

Assessing the Effects of Agency Banking and POS Terminals on the Growth of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in South-East Nigeria's Commercial Hubs

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Abstract

The purpose of this work was to assess the impact of agency banking and POS terminals on micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) growth in Southeast Nigeria. In the explanatory research design, we adopted both descriptive and inferential statistics to answer the research questions. Primary data was generated from a sample of 400 MSMEs operator selected from the states in the region using multiple sampling techniques. Results from the estimation of multiple regression to test the hypotheses and determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables shows that both agency banking and POS usage significantly enhance MSME growth in the region. The study therefore recommends enlargement of digital financial services, improving financial literacy and developing infrastructure that foster fintech and economic development.

Keywords:

Agency Banking, POS Terminals, MSMEs, Commercial Hubs, South-East, Nigeria

1.1 Introduction/Background to the Study

The emergency of financial inclusion has become a critical driver of economic development, predominantly in developing economies that house a huge population of unbanked or underbanked persons (Okolo-obasi et al, 2025). Expansion of digital financial services has become the likely answer to include numerous population of the unbanked in the developing world. For instance, Nigeria's financial landscape has been transformed by the rapid expansion of digital financial services of financial intermediation, with agency banking and Point of Sale (POS) terminals playing a pivotal role in extending banking services beyond traditional brick-and-mortar institutions (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2020; Adewuyi&Bankole, 2021).

To Akighir et al (2023) Anggara et al (2025), agency banking encompasses all models where financial institutions engage third-party agents to provide basic banking services such as deposits, withdrawals, transfers, and bill payments on their behalf. Models of this nature according to Ozili (2018), Uduji et al (2023) have tremendously garnered traction in Nigeria due to infrastructural constraints, especially in rural and semi-urban areas where access to formal banking institutions is limited. In the same vein, POS terminals have become widespread tools for facilitating financial transactions, enabling merchants and small businesses to accept electronic payments efficiently (Ayegbeni, 2020; Ayunku&Pakepinene, 2023).

The rise of agency banking and POS services has coincided with the growing importance of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Nigeria's economy. MSMEs account for a significant proportion of employment and contribute substantially to GDP, particularly in commercial hubs such as those found in Southeast Nigeria, including cities like Onitsha, Aba, and Enugu (SMEDAN, 2021). These enterprises rely heavily on efficient financial services to manage cash flows, access credit, and expand operations.

Despite the apparent benefits, the extent to which agency banking and POS terminals have contributed to MSME growth remains an area requiring empirical investigation. While these financial innovations promise enhanced accessibility, reduced transaction costs, and improved financial management, challenges such as network failures, fraud risks, regulatory constraints, and operational inefficiencies persist (Adewuyi&Bankole, 2021).

This study therefore seeks to examine the relationship between agency banking, POS terminal usage, and MSME growth in the commercial hubs of Southeast Nigeria. It aims to provide insights into how financial technology-driven inclusion mechanisms influence enterprise performance and local economic development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Irrespective of the fact that agency banking and POS services have been highly proliferated across Nigeria, Southeast Nigeria-based MSMEs continue to face significant financial constraints that hinder their growth and sustainability. Some scholars noted that, access to affordable and reliable financial services remains

uneven for mainly the informal or semi-formal sectors small-scale enterprises. While it has been established that the purpose of designing agency banking and POS terminals are to bridge the financial inclusion gap, the effectiveness of these two in stimulating growth of MSME is still a subject under hot debate. To Eze and Nwankwo (2020), numerous MSMEs are still faced with the challenges of high transaction cost, erratic network connectivity, high level of insecurity, and narrow financial literacy. These challenges appear to be undermining the potential benefits of these financial innovations.

On the other hand, most studies carried out before have mainly concentrated on financial inclusion at the macro level, with few attentions paid to localized impacts within specific commercial hubs. The Southeast region of Nigeria known for its vibrant entrepreneurial activities presents a unique context where the interaction between financial technology and enterprise development can be critically examined. The lack of empirical evidence on how agency banking and POS terminals specifically influence MSME performance in this region creates a gap in the literature (Eze & Nwankwo, 2020; Okolo-obasi et al 2025; Ezeudu & Mutezo, 2025). Without such insights, policymakers and financial institutions may be unable to design targeted interventions that effectively support MSME growth.

This study therefore contributes to the financial inclusion debate by attempting to address this gap through thorough investigation of the impact of agency banking and POS terminal usage on MSME growth in Southeast Nigeria. Hence, the study provides answers to the four research questions which form the core objectives of the study. The questions are thus:

- What is the level of adoption of agency banking among MSMEs in Southeast Nigeria?
- What impact does agency banking have on MSME growth?
- To what extent does POS terminal usage affect MSME performance?
- What challenges do MSMEs face in utilizing agency banking and POS services?

Hypotheses Development

Agency Banking and MSME Growth

Agency banking improves access to financial services, reduces transaction costs, and enhances liquidity for MSMEs. Consistent with Financial Intermediation Theory, it facilitates efficient resource allocation and supports business growth (Ayadi et al., 2023; Nduka & Egungwu, 2025). However, in the South-East region of Nigeria, the extent to which the above is applicable is still a subject of debate. Therefore, this study hypothesized that:

$H_{0\ 1}$: Agency banking has no significant effect on MSME growth.

POS Terminal Usage and MSME Growth

POS terminals enhance transaction efficiency, reduce cash-related risks, and improve record-keeping. The Diffusion of Innovation Theory explains how such technologies improve firm performance. Empirical studies confirm a positive link between fintech adoption and SME growth (Siddik et al., 2022; Rabbani et al., 2023). But, not much studies have been done in the context of Nigeria in general and Southeast in particular to substantiate the relationship between POS terminal usage and MSMEs growth. Hence, we hypothesized that:

H_{02} : POS usage has no significant effect on MSME growth.

The further contents of the paper can be adumbrated as follows. Section 2 looks at the literature and theoretical perspective. Section 3 describes the materials and method. Section 4 presents the results and corresponding discussion. Section 5 concludes the paper with policy implications and future research directions.

2. Literature and theoretical perspective

2.1 Conceptual Review

Agency Banking

Agency banking according to Bassey et al (2015), simply means a financial service delivery model where banks appoint third-party agents to provide banking services on their behalf, particularly in underserved areas. This model reduces the need for physical bank branches and enhances financial inclusion(Mammah&Ohazurike2025).In Nigeria, agency banking has expanded significantly due to policy support and technological advancement. It plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between formal financial institutions and unbanked populations by providing services such as deposits, withdrawals, and transfers (Bassey et al., 2015, Gbadamosi&Ajobiwe, 2026). Empirical evidence suggests that agency banking contributes to economic activities by increasing access to financial services, promoting savings culture, and facilitating transactions among small businesses (Odumusor&Nwangwu, 2025).

Point of Sale (POS) Terminals

According to Nwanmuoh et al (2025), POS terminals are electronic devices used to process card-based transactions. They enable businesses to accept cashless payments, thereby improving transaction efficiency and reducing reliance on physical cash. To Odohet al (2026), the growth of POS usage in Nigeria reflects the broader trend of digital financial services expansion. POS systems improve transparency, enhance record-keeping, and facilitate seamless business operations for MSMEs.However,Odumusor andNwangwu (2025) added that, challenges such as network failures, transaction delays, and security concerns can limit their effectiveness in promoting business growth.

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

MSMEs are critical drivers of economic growth, employment generation, and poverty reduction. In Nigeria, they represent a substantial portion of economic activity but face persistent constraints, particularly limited access to finance. Financial inclusion initiatives, including agency banking and POS systems, aim to address these constraints by improving access to financial services and enhancing business performance. Despite these efforts, a significant financing gap remains, estimated in billions of dollars, limiting MSME expansion and sustainability (Mammah&Ohazurike, 2025).

Financial Inclusion and MSME Growth

Financial inclusion refers to the availability and accessibility of affordable financial services to individuals and businesses. It is widely recognized as a key driver of inclusive economic growth. Studies indicate that financial inclusion enhances MSME performance by improving access to credit, facilitating transactions, and reducing operational costs. However, the relationship is often complex and influenced by factors such as government support, infrastructure, and financial literacy (Omebere& Ehiedu,2025; Usman et al., 2026).

2.2Theoretical underpinning

This study is anchored on the following theories:

Financial Intermediation Theory

Financial Intermediation Theory explains the role of financial institutions in mobilizing savings and channeling them into productive investments. Banks act as intermediaries between savers and borrowers, reducing transaction costs and information asymmetry(Okolo-Obasi et al 2025).Agency banking extends this theory by decentralizing financial intermediation through agents, thereby improving access to financial services in remote areas. By lowering transaction costs and increasing accessibility, agency banking enhances MSMEs' ability to access funds and manage financial operations (Uduji et al, 2024).This theory supports the argument that improved financial access through agency banking and POS systems can lead to increased business productivity and growth.

Diffusion of Innovation Theory

The Diffusion of Innovation Theory, developed by Rogers (1995), explains how new technologies spread within a society. It identifies key factors influencing adoption, including relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability.In the context of this study, agency banking and POS terminals are financial innovations whose adoption among MSMEs depends on these factors. For instance, the perceived ease of use and benefits of POS systems can influence their adoption rate.Studies applying this theory to financial innovation highlight that technological adoption is critical for improving financial service delivery and business performance.

Financial Inclusion Theory

Financial Inclusion Theory emphasizes the importance of providing accessible and affordable financial services to underserved populations. It posits that inclusion enhances economic participation, reduces poverty, and promotes sustainable development. Agency banking and POS systems are key instruments of financial inclusion, enabling MSMEs to participate more effectively in the formal financial system. However, challenges such as low financial literacy and infrastructural deficits can hinder the realization of these benefits (Ayegebeni, 2020).

2.3 Empirical Review

Empirical studies on agency banking and MSME growth have produced mixed findings. Some studies find a positive relationship between agency banking and economic activities. For instance, Odumisor and Nwangwu (2025) reported a significant correlation between agency banking and business growth in Nigeria. Similarly, Akighir et al (2023) found that agency banking enhances financial inclusion and economic activities in underserved areas. However, other studies suggest limited or insignificant effects. Ayunku and Pakepinene (2023), Okolo-Obasi et al (2025), found that agency banking services had an inhibitive or insignificant impact on SME performance, indicating that access alone may not guarantee growth.

On digital financial services, broader literature suggests that fintech innovations, including POS systems, improve firm performance by enhancing efficiency, increasing market reach, and reducing transaction costs. Nevertheless, persistent challenges such as infrastructure deficits, cyber risks, and regulatory constraints limit the full realization of these benefits. Recent empirical studies provide strong evidence that digital financial services significantly influence MSME growth. For instance, fintech lending has been found to enhance MSME expansion by improving access to credit and reducing financing constraints (Anggara et al., 2025). Similarly, digital financial inclusion has been shown to positively affect SME growth and employment generation in Nigeria (Gbadamosi&Ajobiwe, 2026). However, despite these benefits, access to finance remains a major constraint, with MSMEs in developing economies still facing substantial funding gaps (Mammah&Ohazurike, 2025).

Although recent studies have established a positive relationship between digital financial services and MSME growth, most of these studies focus broadly on fintech or national-level data. There is limited empirical evidence specifically examining the role of agency banking and POS systems at the micro-regional level, particularly within Southeast Nigeria's commercial. From the above, it becomes obvious that there is limited empirical evidence on how agency banking and POS terminals specifically influence MSME growth in Southeast Nigeria's commercial hubs. This study addresses this gap by providing localized and context-specific analysis.

3.0 Materials and Method

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research design, specifically a **cross-sectional survey approach**. This design is appropriate because it allows for the collection of data from a large number of MSMEs at a single point in time and facilitates the examination of relationships between financial service usage (agency banking and POS) and business performance. The choice of a quantitative approach is justified by its ability to produce measurable and generalizable results using statistical tools (Creswell, 2014).

Area of the Study

The study was conducted in South-East geopolitical region of Nigeria. The South-East region is made up of five states which include, Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. The region has a total land area of 29525Km² with a projected population of about 21,955,414 (NBS, 2020). The population density of the region according to NPC (2019) is about 744 people per Km²; this is two and half times far more than the mean national population density of 140 persons per Km². About 61% of the population is under 30 years, likewise, about 51% of the population is female (NPC, 2019; NBS, 2020). The region is bounded in North-West by Kogi State, in the South-West by Delta and Rivers States, South-South by AkwaIbom and Cross Rivers States, and North-East by Benue State. Mainly the study focuses on commercial hubs in Southeast Nigeria, particularly: Onitsha (Anambra State), Aba (Abia State), Enugu (Enugu State)

Population of the Study

The population consists of registered and unregistered MSMEs operating within the selected commercial hubs. According to SMEDAN and NBS (2021), MSMEs constitute a significant portion of businesses in these areas.

Sample Size

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)} \quad \text{Equation 1}$$

In this equation, while N is total or finite population of the study, e, stands for level of significance (Limit of tolerable error) and 1 is unity (constant)

$$n = \frac{10,907}{1+10,907(5^2)} = n = \frac{10,907}{27.2676} = n = 400$$

Sampling Technique

To select the respondents used for this study, we employed a multi-stage sampling method using both Purposive sampling, Stratified sampling and Random sampling techniques. In the first stage, we purposively selected three states from the zone based on the documented commercial activities in the states. Hence we selected Abia, Anambra, and Enugu states. In the second stage, from each of the selected states, we also purposively selected two local government area on the basis of hosting the biggest commercial hub in such state. In the third stage, we used stratified random sampling as we stratified the MSMEs in each of the commercial hubs. In the last and final stage, with the aid of community gate keepers, we randomly selected MSMEs owners from each of the stratum. With this, we selected a total of 400 MSMEs used for analysis.

Sources and Method of Data Collection

The study uses primary data, collected through structured questionnaires administered to MSME operators. The questionnaire is divided into sections covering; demographic information, usage of agency banking, POS terminal adoption, and business performance indicators

Model Specification

In order to assess the relationship between the dependent variables and independent variables this study specify MSME growth as a function of financial inclusion variables such as adoption of POS terminals, Agency banking, financial literacy, and infrastructural network reliability. Mathematically the equation is as follows.

$$GMSMEs = f(Ag_{Ba} + POS_T + Fin_{Lit} + Inf_{Net}), \text{ Equation 1}$$

econometrically, the model is stated thus:

$$PR = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Ag_Ba + \beta_2 POS_T + \beta_3 Fin_Lit + \beta_4 Inf_Net + \mu \quad \text{Equation 2}$$

Where

- $GMSMEs$ = MSME Growth (dependent variable)
- Ag_Ba = Agency Banking usage
- POS_T = POS terminal usage
- Fin_Lit = Financial literacy
- Inf_Net = Infrastructure (network reliability, electricity)
- β_0 = Intercept
- $\beta_1 - \beta_4$ = Coefficients
- μ = Error term

Table 3.1 Description and Measurement of Variables

Variable	Description	Measurement
GMSMEs	MSME Growth	Revenue growth, employment, expansion (Likert scale or % growth)
Ag_Ba	Agency Banking	Frequency of use, number of transactions
POS_T	POS Usage	Volume/value of POS transactions
Fin_Lit	Financial Literacy	Knowledge score (survey-based)
Inf_Net	Infrastructure	Perception of network/electricity reliability

Justification of the Model

The multiple regression model is justified because MSME growth is influenced by multiple factors beyond financial access alone. Including control variables such as financial literacy and infrastructure improves the explanatory power of the model. Furthermore, similar models have been used in recent empirical studies on fintech and SME growth (Rabbani et al., 2023; Siddik et al., 2022).

4. Results and Discussions

Response Rate

A total of 400 questionnaires were administered, out of which 386 were returned and valid, representing a response rate of 96.5%, which is adequate for statistical analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.1: Summary Statistics of Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max
MSME Growth (GMSME)	3.87	0.74	1.50	5.00
Agency Banking (Ag_Ba)	3.65	0.81	1.00	5.00
POS Usage (POS_T)	3.92	0.69	1.20	5.00
Financial Literacy (Fin_Lit)	3.58	0.77	1.00	5.00
Infrastructure (Inf_Net)	3.21	0.85	1.00	5.00

Source: Authors' Computation, 2026

The average MSME growth score (3.87) suggests moderate business expansion among respondents. POS usage appears slightly higher than agency banking, indicating stronger adoption of POS systems.

Correlation Analysis

Table 4.2: Correlation Matrix

Variable	GMSMEs	Ag_Ba	POS_T	Fin_Lit	Inf_Net
GMSMEs	1.000				
Ag_Ba	0.612	1.000			
POS_T	0.684	0.531	1.000		
Fin_Lit	0.577	0.492	0.515	1.000	
Inf_Net	0.498	0.441	0.462	0.438	1.000

Source: Authors' Computation, 2026

All independent variables show **positive correlations** with MSME growth. POS usage has the strongest relationship ($r = 0.684$), suggesting it plays a significant role in business performance.

Regression Analysis

To test the study hypotheses, an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression was conducted.

Regression Model

$$y = b_0 + b_1 x$$

$$y = 8.49 - 0.54x$$

$R^2 = 0.72$ • b_0 = intercept • b_1 = slope • least squares minimizes squared vertical residual gaps.

Table 4.3: Regression Results

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Probability
GMSMEs	0.842	0.312	2.70	0.008
Ag_Ba	0.215	0.072	2.99	0.003
POS_T	0.348	0.081	4.30	0.000
Fin_Lit	0.189	0.069	2.74	0.007
Inf_Net	0.142	0.061	2.33	0.021

Source: Authors' Computation, 2026

Model Summary:	
Statistic	Value
R ²	0.621
Adjusted R ²	0.608
F-Statistic	47.85
Prob (F-Stat)	0.000

Source: Authors' Computation, 2026

Agency Banking (Ag_Ba)

Agency banking has a positive and statistically significant effect on MSME growth ($\beta = 0.215$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that increased use of agency banking services enhances business performance. We therefore rejected the null hypothesis one and accepted the alternative to conclude that: *agency banking has no significant effect on MSME growth*

POS Usage (POS_T)

POS usage shows the strongest positive impact ($\beta = 0.348$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that digital payment systems significantly improve transaction efficiency and sales. To this, we rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative to conclude that: *POS usage has significant effect on MSME growth*

Financial Literacy (Fin_Lit)

Financial literacy is also significant ($\beta = 0.189$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that MSME owners with better financial knowledge perform better.

Infrastructure Network (Inf_Net)

Infrastructure positively affects MSME growth ($\beta = 0.142$, $p < 0.05$), highlighting the importance of reliable electricity and network services.

Discussion of Findings

The findings align with Financial Intermediation Theory and Diffusion of Innovation Theory, confirming that access to financial services and technology adoption significantly influence MSME growth.

Agency Banking and MSME Growth

The regression results revealed that agency banking has a positive and statistically significant effect on MSME growth in Southeast Nigeria. This implies that increased access to financial services through agents enhances business expansion, improves liquidity, and facilitates financial transactions. This finding aligns with the study by Ayadi et al. (2023), which found that proximity, convenience, and accessibility are key

drivers of agency banking adoption in Nigeria, thereby improving financial inclusion and economic participation. Similarly, Nduka and Egungwu (2025) observed that agency banking contributes significantly to financial system efficiency and promotes access to financial services, particularly in underserved areas. From a theoretical perspective, this result supports the Financial Intermediation Theory, which posits that financial institutions (including agents) act as intermediaries that reduce transaction costs and information asymmetry, thereby enhancing economic activities.

However, the finding contrasts partially with Ayunku and Pakepinene (2023), who reported that agency banking showed an insignificant or inhibitive effect on SME performance in certain contexts. This discrepancy may be due to regional differences, infrastructural constraints, or varying levels of agent efficiency. In Southeast Nigeria, the dense commercial environment likely amplifies the benefits of agency banking.

POS Terminal Usage and MSME Performance

The study found that POS terminal usage has the strongest positive and significant impact on MSME growth, suggesting that digital payment adoption is a major driver of business performance. This result is consistent with Ogunsuyi and Siyanbola (2020), who found that POS systems significantly improve SME performance by enhancing transaction efficiency and reducing cash-handling risks. More recent evidence by Ogunwale et al. (2024) also confirms that POS and other electronic banking tools improve operational efficiency among SMEs. Furthermore, Kifordu (2024) noted that fintech solutions such as POS terminals enable SMEs to better manage financial records, improve decision-making, and increase their contribution to GDP. Similarly, Ewubare and Odu (2024) highlighted that cashless payment systems (including POS) significantly enhance sales growth, profitability, and customer satisfaction among MSMEs.

These findings strongly support the Diffusion of Innovation Theory, which explains how the adoption of new technologies (e.g., POS systems) leads to improved efficiency and competitiveness among early adopters. Additionally, fintech-focused studies (e.g., Moniepoint-related research) show that POS terminals and digital platforms have reduced the cost of transactions and transformed business operations in Southeast Nigeria, thereby promoting MSME growth.

Financial Literacy and MSME Growth

The regression results indicate that financial literacy has a positive and significant effect on MSME growth, suggesting that knowledge and understanding of financial tools enhance business decision-making. Although not always explicitly isolated in empirical models, existing literature consistently highlights financial literacy as a critical enabler of financial inclusion. For instance, fintech adoption

studies emphasize that MSMEs with better understanding of digital tools are more likely to utilize them effectively and achieve improved performance outcomes.

This finding is also supported indirectly by financial inclusion literature, which shows that access to financial services alone is insufficient without the capacity to utilize such services effectively. Hence, financial literacy complements agency banking and POS usage in driving MSME growth.

Infrastructure and MSME Growth

The study further found that infrastructure (electricity and internet connectivity) has a positive and significant effect on MSME growth, though its impact is relatively moderate compared to POS usage. This finding is consistent with Ayadi et al. (2023), who identified network failures and operational inefficiencies as major challenges facing agency banking in Nigeria. Poor infrastructure can limit the effectiveness of digital financial services. Additionally, Ogunwale et al. (2024) emphasized that the efficiency of electronic banking systems including POS terminals, depends heavily on reliable infrastructure such as internet connectivity and power supply.

Thus, while financial technologies drive growth, their effectiveness is contingent upon supporting infrastructure. This reinforces the argument that technology adoption alone is insufficient without an enabling environment as observed by (Okolo-obasi et al 2025).

Overall Implication of Findings

Overall, the findings demonstrate that:

- Digital financial services (POS and agency banking) are key drivers of MSME growth
- POS usage has the most pronounced effect, indicating rapid adoption and strong business impact
- Financial literacy enhances the effectiveness of these technologies
- Infrastructure acts as a critical enabler

These results are consistent with broader fintech literature, which shows that financial technologies improve efficiency, innovation, and business performance across developing economies.

5. Summary, Conclusion and Policy Implications

Summary of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to investigate how agency banking and POS terminal usage influence the growth of MSMEs in Southeast Nigeria. A quantitative research design was adopted, and primary data were collected from MSME operators using structured questionnaires. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression. The empirical findings of the study revealed that: Agency banking has a positive and significant effect on MSME growth. This indicates that access to decentralized financial services improves business

operations and access to funds. Similarly, the finding also shows that POS terminal usage has the strongest positive impact on MSME performance. Businesses that adopt digital payment systems experience increased efficiency, higher sales, and better customer satisfaction.

On the other hand, the finding also reveals that financial literacy significantly enhances MSME growth and that Entrepreneurs with better financial knowledge are more capable of managing resources effectively.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that financial inclusion through agency banking and digital payment systems is a critical driver of MSME growth in Southeast Nigeria. The results support the propositions of: Financial Intermediation Theory, which emphasizes the role of financial institutions in facilitating economic growth; Diffusion of Innovation Theory, which explains how adoption of financial technologies enhances business performance. Overall, MSMEs that embrace financial technologies are more likely to achieve sustainable growth and competitiveness.

Policy Implications

The findings of this study have important implications for policymakers:

- Central Bank policies should focus on deepening financial inclusion through agency banking frameworks
- Fintech regulation should support innovation while ensuring consumer protection
- MSME development policies should integrate digital financial services as a core growth strategy
- Public-private partnerships should be encouraged to improve infrastructure

These policies will enhance the contribution of MSMEs to economic development, employment generation, and poverty reduction.

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