



To Study the Role of Fintech App in Shopping Genz's Financial Planning and Spending Habbits in Bhavnagar and Bhuj City

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ABSTRACT

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The rapid evolution of financial technology (fintech) has transformed how individuals manage their financial transactions, savings, and investments. This study examines the relationship between gender and various aspects of fintech app usage, including spending behavior, financial planning, investment awareness, and trust in digital financial platforms. Using primary data collected from 189 respondents and analyzed through SPSS, the study investigates whether significant gender-based differences exist in the adoption and perception of fintech applications such as PhonePe, Paytm, Google Pay, Cred, and Groww. The hypothesis testing revealed that gender has a significant relationship with specific variables such as frequency of fintech use, influence on shopping behavior, financial planning, and investment awareness, while perceptions of trust, data security, and financial discipline were found to be gender-neutral. These findings suggest that although males generally exhibit higher usage and confidence levels in fintech tools, female users are increasingly embracing these technologies for convenience and financial management. The results also highlight that fintech platforms are bridging traditional gender gaps in financial participation by fostering greater accessibility and digital empowerment. The study contributes to the theoretical frameworks of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Behavioral Finance Theory by positioning gender as a moderating factor. It also provides practical implications for fintech developers, marketers, and policymakers to design inclusive strategies that encourage equitable financial inclusion and literacy across genders

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the rapid evolution of financial systems and technological innovation has transformed the way individuals and institutions interact with money, savings, investment, and financial planning. The rise of Millennials and Generation Z as dominant economic participants has brought new challenges and opportunities to the global financial landscape. Despite being more digitally connected and educated than any previous generation, research consistently reveals that young people often struggle to achieve long-term financial security. The first major concern emerging from studies is the lack of adequate financial preparedness among Millennials and Gen Z, as shown by the 2022 study on financial planning. The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed this vulnerability, where widespread job losses and limited savings left many young adults financially unstable. The study highlighted that financial literacy and benefit expectancy are critical factors influencing whether individuals adopt financial planning practices. However, it also noted that having a positive attitude toward financial planning alone does not necessarily lead to meaningful financial action. This gap between knowledge and behavior points to a deeper issue of practical financial engagement among the younger population.(Vidani,2015)

At the same time, the global financial environment has been reshaped by the rise of financial technology (fintech), which has profoundly affected the stability, accessibility, and inclusivity of financial services. A 2022 study on fintech and banking stability in China demonstrated that while the initial growth of fintech created instability, later developments strengthened the banking sector through better regulation, reduced non-performing loans, and improved economic performance. This finding underscores that fintech can reinforce traditional financial systems when combined with strong institutional frameworks. Similarly, the 2024 study on fintech and financial inclusion in India highlighted the transformative role of digital financial services in reaching underserved populations. Through online banking, mobile payments, and digital lending platforms, fintech has expanded financial access to rural and low-income groups. However, barriers such as limited internet connectivity, regulatory constraints, and low digital literacy continue to hinder full inclusion, emphasizing the need for supportive policies and educational initiatives.(Vidani 2016)

Complementing these structural perspectives are studies examining individual financial behavior, particularly among Generation Z. Research conducted in 2024 established that financial literacy improves spending habits most effectively when applied through consistent financial behavior—demonstrating that knowledge alone is insufficient without active practice. Likewise, a 2025 study on Gen Z investors in Surabaya revealed that digital financial literacy plays a pivotal role in shaping investment decisions. Income emerged as a strong determinant of investment behavior, while the ability to navigate digital financial platforms significantly enhanced individuals' willingness and capacity to invest. Collectively, these studies suggest that financial well-being in the modern era depends on a combination of literacy, digital competence, and behavioral consistency. Moreover, the collaboration

between fintech innovation and traditional banking institutions signifies a new phase of financial transformation – one that prioritizes accessibility, stability, and personalization. Thus, as the global financial ecosystem continues to evolve, fostering financial education, digital inclusion, and responsible behavior becomes essential for empowering Millennials and Generation Z to achieve sustainable economic futures.(Vidani 2017)

Research Objectives

1. To study the usage of fintech apps among Gen Z respondents (objective achieved in Question 6 of questionnaire).
2. To examine whether fintech apps make spending management easier for Gen Z (objective achieved in Question 7 of questionnaire).
3. To analyze the role of fintech apps in tracking expenses of Gen Z respondents (objective achieved in Question 8 of questionnaire).
4. To study the influence of fintech apps on shopping behavior through offers, cashback, and BNPL schemes (objective achieved in Question 9 of questionnaire).
5. To assess the impact of fintech apps on promoting financial discipline among Gen Z (objective achieved in Question 10 of questionnaire).
6. To evaluate the effect of fintech apps on long-term financial planning of Gen Z respondents (objective achieved in Question 11 of questionnaire).
7. To study the preference of Gen Z for fintech apps over traditional banking methods (objective achieved in Question 12 of questionnaire).
8. To examine the self-rated financial literacy of Gen Z in using fintech apps effectively (objective achieved in Question 13 of questionnaire).
9. To study the perception of Gen Z that fintech apps encourage overspending (objective achieved in Question 14 of questionnaire).
10. To evaluate the trust of Gen Z respondents in fintech apps for handling personal and financial data securely (objective achieved in Question 15 of questionnaire).
11. To analyze the role of fintech apps in increasing awareness about investment among Gen Z (Objective Achieved In Question 16questionnaire)
12. To study the overall perception of Gen Z regarding fintech apps improving their financial well-being (objective achieved in Question 17 of questionnaire).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Financial planning is often described as a structured process through which individuals set, pursue, and achieve their financial goals. It is not simply about saving money but about balancing short-term needs with long-term security. Researchers such as Susanto, Setiawan, and Ariyanto (2022) highlight that effective financial planning involves budgeting, saving, investing, and preparing for uncertainties such as retirement, medical emergencies, or sudden financial shocks. Traditionally, people relied on financial advisors or the conventional banking system to guide them in this process. However, the emergence of digital platforms has transformed the way individuals engage with financial services, making tools for planning and investment more accessible to a wider population.(Vidani2016).

This transformation has been made possible through the rapid growth of financial technology, commonly referred to as fintech. Fintech encompasses the use of innovative technologies to deliver financial products and services more efficiently and in more personalized ways. It includes mobile payment applications, robo-advisors, peer-to-peer lending systems, and digital investment platforms (Dhingra, 2024). With the increasing digitalization of life, the spread of the internet, and a growing demand for convenience, fintech has become a central part of modern financial management. For Generation Z, a cohort that has grown up surrounded by smartphones and digital applications, fintech tools are not an external service but an integral part of their lifestyle. They rely on mobile apps not only for payments and shopping but also for transferring money and managing investments. In cities like Bhavnagar, where digital adoption is steadily rising, fintech apps play a central role in shaping how young people plan their finances and make everyday spending decisions (Vidani 2017).

Research on Millennials and Generation Z indicates that their financial planning behavior differs significantly from that of older generations. A study by Susanto and colleagues (2022) revealed that while younger people understand the importance of financial planning, they often struggle to implement it effectively. Their decision to use financial planning tools is strongly influenced by the benefits they perceive from those tools. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted this reality, as many young individuals lacked sufficient emergency funds and had to compromise their standard of living. To address such challenges, fintech apps have introduced features like goal-setting dashboards, reminders, gamified savings plans, and reward-based systems, all aimed at making financial planning more appealing. Yet, the success of these tools depends largely on whether users can maintain disciplined financial behavior, since technology alone cannot replace consistent habits. (Vidani 2018).

Financial literacy plays an essential role in determining how individuals manage their spending and savings. Financial literacy refers to the ability to understand concepts such as budgeting, interest rates, inflation, and investment risks. For Generation Z, the internet and social media have made financial information widely accessible, but this information is often fragmented and sometimes unreliable. Rodriguez, Labong, and Palallos (2024) emphasize that financial literacy has a strong influence on spending habits but only when combined with proper financial behavior. Simply knowing about financial concepts is not enough; individuals must be able to translate that knowledge into action. This is particularly relevant in the Indian context, where online shopping, discounts, and peer pressure through social media often encourage impulsive consumption. Many Gen Z individuals, though financially literate to some extent, still find it difficult to resist such influences. Fintech apps attempt to counter this by offering budgeting tools, spending trackers, and credit monitoring systems, but their effectiveness varies depending on user discipline. Spending behavior is also shaped by psychological and social influences. Studies show that Generation Z places a high value on convenience, instant gratification, and unique experiences. This often results in impulsive buying patterns, which are further fueled by influencer culture and social media marketing strategies

(Rodriguez et al., 2024). Fintech platforms, through offers such as “Buy Now, Pay Later” options, cashback schemes, and gamified rewards, add another layer to this tendency. While these innovations make financial services more engaging, they also risk reinforcing overspending habits. This creates a paradox for Generation Z: while they aspire to financial independence and security, their behavioral tendencies expose them to the danger of debt and poor financial planning. The challenge for fintech, therefore, lies in bridging this gap by incorporating behavioral nudges, timely notifications, and educational tools that encourage more responsible usage. (Vidani 2019). Especially At a broader level, fintech has been recognized as a driving force financial inclusion, in developing countries. In India, mobile-based fintech platforms have expanded access to banking, credit, savings, and insurance in regions where traditional banking infrastructure is weak or absent. Jana (2024) notes that services like UPI payments, Paytm, and Google Pay have become household names, even in semi-urban and rural areas. However, despite this progress, barriers such as limited digital literacy, inconsistent internet access, and regulatory challenges remain. While Generation Z, being digitally savvy, is better positioned to use these tools compared to older generations, disparities still exist between metropolitan cities and smaller towns like Bhavnagar. Understanding how fintech contributes to or limits financial inclusion in such semi-urban areas is vital for assessing its real impact. (Vidani 2020)

Research Gap

Although numerous studies have explored the adoption and usage of financial technology (fintech) applications, much of the existing research has primarily focused on factors such as perceived usefulness, ease of use, trust, and technological readiness. However, the influence of gender differences on fintech adoption and financial behavior remains comparatively underexplored, especially within the context of emerging economies like India. Most previous research has concentrated on Western markets or urban, tech-savvy populations, thereby overlooking the nuanced behavioral, social, and psychological factors that shape fintech engagement across genders in diverse cultural settings.

Furthermore, while existing studies have examined fintech adoption at a general level, limited research has investigated specific behavioral dimensions – such as financial planning, spending control, investment awareness, and the psychological impact of digital finance tools – through a gendered lens. There is also a lack of empirical evidence connecting gender with variables like trust in data security, overspending tendencies, and perceptions of financial discipline within the fintech ecosystem.

Another significant gap lies in the integration of behavioral finance and technology acceptance frameworks. Few studies have combined these theoretical models to explain how gender moderates the relationship between fintech usage, financial confidence, and digital literacy. This gap highlights the need for empirical research that not only measures adoption patterns but also interprets the socio- psychological implications of fintech use across genders.

Addressing these gaps, the present study contributes to existing literature by analyzing gender- based differences in fintech perceptions and behaviors among Indian users.

Hypothesis

1. There is a significant relationship between gender and regular use of fintech apps for shopping and transactions.
2. There is a significant relationship between gender and ease of managing daily spending through fintech apps.
3. There is a significant relationship between gender and tracking expenses using fintech apps.
4. There is a significant relationship between gender and influence of fintech apps on shopping behavior.
5. There is a significant relationship between gender and feeling of financial discipline when using fintech apps.
6. There is a significant relationship between gender and improvement in financial planning for long-term goals through fintech apps.
7. There is a significant relationship between gender and preference for fintech apps over traditional banking.
8. There is a significant relationship between gender and level of financial literacy while using fintech apps.
9. There is a significant relationship between gender and tendency to overspend due to fintech app usage.
10. There is a significant relationship between gender and trust in fintech apps for secure data handling.
11. There is a significant relationship between gender and awareness about investments through fintech apps.
12. There is a significant relationship between gender and perception of fintech apps improving financial well-being.

Table 1. Validation of Questionnaire

Statements	Citation
I regularly use fintech apps (e.g., PhonePe, Paytm, Google Pay, Cred, Groww) for shopping and financial transactions.	(Vidani & Das 2016)
Fintech apps have made it easier for me to manage my daily spending.	(Vidani & Solanki 2017)
Using fintech apps helps me track my expenses more effectively.	(Vidani 2018)
Fintech apps influence my shopping behavior (e.g., cashback offers, discounts, BNPL schemes)	(Vidani 2019)
I feel more financially disciplined when I use fintech apps for payments and budgeting.	(Vidani 2020)
Fintech apps have improved my financial planning for long-term goals (e.g., savings, investments).	(Vidani & Saxena 2021)
I prefer fintech apps over traditional banking methods for convenience and speed.	(Thakkar & Vidani 2022)
I have a good level of financial literacy that helps me make informed decisions while using fintech apps.	(Sharma & Shah 2023)

I trust fintech apps to handle my personal and financial data securely.	(Shah & Saxena 2023)
Fintech apps have increased my awareness about investments (e.g., mutual funds, stock trading)	(Das & Vidani 2024)
Overall, I believe fintech apps play a positive role in improving my financial well- being	(Vidani & Solanki 2024)

Source: Author's Compilation

METHODOLOGY

Table 2. Research Methodology

Research Design	Descriptive
Sample Method	Non-Probability - Convenient Sampling method
Data Collection Method	Primary method
Data Collection Method	Structured Questionnaire
Type of Questions	Close ended
Data Collection mode	Online through Google Form
Data Analysis methods	Tables
Data Analysis Tools	SPSS and Excel
Sampling Size	189
Survey Area	Bhavnagar And Bhuj
Sampling Unit	Students, Private and government Job employees, Businessmen, Home maker, Professionals like CA, Doctor etc.

Source: Author's Compilation

Demographic Summary

The demographic summary of the sample consists of 189 individuals. In terms of gender, 66.7% are male, while 33.3% are female. The majority of respondents (85.2%) are in the 18-25 age group, with only 3.7% falling between 26-32 years, and 11.1% in the 32-40 range. Regarding education, most participants are graduates (40.7%), followed by postgraduates (29.6%), and 22.2% have completed only their higher secondary certificate. In terms of occupation, 74.1% are students, 14.8% are businessmen, and smaller percentages are employed in jobs (7.4%) or hold professional roles (3.7%). Monthly income data shows that over half of the sample (51.9%) earn less than Rs. 5000, while 25.9% earn above Rs. 20,000.

Cronbach Alpha

The Cronbach's Alpha for the reliability of the scale is 0.854, based on 12 items. This value indicates a high level of internal consistency, suggesting that the items in the scale are reliably measuring the same underlying construct. Typically, a Cronbach's Alpha above 0.8 is considered excellent, indicating strong reliability for the data collected.

Table 3. Results of Hypothesis Testing.

Sr. No	Alternate Hypothesis (H ₁)	Result (p =)	p > / < 0.05	Accept / Reject Null Hypothesis	R value	Relationship
1	There is a significant relationship between gender and regular use of fintech apps for shopping and transactions.	0.031	< 0.05	Reject Null	0.284	Weak Positive
2	There is a significant relationship between gender and ease of managing daily spending through fintech apps.	0.072	> 0.05	Accept Null	0.146	Weak Positive
3	There is a significant relationship between gender and tracking expenses using fintech apps.	0.044	< 0.05	Reject Null	0.261	Weak Positive
4	There is a significant relationship between gender and influence of fintech apps on shopping behavior.	0.018	< 0.05	Reject Null	0.312	Moderate Positive
5	There is a significant relationship between gender and feeling of financial discipline when using fintech apps	0.058	< 0.05	Accept Null	0.172	Weak Positive
6	There is a significant relationship between gender and improvement in financial planning for long-term goals through fintech apps.	0.029	< 0.05	Reject Null	0.297	Weak Positive
7	There is a significant relationship between gender	0.003	< 0.05	Reject Null	0.339	Moderate Positive

Source: Author's Compilation

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide valuable insights into the influence of gender on the use and perception of fintech applications such as PhonePe, Paytm, Google Pay, Cred, and Groww. The hypothesis testing revealed a mix of significant and non-significant relationships, indicating that while gender differences play a role in certain aspects of fintech usage, other perceptions are relatively similar across male and female respondents. This finding highlights that fintech adoption is increasingly becoming gender-neutral in several areas, though distinct behavioral and attitudinal patterns still exist.

A key outcome of the study is that gender has a significant relationship with the frequency of fintech app usage for shopping and transactions. This suggests that males and females differ in how frequently they rely on these digital platforms for financial activities. Consistent with previous research, males tend to adopt fintech tools more frequently for investment or transaction purposes, whereas females are gradually increasing their participation due to growing trust and ease of use. The results also demonstrate a significant association between gender and influence of fintech apps on shopping behavior, indicating that features like cashback, discounts, and buy-now-pay-later schemes appeal differently to male and female users. Females, in particular, might be more responsive to convenience and reward-driven incentives, whereas males may focus more on financial utility.

Another significant relationship was observed between gender and financial planning and long-term goal management through fintech apps. This suggests that fintech platforms are empowering both genders but in different ways – males may use them for investment tracking and returns, while females may use them for budgeting and savings. The study also found a significant relationship between gender and preference for fintech apps over traditional banking, implying that convenience, speed, and accessibility have become major drivers of adoption across both genders, albeit with varying intensities.

However, several hypotheses yielded non-significant results, such as the relationship between gender and perceptions of financial discipline, trust in data security, and ease of managing daily spending. This indicates that both males and females share similar confidence levels in fintech platforms' reliability and security measures. It also highlights that once users are familiar with digital financial tools, gender ceases to be a distinguishing factor in their perceptions of control, safety, and efficiency. The weak correlations across many variables further suggest that fintech acceptance has become more inclusive and democratized.

Interestingly, the study also found significant links between gender and awareness of investment opportunities as well as overall financial well-being attributed to fintech use. This implies that fintech platforms are not only transforming transaction behavior but are also contributing to financial literacy and empowerment across genders. As digital finance continues to evolve, such findings emphasize the growing role of fintech in promoting financial inclusion and knowledge.

Overall, the results suggest that while some gender-based differences persist, the increasing normalization of digital finance tools is bridging this gap. Fintech adoption is driven more by technological convenience and perceived utility than by demographic factors, suggesting a positive shift toward digital financial equality in India.

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study contribute meaningfully to the theoretical understanding of gender differences in fintech adoption and financial behavior, offering new insights into how digital financial technologies are reshaping financial decision-making. The results provide empirical support to several established theories in the domains of technology adoption, consumer behavior, and financial psychology while also highlighting emerging dimensions in the context of fintech usage in a rapidly digitizing economy like India.

Firstly, the study reinforces the core principles of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), which emphasize perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and behavioral intention as key determinants of technology adoption. The observed gender differences in fintech app usage and perception indicate that these determinants manifest differently across male and female users. Males may place more emphasis on the functional utility and efficiency of fintech apps, while females might value convenience, accessibility, and trust. This finding theoretically expands TAM by suggesting that gender moderates the influence of perceived usefulness and trust in the adoption of financial technologies.

Secondly, the study offers theoretical extensions to the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 2003) by illustrating how fintech innovations diffuse differently across demographic groups. The results showing significant relationships between gender and aspects such as financial planning, shopping behavior, and investment awareness imply that innovation adoption is not solely driven by technological readiness but also by social and psychological factors associated with gender norms. This suggests that diffusion models in financial technology should account for cultural and gender-based socialization patterns that influence risk perception, confidence, and financial control.

From the perspective of Behavioral Finance Theory, the findings deepen our understanding of how digital financial interfaces affect individual attitudes toward money management. The significant relationships between gender and financial discipline, long-term planning, and overspending behavior highlight that fintech tools can alter financial cognition and self-control mechanisms. This supports the theoretical argument that technology is not a neutral medium; rather, it shapes and reshapes financial behaviors based on users' psychological orientations and socio-cultural identities. Hence, gender operates as a behavioral lens through which individuals interpret and engage with financial innovations.

Furthermore, the study contributes to the Financial Literacy and Empowerment Frameworks, which assert that access to technology can democratize financial knowledge. The finding that fintech usage enhances investment awareness and perceived financial well-being across genders aligns with theoretical perspectives on inclusive finance and digital empowerment. It

suggests that fintech platforms act as informal financial educators, promoting self-directed learning and informed decision-making. This underscores the theoretical shift from gendered financial dependency to gender-neutral financial capability enabled by technology.

Lastly, the study's outcomes bridge theories of consumer trust and data security perception with fintech adoption models. The relatively neutral gender differences in trust and perceived security imply that fintech ecosystems are achieving parity in user confidence—supporting theories that trust is built through systemic credibility and positive user experience rather than demographic predispositions.

In sum, this research enriches theoretical discussions by integrating gender as a critical moderating variable in technology acceptance and behavioral finance theories. It highlights that fintech adoption is a complex interplay of technological, psychological, and social factors, thereby encouraging future researchers to explore more intersectional theoretical models that capture the evolving dynamics of financial digitization.

Practical Implications

The results of this study hold significant practical implications for fintech companies, policymakers, educators, and financial institutions seeking to enhance financial inclusion, user engagement, and digital literacy. As gender was found to influence several aspects of fintech app usage, understanding these behavioral nuances can help stakeholders design more inclusive, user-friendly, and impactful financial technologies that cater to the diverse needs of both men and women in the digital economy.

For fintech companies, the findings emphasize the importance of developing gender-sensitive strategies that address varying motivations and usage patterns. Since males were found to use fintech apps more frequently for shopping, investments, and financial management, while females tend to prioritize convenience, trust, and budgeting features, app developers can customize interfaces and features accordingly. For example, integrating personalized financial planning tools, spending alerts, or simplified investment tutorials can attract and retain more female users. Meanwhile, offering data analytics dashboards, investment tracking, and performance insights can enhance engagement among male users. The results also imply that promotional strategies—such as cashback offers, rewards, and “buy now, pay later” schemes—should be designed to appeal to both genders through balanced marketing narratives that emphasize security, convenience, and empowerment.

The study also offers valuable implications for financial institutions and policymakers. The positive relationship between gender and perceptions of financial planning and well-being highlights the growing role of fintech in promoting financial inclusion and stability. Policymakers can leverage these insights to design targeted awareness campaigns that promote digital financial literacy among underrepresented groups, particularly women. Encouraging fintech adoption among women can contribute to greater participation in formal financial systems, bridging the gender gap in savings, credit, and investment. Additionally, regulatory bodies should focus on ensuring that fintech platforms

adhere to stringent data protection and privacy standards to sustain user trust, which was found to be relatively neutral across genders—an encouraging sign for equitable adoption. In the context of financial education, the findings suggest that fintech apps can serve as effective tools for improving financial literacy and long-term financial planning. Educational institutions and non-governmental organizations can collaborate with fintech firms to develop interactive financial education modules that utilize app-based simulations, gamified learning, and real-time financial tracking. These interventions can empower users, particularly women and younger generations, to make informed financial decisions and develop sound budgeting habits.

For marketers and brand strategists, the insights from this research highlight that gender-based segmentation can improve customer engagement. Understanding the psychological drivers behind fintech usage allows marketers to craft messages that resonate more deeply with their target audiences. Campaigns that emphasize empowerment, financial independence, and technological convenience can appeal to female users, while themes centered around performance, control, and innovation may engage male users more effectively.

Finally, for product developers and UX designers, the study reinforces the need for intuitive, secure, and inclusive digital environments. Features such as multilingual support, voice assistance, visual dashboards, and AI-driven financial advice can cater to diverse user preferences and comfort levels.

Overall, these findings underscore that fintech success depends not only on technological innovation but also on understanding user diversity. By integrating gender-sensitive insights into product design, marketing, and policy frameworks, fintech firms and stakeholders can create more equitable and sustainable digital finance ecosystems that empower all users to manage their finances effectively and confidently.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study sought to examine the relationship between gender and various aspects of fintech app usage and perception, focusing on dimensions such as spending habits, financial planning, investment awareness, trust, and preference for digital financial tools. The findings provide meaningful insights into how males and females engage differently with fintech platforms, while also highlighting the broader trend of digital inclusivity emerging in India's financial landscape. Overall, the results suggest that gender continues to play a role in shaping specific behavioral and attitudinal patterns toward fintech usage, though the gap between male and female users is gradually narrowing as digital finance becomes more mainstream.

The analysis revealed several statistically significant relationships between gender and key fintech behaviors. Male respondents were generally more frequent users of fintech apps for transactions, investments, and financial management, while females exhibited higher responsiveness to convenience, cashback offers, and user-friendly features. These findings align with the view that fintech adoption is influenced not only by technological ease but also by

social and psychological factors tied to gendered financial experiences. Furthermore, significant associations were found between gender and financial planning, awareness of investment opportunities, and perception of overall financial well-being, suggesting that fintech platforms are serving as catalysts for greater financial empowerment among both men and women.

Equally important were the non-significant results, which indicated that both genders share similar attitudes toward trust, data security, and financial discipline when using fintech apps. This outcome reflects the growing credibility of fintech platforms and the success of digital finance companies in building user confidence through transparency, security, and consistent service delivery. The neutral perception of trust across genders signifies that fintech adoption is becoming less dependent on demographic attributes and more influenced by perceived reliability and usability of the technology itself.

Theoretically, the study contributes to existing models such as the Technology Acceptance Model and Behavioral Finance Theory by introducing gender as a moderating variable that influences the relationship between perceived usefulness, trust, and behavioral intention. Practically, it highlights how fintech developers, marketers, and policymakers can design gender-sensitive strategies to promote financial inclusion and digital literacy. By addressing gender-based differences in motivation, comfort, and awareness, stakeholders can ensure a more balanced and inclusive growth of the fintech ecosystem.

In a broader context, the study reinforces the transformative role of fintech in bridging traditional financial divides. As mobile payment systems, investment platforms, and budgeting tools continue to expand, they are not only changing how people transact but also how they perceive and manage money. The democratization of finance through technology is empowering individuals to take greater control of their financial lives, regardless of gender, income, or location.

To conclude, while gender remains a factor influencing certain aspects of fintech adoption, the overall trajectory points toward increasing parity in digital financial behavior. Fintech applications have proven to be powerful tools for promoting financial literacy, inclusion, and empowerment. Continued innovation, supported by inclusive design and equitable policy measures, can ensure that the benefits of digital finance reach every segment of society, thereby contributing to a more inclusive and financially aware future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While this study has provided valuable insights into the relationship between gender and the use of fintech applications, there remains considerable scope for future research to deepen, broaden, and refine our understanding of digital financial behavior. The findings highlight key areas where further exploration could enhance both academic knowledge and practical implementation in the fintech domain.

First, future studies should consider expanding the demographic scope beyond gender to include factors such as age, income level, education, and

occupation. These variables can significantly influence an individual's financial behavior and technology adoption patterns. For instance, younger users might exhibit higher digital literacy and willingness to experiment with new fintech tools compared to older users. Similarly, income and educational levels may moderate how users perceive the usefulness and risks associated with fintech applications. A multidimensional approach integrating these variables would provide a more comprehensive understanding of user diversity.

Second, researchers should employ longitudinal study designs to track behavioral changes over time. The current study captures a cross-sectional snapshot of user perceptions, but fintech adoption is a dynamic process influenced by evolving technology, market innovations, and regulatory developments. Long-term studies could reveal how user trust, satisfaction, and financial habits evolve as new features, services, and security frameworks are introduced by fintech companies.

Third, future research should explore cross-cultural and regional comparisons. Given India's cultural and socio-economic diversity, fintech adoption patterns may vary across urban and rural settings or among different states and communities. Comparing results across regions or extending the study to other developing and developed countries would help determine whether observed gender differences are culturally specific or globally consistent. Such comparative studies would enrich the global understanding of financial inclusion through technology.

Another promising avenue for future research lies in examining psychological and behavioral factors influencing fintech adoption. Variables such as risk perception, trust, digital anxiety, and financial self-efficacy could offer deeper insights into the motivational and emotional components of fintech behavior. Integrating behavioral finance and psychology theories with technology adoption frameworks would help build more predictive and holistic models.

Additionally, future studies could focus on emerging fintech domains such as blockchain-based finance, decentralized banking, robo-advisors, and AI-driven investment platforms. As technology advances, user perceptions and trust mechanisms are likely to change.

Understanding gender-based responses to these innovations will be crucial for designing inclusive and trustworthy financial technologies.

Researchers should also consider the impact of digital financial education and awareness campaigns. Experimental studies could assess how targeted interventions, such as app-based learning modules or financial literacy workshops, influence fintech usage and confidence among women and other underrepresented groups.

Finally, future research should examine the policy and ethical implications of fintech growth. As data privacy, cybersecurity, and digital consumer rights become central issues, exploring user attitudes toward regulation and transparency will provide important guidance for policymakers and industry leaders.

In conclusion, while this study establishes a foundation for understanding gendered fintech behavior, future research must adopt interdisciplinary, longitudinal, and cross-cultural approaches. By integrating demographic, psychological, and technological perspectives, scholars and practitioners can contribute to the creation of a more inclusive, secure, and sustainable digital financial ecosystem that benefits all segments of society..

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