

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: A THREAT OR CATALYST TO QUALITY HEALTHCARE DELIVERY

The Research and Development Unit of ACPN carried out a brief survey on the perception of the use of AI by some pharmacists in Nigeria; below is the AI-assisted analysis of the data collected

Based on the survey responses (n = **51 pharmacists**), the findings indicate that pharmacists generally perceive **Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a catalyst rather than a threat** to quality healthcare delivery. However, respondents also recognized legitimate concerns regarding regulation, privacy, and implementation.

Analysis of the Survey Findings

1. Respondents' Awareness of AI

The majority of respondents were already familiar with AI in healthcare.

- **Yes:** 34 (66.7%)
- **Maybe:** 7 (13.7%)
- **No:** 10 (19.6%)

This suggests that approximately two-thirds of pharmacists have been exposed to AI applications in healthcare, indicating growing awareness within the profession.

2. Self-rated Knowledge of AI

Respondents generally considered their knowledge to be moderate.

Knowledge Level Frequency Percentage

Moderate	25	49.0%
Low	13	25.5%
High	7	13.7%
Very Low	5	9.8%
Very High	1	2.0%

This shows that while awareness is relatively high, advanced understanding of AI remains limited, highlighting the need for professional education and training.

AI: Threat or Catalyst?

The central question of the survey produced a clear outcome.

Perception	Frequency Percentage	
Catalyst	31	60.8%
Both Threat and Catalyst	16	31.4%
Threat	3	5.9%
Unsure	1	2.0%

Interpretation

Nearly **61%** of pharmacists believe AI is primarily **a catalyst for improving healthcare delivery**, while only **5.9%** consider it mainly a threat.

Interestingly, almost one-third believe AI is **both a catalyst and a threat**, suggesting that although respondents appreciate AI's benefits, they also recognize associated risks.

This indicates a balanced and realistic perception rather than blind optimism.

Willingness to Adopt AI

Acceptance of AI was very high.

Response	Frequency Percentage	
Yes	46	90.2%
No	3	5.9%
Maybe	2	3.9%

Interpretation

Over **90%** of pharmacists expressed willingness to adopt AI tools in practice. This demonstrates strong readiness for digital transformation, provided appropriate support and safeguards are available.

Regulation of AI

Respondents overwhelmingly supported regulation.

Response	Frequency Percentage	
Strongly Agree	19	37.3%
Agree	25	49.0%

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Neutral	2	3.9%
Disagree	3	5.9%
Strongly Disagree	2	3.9%

Interpretation

Approximately **86%** of respondents agreed that AI should be regulated in healthcare.

This demonstrates that pharmacists welcome AI but believe it must operate within ethical, legal, and professional frameworks to ensure patient safety and data protection.

Overall Interpretation

The survey strongly supports the conclusion that pharmacists view AI as **an enabler of quality healthcare delivery rather than a replacement for healthcare professionals**.

Although respondents acknowledged concerns such as:

- data privacy,
- potential bias,
- reduced human interaction,
- over-reliance on AI,

these concerns did not outweigh their confidence in AI's ability to improve healthcare services.

The high willingness to adopt AI, together with strong support for regulation, suggests that pharmacists are prepared to embrace AI if appropriate governance, infrastructure, and training are provided.

Conclusion

This survey indicates that **Artificial Intelligence is perceived predominantly as a catalyst for quality healthcare delivery among pharmacists**. Most respondents recognize AI's potential to enhance efficiency, improve clinical decision-making, reduce errors, and support better patient outcomes. Nevertheless, pharmacists emphasize the importance of regulatory oversight, professional training, robust data security, and ethical implementation to ensure AI complements rather than replaces human expertise. Overall, the findings suggest that

successful integration of AI into pharmacy practice will depend on balancing technological innovation with patient safety, professional accountability, and continuous capacity building