD platforms enable access to formal financial services for previously unbanked populations. Field studies show that, overall, FinTech has had a positive impact on financial inclusion by reducing transaction costs, information asymmetry, and by spreading access to financial services via agents and mobile channels (Financial Innovation, 2025). The strength and longevity of such impacts is, however, very context-specific, as it is influenced by regulatory contexts, digital infrastructure or financial and digital literacy.

Globally and regionally, there is evidence that links the introduction of FinTech with positive financial inclusion outcomes across all emerging and developing economies. On the panel data set of 28 emerging and developing economies from 2011 to 2021, Mashoene (2025) found that an increase in FinTech adoption resulted in a statistically significant increase in the financial inclusion index. The study highlighted the role of internet penetration and regulatory quality as a moderator in enhancing this relationship. In a similar vein, Goswami (2025) noted that the FinTech platforms are especially crucial for engaging with the bottom of the pyramid population, but the adoption rate may be biased towards younger and more educated users. The results corroborate wider cross-country studies that indicate that mobile money and digital payment systems have driven

financial inclusion in sub-Saharan Africa, with significant cross-country differences between the countries with supportive policy frameworks and those without.

In Nigeria, empirical studies have shown a significant increase in FinTech uptake and a slight improvement in financial inclusion measures. The survey on Enhancing Financial Innovation and Access (EFInA) to Financial Services in Nigeria (A2F) has monitored these trends over time and showed that the financial inclusion rate in Nigeria increased from about 56% in 2020 to around 57% in 2023, of which non-bank financial institutions, including FinTech providers, contributed a larger share of the gains (EFinA, 2023). In a comprehensive study on the adoption of FinTech and financial inclusion in Nigeria, Uzoegbunam (2025) noted that users of FinTech services, after they start using FinTech, tend to score higher in financial inclusion in terms of access, use, and quality. The study also pointed out that adoption tends to be concentrated among younger users (18-35 years) who live in urban areas, and tech-savvy individuals which make up the active users for many platforms.

However, other literature shows that there were some challenges and uneven patterns that persisted despite these positive trends. There is evidence that while channels like USSD and mobile money have been successful in rural areas, there are also various challenges that women, older people and people with low income face in using these channels. For some specifications the impact of financial technology on financial inclusion was statistically significant and negative, indicating that existing products may not sufficiently meet the needs of the most vulnerable. Financial technology had a negative and statistically significant effect on financial inclusion in some specifications, which suggests the current offerings do not provide adequate service to the most vulnerable. Other scholars point to the importance of digital financial literacy, suggesting that the positive impacts of FinTech adoption for inclusion are more pronounced for those who have the knowledge and skills to use digital platforms safely and effectively (Ogu et al., 2026). Other reported issues in recent Nigerian studies have been issues of cybersecurity, data privacy and the risk being created by over-drafting on digital lending products.

New patterns in the literature suggest some key changes. As artificial intelligence is used more and more in credit scoring and customer service, embedded finance is becoming more prevalent, and open banking is emerging, these trends are opening new avenues for inclusion, but also generating new consumer protection and regulatory challenges. Gender and rural-urban differences remain high profile, and there is some evidence that tailored product design and agent networks can contribute to narrowing some of these differences, but progress has been slow. Additionally, the importance of trust, not only within financial institutions, but also in digital platforms has been found to be key to continued adoption and meaningful use (Aracil, 2025).

Although the existing literature offers rich contributions to the understanding of the link between FinTech and financial inclusion, key gaps exist. Many of the analyses that have been carried out are based on data that is not reflective of the latest surge of digital payments and regulatory changes in Nigeria. There were very few studies that have systematically analysed adoption trends by socio-demographic segments, geographical areas and products, or how new technologies and business models are impacting the inclusion landscape. There is also a limited integration of large scale survey data (e.g. the updated A2F, 2023) with transaction-level trends from the Central Bank of Nigeria to give a complete view of the current trends. Hence, this study aims to specifically fill these identified gaps with the use of the secondary data sources and contemporary empirical evidence on the trends, patterns and emerging dynamics of FinTech adoption and financial inclusion in Nigeria.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on the Diffusion of Innovation Theory put forward by Rogers (2003). The theory describes the process whereby new ideas, practices or technologies diffuse through a society over time, with focus on the communication channels, time, and attributes of the adopting population. Rogers' 5 attributes of innovation include: Relative Advantage, Compatibility, Complexity, Trialability, and Observability. The characteristics that explain the speed and extent of adoption within the various groups of adopters, from the innovators to early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards.

At the level of financial technology, the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory helps to illuminate the adoption patterns and dynamics of FinTech and its effects on financial inclusion. For instance, digital financial services like mobile money, USSD platforms, POS systems and digital wallets are innovations that provide a relative

advantage in terms of convenience, speed and cost to traditional cash-based or branch-based transactions. Their adoption, however, is affected by the compatibility with the current financial practices, perceived complexity of use, opportunities for testing, and the visibility of social network and community benefits. In Nigeria, these factors account for the variations in adoption across demographic groups with younger, urban and more educated groups showing higher levels of adoption than older, rural and less digitally literate groups, respectively (Uzoegbunam, 2025; Ogu et al., 2026).

The theory also emphasizes the role that communication channels play in speeding up or slowing down the diffusion process. Agent networks, mobile phone, social influence and word-of-mouth are important channels of information transmission in the Nigerian context, especially in areas where formal banking services are limited. In addition, the theory highlights the temporal aspect of financial inclusion: outcomes of inclusion can change over time as various population groups progress through the adoption curve and as innovations are developed to meet the needs of late adopters.

This study uses the Diffusion of Innovation to analyse the trends, patterns and emerging dynamics of the adoption of FinTech and financial inclusion in Nigeria. The framework highlights the interplay between the characteristics of innovation, communication processes and the nature of the adopters over time, to demonstrate how uneven adoption of these innovations has been across countries and population groups, and what conditions might lead to wider and deeper adoption going forward.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research design was adopted for this study to investigate the trends and pattern in financial inclusion and financial uptake of FinTech in Nigeria as it helps to analyze and present the existing phenomena systematically, which can be analyzed quantitatively. The study used only secondary data from reliable national sources to support the empirical evidence related to digital financial services development in the country and extent of financial inclusion.

The data on the adoption of FinTech were gathered from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Electronic Payment Statistics. The data set included the values of transactions by main digital payment channels for the years 2018 to 2024. This analysis was conducted for four major FinTech channels: Automated Teller Machine (ATM), Point of Sale (POS), Mobile App transactions and Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) transactions. The channels are chosen due to their prevalence and importance in the digital finance system in Nigeria.

Financial inclusion data were taken from Access to Financial Services (A2F) 2023 Revised Dataset. The data is nationally representative and gives information on financial behaviour and the use of financial services by adults in Nigeria. The Financial Access Strand was used to measure the extent and distribution of financial inclusion, where respondents were classified as being banked, other formal, informal and financially excluded. This classification allowed a more detailed analysis of the level of financial inclusion of people.

Data collected were cleaned, coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 26. The frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, minimum and maximum values were used as descriptive statistical techniques to minimize and describe the data and find patterns. Further, a trend analysis was performed to see how values of transactions have changed on the selected FinTech channels during the analysis period. The results were reported in tabular and graphical forms for easy interpretation and comparison.

Relying on descriptive statistics and trend analysis was an effective way of analysing the state of FinTech adoption and financial inclusion in Nigeria. These analytical methods allowed the study to detect trends, show differences between channels in the financial services sector and give insights into the continued evolution of Nigeria's digital financial services sector.

RESULTS

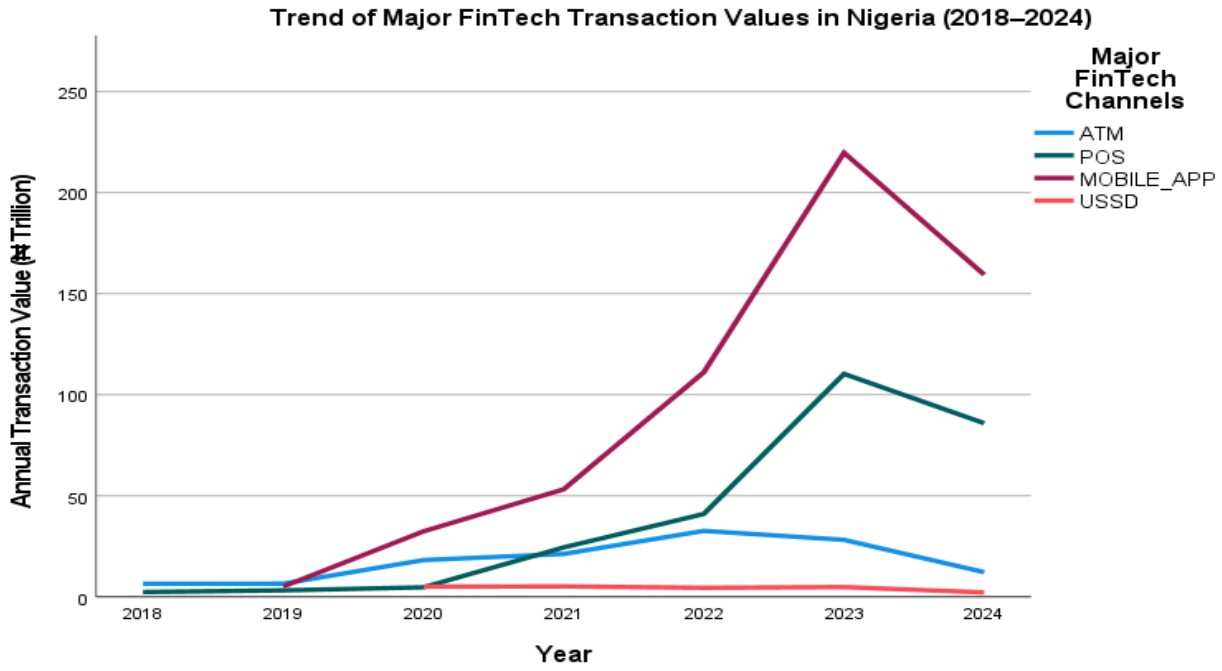
RQ1: What are the trends and patterns of FinTech adoption in Nigeria between 2018 and 2024?

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Major FinTech Channels in Nigeria (2018–2024)

Major FinTech Channel	Mean Transaction Value (₦ Trillion)	Std. Deviation (₦ Trillion)	Minimum (₦ Trillion)	Maximum (₦ Trillion)
ATM	17.93	10.23	6.48	32.60
POS	38.87	43.40	2.38	110.35
Mobile App	96.84	82.12	5.08	219.80
USSD	4.35	2.23	2.19	5.18
Total	**40.01**	**55.83**	**2.19**	**220.00**

Source: Computed from Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Electronic Payment Statistics (2018–2024); Note: Transaction values are expressed in trillions of Nigerian Naira (₦). ATM = Automated Teller Machine; POS = Point of Sale; USSD = Unstructured Supplementary Service Data.

Figure 1:



Source: Author's computation from Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Electronic Payment Statistics (2018–2024). Note: Figure 1 illustrates the annual transaction values of the four major FinTech channels (ATM, POS, Mobile App, and USSD) in Nigeria between 2018 and 2024. The figure highlights the growth trajectory of digital financial transactions and the relative contribution of each channel to Nigeria's digital payment ecosystem.

As shown in Table 1, significant variations in transaction exist between the main channels of FinTech. The Average transaction value (Mean) was highest in the Mobile App (₦96.84 trillion) followed by the POS (₦38.87 trillion), ATM (₦17.93 trillion), and the USSD (₦4.35 trillion). High standard deviations for Mobile App and POS transactions suggest considerable growth and variation during the study period, highlighting the swift expansion of these channels in Nigeria's digital financial landscape.

Transaction values across major channels of FinTech basically grew from 2018 to 2024 (Figure 1). The mobile app transactions segment saw the highest growth path, starting from a significant increase in 2020 and peaking at about ₦220 trillion in 2023, followed by a moderate decrease in 2024. The value of transactions on the POS also grew significantly and steadily the entire time period and reached the highest quantity of transactions in 2023. ATM transactions showed moderate growth till 2022 and slightly decreased during the next few years. Compared with the other channels, transactions via the USSD channel increased slightly.

The trend analysis shows an increase in the adoption of FinTech in Nigeria over the study period. The development of Mobile App and POS transactions indicates a gradual acceptance of digital payment technologies by consumers and a greater integration of electronic financial services into the economy. The ATM and USSD channels continued to be used, suggesting that traditional and emerging digital payment methods are coexisting in Nigeria's financial sector.

The findings in Table 1 and Figure 1 clearly show that in Nigeria, FinTech has played a positive role in the economic development by supporting an efficient financial transaction, enhancing financial service delivery and facilitating digital commerce. Mobile App and POS transactions have driven digital financial transformation with their dominance over the entire period of the study, and have most likely served as the most significant income boosters in the boost in economic activity.

RQ2: What is the level and pattern of financial inclusion among adults in Nigeria?

Table 2: Distribution of Financial Inclusion Status among Nigerian Adults

Financial Inclusion Category	Frequency(₦)	Percentage (%)
Banked	63,100,110	50.4
Other Formal	15,649,222	12.5
Informal	9,500,740	7.6
Financially Excluded	36,941,283	29.5
Total	**125,077,958**	**100.0**

Source: A2F 2023 Revised Dataset

Figure 2: Distribution of Financial Inclusion Status among Nigerian Adults in 2023

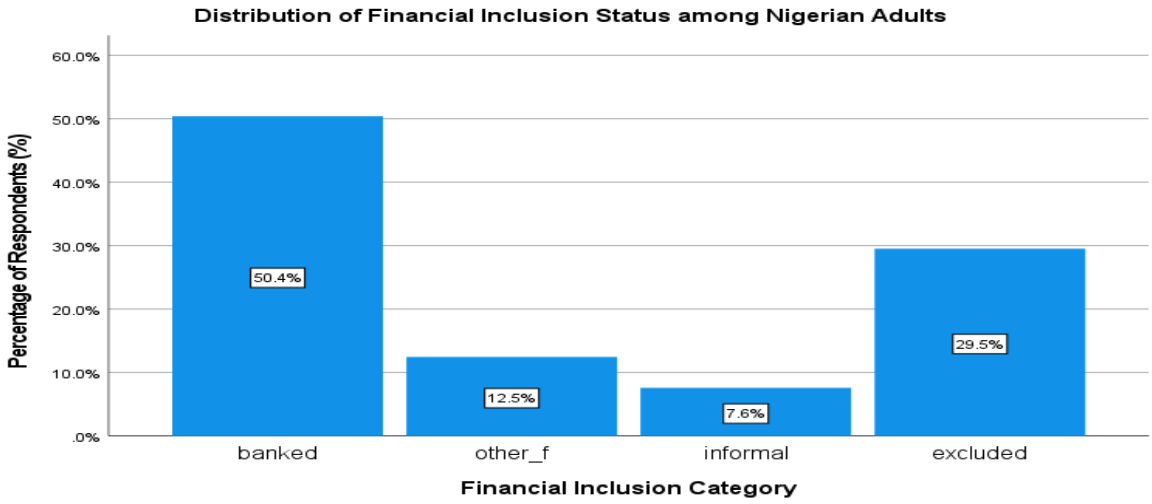


Figure 2 presents the percentage distribution of Nigerian adults across the four major financial inclusion categories: Banked, Other Formal, Informal, and Financially Excluded

The descriptive statistics in the above table (Table 2) show that there is great disparity in the extent of financial inclusion among adults in Nigeria. The banked population was the largest group (50.4% of the adult population). This shows that Nigerians have relegated formal financial services to their main sources of access to financial services. The second largest group was financially excluded individuals (29.5%) indicating that there is still a high level of financial exclusion. The 12.5% of respondents fell under the formal financial services and 7.6% fell under informal financial services. The results indicate that the financial inclusion has improved significantly but there is a large unbanked population.

The distribution of financial inclusion category is unevenly distributed among people as presented in Figure 2. More than half of the adults were in the banked category. In contrast, the share of the people using other formal

financial services and informal financial arrangements was significantly less. The figure also shows that 29.5% of all Nigerian adults are financially excluded, showing that financial inclusion is not yet universal even with the continuous reforms in financial services and financial innovations in the digital economy.

The analysis shows that Nigeria is making significant progress towards financial inclusion, with close to 70.5% of adults having access to either formal or informal financial services. The preponderance of the banked category indicates that more people are becoming engaged in formal financial systems and using financial products and services. Meanwhile, the fact that people are still in other formal and informal categories suggests that financial service usage is not limited to formal financial institutions. The high number of financially excluded, however, suggests that there are many ongoing affordability and accessibility challenges, as well as financial literacy, infrastructure and socioeconomic issues.

The findings presented in Table 2 and Figure 2 indicate medium level of financial inclusion in Nigeria as over two thirds of the adult population participate in the financial system. However, the fact that the financial exclusion rate is high (1 in 3) indicates that greater will need to be done to improve access to financial services. The results suggest that the further spread of digital financial technologies, alternative financial service pathways, and inclusive financial policies will play a significant role in creating a more inclusive financial system and reducing financial exclusion.

RQ3: What was the rate of adoption of the major channels in FinTech for Nigeria in the period 2018 to 2024?

Table 1 and Figure 1 show that there were significant variations in the penetration of the biggest FinTech channels across Nigeria during the study period. Mobile App transactions had the highest Mean transaction value (₦96.84 trillion), which is significantly higher than all other transactions. This was followed by the value of POS transactions of ₦38.87 trillion with an average transaction value of ₦17.93 trillion for ATM transactions. The average transaction value in USDT was at the lowest value of ₦4.35 trillion. These gaps suggest that there are varying degrees of consumer preference and use of the various channels of a digital financial service.

The fastest growth trend was seen with Mobile App transactions as shown in Figure 1. The value of transactions has continued to rise since 2020 to peak at about ₦220 trillion in 2023, though with a slight drop in 2024. POS transactions also made impressive gains, especially from 2021 to 2023 as the use of electronic payment systems by merchants grew in the country. The number of transactions at ATM machines showed moderate increase in early years of the study period and decreased in the later years. The USSD channel, by contrast, saw relatively little change, and modest growth relative to other channels.

Based on the trends observed, Nigeria's consumers are shifting towards the adoption of digital payment technologies that are more convenient, faster and easier to access. The surge of Mobile App transactions can be put down to the rising smartphone penetration and better internet connectivity and upsurge in mobile banking applications. Likewise, the growth of the number of cashless payment infrastructures and businesses and consumers' acceptance of electronic payment methods are mirrored in the strong performance of POS transactions. ATM and USSD channels still remain significant in the financial system, but their relative growth rate indicates that there is a shift towards more sophisticated digital payment systems.

Table 1 and Figure 1 show that the most predominant FinTech channels in Nigeria from 2018 to 2024 were Mobile App and POS transactions. However, the usage trend shows that they are the most popular channels in the country's digital finance ecosystem, with sustained growth and increasing transactions. The results highlight the significant shift in consumer payment behavior and reinforce the need for technology-enabled financial services to further financial sector development.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study provide important insights into the evolving landscape of digital finance and financial inclusion in Nigeria. The analysis showed that all financial services use of FinTech surged from 2018 to 2024 and that the most dominant in the digital financial ecosystem are Mobile App and POS transactions. The Mobile

App transactions are booming due to the increasing adoption of smartphones, better internet connectivity, and greater acceptance of digital banking services among individuals and businesses. Likewise, as for the growth of transactions at the POS, there's a clear trend towards cashless payments and the rise of electronic payment in business activities.

The results also reveal that although ATM transactions are still important, they are not as prominent as other newer digital payment methods. This trend indicates a shift towards a more technology-centric financial approach and the investment of time in this area by the banking sector. The role of USDD transactions has also been significant during the study period as it provides avenue to reach the financial services to those who cannot access a smartphone and Internet connected device. The ongoing use of USSD services shows the need for inclusive digital financial service in a developing economy like Nigeria.

In the area of financial inclusion, the study revealed that close to 70.5% of Nigerian adults had access to at least one financial service while 29.5% of adults were financially excluded. The high share of banked indicates a lot of advancement in formal financial access. But a large number of financially excluded individuals indicates that income criteria, geographic, digital literacy, infrastructure, and financial awareness remain a constraint for achieving financial inclusion.

Overall, these findings imply that the growth of FinTech services has helped to make finance more accessible and diversified. The rise in the use of digital payment channels reflects the importance of technology in the provision of financial services and the possibilities of new innovations in the FinTech sector to enhance financial inclusion and economic empowerment.

CONCLUSION

The study reviewed the trends and patterns of adoption of FinTech and financial inclusion in Nigeria based on data from the Central Bank of Nigeria Electronic Payment Statistics and Access to Financial Services (A2F) 2023 Revised Dataset. The results indicated that FinTech adoption increased substantially from 2018 to 2024, with the Mobile App and POS transaction channels being the most adopted digital financial platforms. The findings also suggested that financial inclusion has significantly increased, as Nigeria's adult population is predominantly involved in either formal or informal financial transactions.

Although financial inclusion has improved, a significant share of the population is out of financial reach of financial services, reflecting unequal access to financial services across the country. From this study, it is concluded that Nigeria has made tremendous strides in the digital financial transformation and financial inclusion, but more must be done to ensure that all the advantages of financial innovation is expanded to the underserved and excluded groups. With digital financial services continuing to grow, there is a chance to improve financial inclusion, financial accessibility and sustain economic development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given that the use of Mobile App transactions is rapidly increasing and is gaining momentum in the digital financial environment in Nigeria, financial institutions and fintechs are advised to keep investing in mobile

financial solutions.

Government agencies and financial regulators need to further incentivize growth of digital payment systems, especially in rural and underserved areas with relatively high financial exclusion rates.

Financial education initiatives should be stepped up to enhance the knowledge and awareness of the public about digital financial services and strengthen confidence in electronic payment platforms.

Improve the reliability, affordability and accessibility of Internet and mobile network services that are essential for the use of digital financial technologies, particularly in partnership with telecommunication providers and financial service providers.

Financial products and services must be simplified for financial inclusion of people who are financially excluded and services must include agent-banking and easy-to-use digital financial services.

Regulatory bodies need to foster innovation while maintaining sufficient levels of consumer protection, cybersecurity and data privacy protection in the FinTech ecosystem.

Limitations of the Study

The findings in this study may be limited by the following constraints: The first is that the study used only secondary data sources from the Access to Financial Services and the Central Bank of Nigeria. As such, only variables and indicators that were available within these datasets were analysed.

Secondly, the study used descriptive research design and descriptive statistical methods and trend analysis technique. Because of this, the results do not conclude the causal relationships between the adoption of FinTech, financial inclusion and other economic consequences.

Thirdly, the data sets we used were taken at various time periods for various reasons. The CBN dataset was only on transaction values across digital payment channels, whereas the A2F dataset was on financial access and inclusion of Nigerian adults. This reduced the capacity of being able to explore the direct statistical relationship between the two sets of data.

Lastly, this study was mainly focused on four major channels of FinTech and might not adequately capture the recent digital innovations in the financial ecosystem that are yet to take root in Nigeria. Future research could use a longitudinal and inferential design to analyze the causality of the relationship between the use of FinTech and financial inclusion, economic growth, and other socioeconomic effects.

REFERENCES

1. Akutson, S. K. (2026). The effect of financial technology on financial inclusion in Nigeria. British Journal of International Relations. https://doi.org/10.31039/bjir.v3i10.93
2. Aracil, E. (2025). Trust and financial inclusion: A literature review with bibliometric analysis. Heliyon. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2405844025025319
3. Central Bank of Nigeria. (2025). E-payment statistics. https://www.cbn.gov.ng/PaymentsSystem/ePaymentStatistics.html
4. EFInA. (2023). Access to financial services in Nigeria (A2F) 2023 survey: Key highlights. Enhancing Financial Innovation & Access. https://a2f.ng/
5. Financial Innovation. (2025). Financial inclusion and fintech: A state-of-the-art systematic literature review. Financial Innovation, 11(1), Article 69. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40854-024-00741-0
6. Goswami, S. (2025). FinTech adoption: Driving financial inclusion at the bottom of the pyramid. Future Business Journal. https://doi.org/10.1186/s43093-025-00570-2
7. Mashoene, M. (2025). FinTech and financial inclusion in emerging and developing economies. Cogent Social Sciences. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2025.2491701
8. Ogu, V. U., et al. (2026). Financial technology and financial inclusion in Nigeria. International Journal of Economics, Finance and Management, 11(3), 1–16. https://iiardjournals.org/get/IJEFM/VOL.%2011%20NO.%203%202026/FINANCIAL%20TECHNOLOGY%20AND%20FINANCIAL%201-16.pdf
9. Rogers, E. M. (2003). Diffusion of innovations (5th ed.). Free Press. https://books.google.com/books?id=9U1K5LjUOwEC
10. Uzoegbunam, O. J. (2025). Fintech adoption and financial inclusion in Nigeria [Master's thesis, Dalarna University]. DiVA Portal. https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:2002518/FULLTEXT01.pdf