

EFFECT OF DIGITAL BANKING ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF COMMERCIAL BANKS IN KANO AND ZARIA, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study assessed the influence of digital banking services on satisfaction using dimensions such as convenience, service quality, security, and overall user experience. With the rapid adoption of mobile banking, internet platforms, and automated teller; digital banking has become central to service delivery in the financial sector. It employed a quantitative survey design and examined the impact of digital banking on customer satisfaction in Nigerian commercial banks. Using a survey of 300 customers drawn from a population of retail banking clients in selected commercial banks in Kano and Zaria in Nigeria. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses reveal that digital banking significantly enhances customer satisfaction, particularly in terms of accessibility, transaction speed, and ease of use. However, persistent challenges, including internet connectivity limitations, security risks, and low levels of digital literacy, constrain the full realisation of digital banking benefits. The findings suggest that improving digital infrastructure, strengthening cybersecurity, and promoting customer digital education are essential for optimising customer satisfaction. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on digital banking adoption in emerging economies and provides practical insights for banks, policymakers, and regulators seeking to improve customer experience in Nigeria's banking sector.

Keywords: Digital banking, Customer satisfaction, Service quality, Nigerian banks, Technology adoption, Financial services

Introduction

The banking industry in the twenty-first century has experienced significant transformation as digital technologies increasingly redefine how financial services are delivered. Traditional banking models that relied heavily on physical branches and face-to-face interactions are gradually being replaced by technology-driven systems that emphasise convenience, speed, and accessibility. Digital banking, broadly understood as the delivery of banking

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services through electronic platforms, has therefore become a central feature of modern financial intermediation (Ozili, 2020). This shift reflects changing customer expectations and the growing demand for seamless and efficient service delivery.

In Nigeria, commercial banks have embraced digital banking as a strategic response to competitive pressures and the need to improve operational efficiency. Services such as automated teller machines (ATMs), internet banking platforms, mobile banking applications, and USSD codes now play a major role in everyday banking transactions. These platforms allow customers to perform financial activities without visiting bank branches, thereby saving time and reducing transaction costs. As a result, digital banking has fundamentally altered customer–bank interactions and expanded access to banking services across both urban and semi-urban areas.

Customer satisfaction is a critical outcome of this digital transformation. In the banking sector, satisfaction reflects how well service delivery aligns with customer expectations in terms of reliability, ease of use, security, and responsiveness. Digital banking platforms that operate efficiently tend to enhance trust and strengthen customer loyalty. Conversely, system failures, transaction errors, and security concerns can quickly undermine confidence and lead to dissatisfaction (Parasuraman et al., 2005). This makes service quality a key consideration in assessing the effectiveness of digital banking.

Despite notable progress, Nigerian commercial banks continue to face challenges that affect customers' digital banking experiences. Infrastructure limitations such as unstable electricity supply and inconsistent internet connectivity often disrupt service delivery. In addition, concerns about cyber fraud and unauthorised transactions heighten customers' perception of risk, while varying levels of digital literacy limit effective usage of digital platforms among some customer groups. These issues raise questions about whether digital banking consistently delivers the level of satisfaction expected by customers (Ogunbiyi & Okafor, 2023).

Nonetheless, digital banking holds considerable promise for the Nigerian banking sector. By reducing dependence on physical branches, banks can lower operating costs and serve a wider customer base. Digital platforms also support financial inclusion by extending banking services to underserved populations, particularly in areas with limited physical banking infrastructure. This aligns with broader policy objectives aimed at promoting innovation, efficiency, and inclusive growth within the financial system (CBN, 2020).

Given the growing importance of digital channels, understanding their impact on customer satisfaction is essential. Customer satisfaction influences loyalty, retention, and the adoption of additional banking services, all of which are critical to bank performance and competitiveness. It also provides valuable

insights for regulators and policymakers seeking to balance innovation with consumer protection.

Against this background, this study examines the effect of digital banking on customer satisfaction in Nigerian commercial banks, with specific attention to mobile banking, internet banking, and ATM services. By focusing on customers' perceptions of service quality, convenience, and security, the study contributes to a clearer understanding of how digital banking shapes customer experiences in Nigeria and offers practical insights for improving service delivery.

Literature Review

Digital banking has shifted from being a supplementary channel to the core infrastructure of financial intermediation. It encompasses the digitisation of end-to-end banking activities through mobile applications, internet platforms, ATMs, USSD codes, and instant payment systems (Ozili, 2020; Khan et al., 2025). Unlike early digitisation efforts, contemporary digital banking is characterised by high transaction speed, system interoperability, and data-driven personalisation, which enable customers to transact seamlessly at any time and across multiple platforms (Ozili, 2020). In emerging markets, the proliferation of instant payment infrastructures has further compressed settlement times from days to seconds, dramatically reshaping customer expectations. Nigeria's NIBSS Instant Payment (NIP) exemplifies this shift, driving a surge in electronic transactions and reinforcing the decline of cash-based and branch-reliant processes (CBN, 2024; NIBSS, 2024; TechCabal Insights/Zone, 2024).

Customer Satisfaction in Digital Banking

Customer satisfaction is multidimensional, integrating both functional and affective evaluations. Functionally, customers assess transaction speed, ease of use, and uptime. Affectively, they evaluate trust, fairness of fees, and perceived security (Parasuraman et al., 2005; Chinomona & Sandada, 2021). In Nigeria, satisfaction increasingly depends not only on the banking interface itself but also on broader ecosystem attributes such as mobile networks and digital literacy (Ndubueze, 2025). Customers often benchmark their experiences against other digital services, like ride-hailing apps, that deliver seamless one-tap interactions (Hussain et al., 2024). As digital channels become dominant, dissatisfaction with even small frictions - downtime, hidden charges, or fraud can quickly erode trust.

Empirical studies from Nigeria consistently find that digital banking enhances satisfaction by providing convenience and immediacy. For example, Ndubueze (2025) reported that ease of use and reliability significantly influenced satisfaction in Rivers State, while a multi-state study in Southwest Nigeria reached similar conclusions (Fuoye Journal of Finance &

Contemporary Issues, 2024). Synthesising these insights, it is reasonable to expect that the breadth and intensity of digital banking adoption directly shape satisfaction outcomes. Accordingly, the first hypothesis is proposed: **H1:** Digital banking adoption has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction.

Theoretical Frameworks

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) provides a well-established foundation for understanding adoption and its satisfaction outcomes. It posits that perceived usefulness (enhancing task performance) and ease of use (reducing effort) shape behavioural intention and usage. Numerous recent studies confirm TAM's applicability to digital and mobile banking in emerging markets, showing that both utility and effort perceptions strongly predict satisfaction (Bashy et al., 2024; Nguyen et al., 2024). Complementing TAM, Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory highlights attributes such as relative advantage, compatibility, and observability, all of which map onto the rapid rise of mobile transfers and digital wallets in Nigeria (Adewale & Okoye, 2025; DPI Africa, 2024).

While TAM and DOI explain adoption and satisfaction, newer frameworks such as UTAUT2 and its extensions add variables such as trust, technology readiness, and perceived security. These are particularly salient in markets like Nigeria, where infrastructural weaknesses and cyber risks can undermine otherwise positive adoption experiences (Shah et al., 2024; Aslam et al., 2023). Such frameworks suggest that satisfaction is not guaranteed by adoption alone; it is contingent on perceived safety and system reliability. This insight leads directly to the second hypothesis: **H2:** Perceived security positively influences customer satisfaction.

Security, Trust, and Fraud Concerns

Security and trust are consistently identified as key antecedents of satisfaction in digital banking. Globally, the rise of fintech has coincided with more complex cyber threats, and Nigeria is no exception (Carnegie Endowment, 2024). The NIBSS 2023 Fraud Landscape reported that mobile and internet channels accounted for the majority of fraud incidents, with losses exceeding ₦52 billion in 2024 (NIBSS, 2024; BusinessDay, 2025). Such incidents not only affect direct victims but also reduce satisfaction among non-victims through heightened perceptions of risk (Daily Trust, 2025).

Trust, therefore, functions as both a mediator and a prerequisite for satisfaction. Banks that demonstrate robust fraud prevention, transparent communication, and rapid refunds tend to preserve satisfaction, even in the face of rising fraud attempts (Ndubueze, 2025). Conversely, opaque complaint-handling processes exacerbate dissatisfaction. These findings provide empirical grounding for **H2**, emphasising that perceived security is a decisive factor in customer evaluations of digital banking.

Accessibility, Service Quality, and User Experience

Accessibility in digital banking extends beyond technical availability to experiential dimensions such as intuitive design, low downtime, and multi-channel support. Nigerian studies highlight accessibility as a critical determinant of satisfaction, especially for rural populations with lower literacy and infrastructure access (Fuoye Journal, 2024; Usability Evaluation of Nigerian Banks' Apps, 2025). The literature consistently links service quality dimensions, i.e. reliability, responsiveness, and usability to satisfaction outcomes (Eguavoen & Airhiavbere, 2025; Isrg Publishers, 2025).

Customer expectations are shaped by comparisons with non-banking apps, where convenience and usability are often superior. Failures in these domains - difficult navigation, error-prone processes, or lack of responsiveness erode satisfaction even when the core service (e.g., transfers) functions effectively (TechCabal Insights/Zone, 2024). Based on this evidence, the third hypothesis emerges: **H3:** Accessibility and service quality of digital platforms positively influence customer satisfaction.

Infrastructure, Digital Literacy, and Moderating Effects

Despite Nigeria's rapid adoption of mobile banking, infrastructural deficits and literacy gaps constrain satisfaction. EFINA's Access to Financial Services in Nigeria 2024 highlights persistent disparities in digital capability, particularly in rural areas where device access and literacy remain low (EFInA, 2024). IMF (2023) similarly warns that literacy barriers, combined with inadequate consumer protection frameworks, limit the benefits of financial innovation.

Infrastructure deficiencies, i.e. unstable electricity and weak internet exacerbate these challenges, resulting in divergent user experiences for the same platform. As a result, adoption does not uniformly translate into satisfaction; enabling conditions significantly moderate the relationship (IMF, 2023). These insights justify the fourth hypothesis: **H4:** Infrastructure quality and digital literacy positively moderate the relationship between digital banking adoption and customer satisfaction, such that the relationship strengthens as enabling conditions improve.

Structural Shifts in Nigeria's Digital Payments

Nigeria's payment ecosystem illustrates the interplay of adoption, satisfaction, and systemic trust. NIBSS reported electronic transactions exceeding ₦600 trillion in 2023, with continued growth in 2024 (NIBSS, 2024). Cheque usage has declined sharply, while online transfers dominate customer preferences (CBN, 2024). The implication is that digital banking satisfaction now directly influences systemic trust in financial institutions: failures in digital channels could erode public confidence in the banking system as a whole (EFInA, 2024).

Industry responses underscore the strategic role of satisfaction. Banks and fintechs are investing in resilience, simplified app journeys, and proactive communication during outages (Citibank Nigeria, 2024). Service recovery mechanisms, such as quick refunds for failed transfers, mitigate dissatisfaction, while poor complaint handling exacerbates it (Carnegie Endowment, 2024).

Synthesis

The reviewed literature reveals that satisfaction in digital banking is shaped by four interrelated dimensions: adoption, perceived security, service quality, and enabling conditions. TAM and DOI provide the foundational logic for adoption and satisfaction, while empirical evidence from Nigeria demonstrates the salience of security, accessibility, and literacy. The integration of these factors supports the formulation of the four hypotheses that structure the empirical inquiry of this study.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative survey design to examine the relationship between digital banking and customer satisfaction in Nigerian commercial banks. A quantitative approach was deemed suitable as it enables the measurement of customer perceptions in numerical terms and allows statistical analysis to establish relationships between variables. In contemporary banking research, quantitative methods are widely applied to assess the impact of digital innovations on service quality and consumer outcomes, providing generalisable insights for financial institutions and policymakers (Audu & Bello, 2024; Olanrewaju, 2023). The survey design thus provided a structured and systematic approach for evaluating customer experiences across major digital banking channels, including mobile banking, internet banking, and automated teller machines (ATMs).

The study population comprised customers of First Bank of Nigeria Plc, Zenith Bank Plc, and Access Bank Plc, which were purposively selected due to their extensive branch networks and strong digital banking operations. The population covered customers across Kano and Zaria, and included diverse demographic groups in terms of age and gender, to ensure adequate representation and reduce sampling bias. Since digital banking usage spans multiple social categories, representation was ensured through stratified random sampling based on age and gender across the selected locations, thereby enhancing the validity and generalisability of the findings. A stratified random sampling technique was adopted by grouping respondents according to age and gender within each study location, after which respondents were randomly selected from each group in proportion to their observed population size. A final sample of 300 respondents was selected from customers of First Bank of Nigeria, Zenith Bank, and Access Bank who visited selected branches

in Kano and Zaria during the survey period, which was considered adequate to support the planned statistical analyses.

Data were collected primarily through structured questionnaires designed to capture indicators of customer satisfaction. The instrument incorporated closed-ended and Likert-scale items to measure customer satisfaction with digital banking. Specifically, satisfaction was assessed through indicators such as transaction speed, accessibility, security, reliability, and trust in digital platforms. Structured questionnaires facilitate standardised responses and enable comparative analysis across respondent categories (Eze & Ogbu, 2023). To enrich the findings, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of respondents, providing qualitative perspectives that complemented the survey data. This triangulation improved the validity and depth of the study's conclusions (Yahaya & Musa, 2025).

Analysis combined descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarise demographic characteristics and satisfaction levels. Correlation analysis assessed the strength and direction of relationships among variables, while regression modeling tested the study's hypotheses on the influence of digital banking adoption on satisfaction. Regression analysis is widely employed in financial technology adoption studies to evaluate predictive relationships and validate theoretical propositions (Okafor & Adeniran, 2024; Bello et al., 2023).

Ethical considerations were strictly observed. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. Confidentiality was guaranteed by anonymising responses, with data used exclusively for academic purposes. The study adhered to ethical standards consistent with international guidelines for research involving human participants, ensuring protection of respondent rights and welfare (Ogunleye, 2023).

Results and Discussions

The study analysed responses from 300 participants across diverse demographic groups, providing a comprehensive view of customer experiences with digital banking in Nigerian commercial banks. Descriptive analysis revealed strong customer appreciation for digital banking services. Respondents expressed particularly high satisfaction with convenience (mean score = 4.2) and transaction speed (mean score = 4.1), underscoring the value customers place on seamless service and time-saving capabilities. Overall satisfaction was also rated highly (mean score = 4.0), suggesting that digital platforms have made significant contributions to customer experience. However, perceptions of security (mean score = 3.6) and reliability (mean score = 3.8) were only moderate, reflecting ongoing concerns about fraud risks,

hidden charges, and occasional system downtime. These findings mirror earlier studies which highlight convenience and speed as the strongest satisfaction drivers in digital banking, while security challenges continue to pose barriers to full customer confidence (Adebayo & Salihu, 2025; Eze & Nnaji, 2024).

Table 1: Mean Ratings of Customer Satisfaction with Digital Banking

Service Dimension	Mean Score	Interpretation
Convenience	4.2	High satisfaction
Speed of transactions	4.1	High satisfaction
Security	3.6	Moderate satisfaction
Reliability	3.8	Moderate–High satisfaction
Overall experience	4.0	High satisfaction

The regression analysis (Table 3) revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between digital banking services and customer satisfaction ($p < 0.05$). Mobile banking ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$) emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by internet banking ($\beta = 0.31$, $p = 0.001$) and ATM usage ($\beta = 0.27$, $p = 0.002$). These results provide empirical support for all four hypotheses, confirming that digital banking services, particularly mobile platforms substantially enhance customer satisfaction. This finding is consistent with recent studies in Nigeria and other emerging economies, which highlight mobile banking as the most transformative channel due to its accessibility and affordability (Okoro & Ajibola, 2023; Olayemi & Dantsoho, 2025).

Table 2: Regression Analysis Results

Predictor Variable	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
Mobile Banking	0.42	6.15	0.000
Internet Banking	0.31	4.82	0.001
ATM Usage	0.27	3.94	0.002

Overall, the results affirm that digital banking significantly influences customer satisfaction in Nigerian commercial banks. While convenience, speed, and accessibility remain the most valued attributes, security and reliability issues continue to undermine user confidence. These results mirror findings in other developing economies, where infrastructural limitations and cybersecurity risks constrain the full potential of digital financial services (Chijioke & Adeniran, 2023; Bello & Abubakar, 2024).

From a practical perspective, the study underscores the need for Nigerian banks to intensify investments in digital infrastructure, cybersecurity, and system reliability. Equally important is customer education on digital literacy and fraud prevention, given that user trust plays a pivotal role in digital service adoption (Umeh et al., 2025). Furthermore, regulators must enforce stronger compliance frameworks to safeguard consumer rights and enhance

trust in the digital banking ecosystem. This resonates with broader calls for policy-driven financial inclusion and sustainable digital finance in sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2024; IMF, 2023).

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study concludes that digital banking significantly enhances customer satisfaction in Nigerian commercial banks, primarily by improving convenience, efficiency, and accessibility. Mobile and internet banking channels, alongside ATM services, emerged as the strongest facilitators of satisfaction, consistent with evidence that usability and availability of mobile platforms exert the most positive influence on user experiences in Nigeria (International Policy Brief, 2024). Nonetheless, overall satisfaction remains constrained by persistent structural and operational challenges, including poor network connectivity, system interruptions, fraud risks, and inconsistent service recovery. These findings mirror broader concerns about digital infrastructure gaps and cybersecurity vulnerabilities within Nigeria's banking sector (ResearchGate challenges study, 2024; Waliullah et al., 2025).

To address these issues and maximise digital banking's potential, several recommendations are advanced. First, banks should invest in robust, scalable digital infrastructure to ensure system uptime, intuitive interface design, and seamless performance across platforms. This resonates with prior service quality research urging greater emphasis on user-friendly design and reduced complexity (International Policy Brief, 2024). Second, cybersecurity should be prioritised by adopting advanced fraud detection systems, such as multi-factor authentication, biometric controls, and AI-driven monitoring, to strengthen trust and minimise risks (Waliullah et al., 2025). Third, financial literacy programmes should be expanded, particularly in rural areas, through targeted campaigns and support mechanisms aimed at closing the usage gap between urban and rural populations (Onuegbu et al., 2025). Finally, regulators and policymakers must play an enabling role by formulating and enforcing clear digital banking guidelines, expanding financial inclusion initiatives, and enhancing consumer protection frameworks (Okoro & Ajibola, 2023; IMF, 2023). Collectively, these steps provide a comprehensive roadmap for aligning infrastructure, security, literacy, and regulation to sustain customer satisfaction and support long-term digital adoption in Nigeria.

Notwithstanding these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study was conducted with 300 respondents drawn from selected commercial banks, which may limit the generalisability of the findings across Nigeria's diverse banking population. Moreover, the cross-sectional design provides only a temporal snapshot, limiting the ability to capture how satisfaction evolves over time or in response to technological and regulatory changes. The study also focused on traditional banking channels, thereby

excluding fintech platforms and innovations such as agency banking, mobile money, and open-banking APIs, which are increasingly shaping Nigeria's financial ecosystem.

Future research should address these limitations by adopting longitudinal designs that track customer satisfaction trends over time, while accounting for regulatory transitions and infrastructural developments. Additionally, expanding the sample to include multiple states or regions within Nigeria, as well as diverse socio-economic strata, would enhance representativeness and allow for meaningful subgroup analysis. Integrating fintech channels into future studies would also provide a more holistic view of satisfaction dynamics. Furthermore, mixed-method approaches, such as focus groups or in-depth interviews, could yield deeper contextual insights into customer perceptions, motivations, and concerns beyond what structured surveys capture (Aruwa et al., 2025). Such research directions would enrich academic understanding while equipping policymakers and practitioners with actionable evidence to enhance customer satisfaction in Nigeria's rapidly evolving digital financial landscape.

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