KIU LAW JOURNAL
Vol. 7 Issue 2, (2025)
Received: September 10th, 2024
Revised: March 13th, 2025
Accepted: October 21st, 2025
DOI: https://doi.org/10.59568/KIULJ-2025-7-2-02
ISSN: 2519-9501

Artificial Intelligence, Law, and Society: Towards a Sustainable Governance Framework in Nigeria

Paul Atagamen Aidonojie[1], Balyejusa Gusite[2], Benedicta Agbonmere Oviosun[3], David Ayuba[4], Nathan Ibrahim[5]

[1] School of Law, Kampala International University, Kampala, Uganda. E-mail: paul.aidonojie@kiu.ac.ug
[2] Directorate of Research, Innovation, Consultancy and Extension, Kampala International University, Uganda. E-mail: gusite.balyejusa@kiu.ac.ug
[3] Faculty of Law, Edo State University, Uzairue, Edo State, Nigeria, E-mail: oviosun18.benedicta@edouniversity.edu.ng
[4] Faculty of Law, Edo State University, Uzairue, Edo State, Nigeria. E-mail: ayuba18.david@edouniversity.edu.ng
[5] Faculty of Law, Edo State University, Uzairue, Edo State, Nigeria. E-mail: ibrahim18.nathan@edouniversity.edu.ng

***Author Correspondence email**: paul.aidonojie@kiu.ac.ug

Abstract
Artificial intelligence, per se, is rapidly revolutionizing the sectors of Nigeria; one of them is finance, while others include healthcare and education, as well as governance. Integrated with a whole lot of advantages that AI can provide; however, it also poses legal, socio-economic challenges, ranging from issues of data privacy and ethics to regulatory gaps and employment threats. The legal regime that governs AI in Nigeria is still emerging, making it ambiguous in cases of liability concerning decisions coming from AI and intellectual property with respect to content generated through the use of AI. This research addresses the legal and socio-economic scope of AI in Nigeria, focusing mainly on the regulatory deficiencies and their effect on economic growth, employment, and even data protection. The research intends to evaluate the existing laws to assess their adequacy and propose legal or policy reforms for responsible AI governance. It employs a qualitative research methodology to analyze statutory provisions, judicial precedents, policy documents, and comparative legal frameworks from other jurisdictions. Some key findings include certain inconsistencies within the existing regulatory landscape of AI in Nigeria, a shortage of directions regarding the ethical conduct of the use of AI, and worries regarding job losses due to automation. Based on these findings, Nigeria will have to do much in formulating comprehensive legislation and policies regarding AI technology, including socio-economic equity and ethical use of such technologies to achieve sustainable growth in the economy.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Law, Society, Sustainable Governance, Nigeria

1. Introduction

It is worth mentioning that artificial intelligence is growing fast and gaining ground globally today. Thus, to define what artificial intelligence is, it is simply the use of machines to do what humans can do, through the use of algorithms, thereby analysing data and learn from experience[1]. The use of artificial intelligence has been on the rise all over the world, including Nigeria. For instance, in other disciplines, including law, you can have assistance that can explain complex legal concepts, draft legal documents, among others. This is what artificial intelligence can do[2]. On the continent of Africa, Nigeria can be considered one of the champions in the use of artificial intelligence. It has been recorded that Nigeria was the first country in the region to institutionalize a National Centre for AI and Robotics (NCAIR). This reinforces the importance of artificial intelligence in our daily activities nationally and internationally. Today, virtually if not all the sectors in Nigeria have embraced artificial intelligence. To mention some of the benefits associated with the use of artificial intelligence, the use of artificial intelligence has been maximised in human interactions through social media, marketing operations, health sectors, legal, and the economy[3]. However, it must also be noted that, despite the advantages underlying the use of artificial intelligence, it did not come without shortcomings.
The swift rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology offers both problems and possibilities for governance, business, health, and security in Nigeria[4]. However, Nigeria has a lack of legal and regulatory clarity around AI development, deployment, and holding accountability, creating a gap within which urgent questions of data privacy, algorithmic bias, ownership of intellectual property, and liability for harm caused by these systems have been insufficiently explored[5]. The rising use of AI (beyond financial services and public administration) increases the call for Nigerian law to at least consider how to strike a balance among innovation, ethical responsibility, and citizen rights[6]. The question remains whether the existing legislative landscape, such as the Nigeria Data Protection Act (2023) and Cybercrimes Act (2015), is adequate to safeguard citizens or even consider the potential of exploitative use of AI technologies. Moreover, Nigeria's lack of institutional capability to ensure compliance and the absence of a national AI

[1] Cole Stryker, Eda Kavlakoglu, "what is AI" https://www.ibm.com/think/topics/artificial-intelligence, 9th August, 2024.

[2] B Olalekan and C Ogufere, 'The Emerging Artificial Intelligence Legal-Judicial System's Interface: Assessing the State of Nigeria's Judicial System's Readiness for a Revolution' (University of Leicester, 2024).

[3] E O, G U N-Anunobi and C C Umeokafor, 'Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for Sustainable Development: A Pathway to Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in Africa Using Nigeria as a Study' (2024) 1(2) International Journal of Public Administration and Development Studies 37–58.

[4] S E Imoisi and S Iyemeake, 'Legal Effect of the Emergence of Artificial Intelligence on the Regulatory Framework of Nigerian Oil Industry' (2024) 11(5) Current Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CJHASS) 1–17.

[5] E G Orie, O B Bello and K J Nkum, 'Legal and Policy Challenges in the Development of Artificial Intelligence for Adaptation and Mitigation Policies in Nigeria' in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in Practice (2025) 87–104.

[6] E I Atukpa, A Durokifa, I O Ukeje, I C Akor, A E Joseph, N H C Nwaigwe and A I Arinze, 'From Control to Collaboration: Stakeholder Perspectives on Rethinking Local Governance and State Guardianship through the Prism of Digital Technology for Sustainable Grassroots…' (2025) 5(8) SN Social Sciences 114.

strategy in parallel with contemporaneous other countries' global regimes diminishes Nigeria's scope for substantive engagement in today's digital economy[7]. From a socio-economic perspective, the emergence of AI has begun to shift Nigeria's labor market, exacerbating inequality between skilled and unskilled workers, and potentially jeopardising job security in banking, manufacturing, and customer service sectors[8]. The increased reliance on AI-mediated automation presents the risk of furthering unemployment and the digital divide, particularly for rural and under-resourced settlements[9]. This also raises ethical considerations addressing surveillance, potential discrimination stemming from automated decision-making, and unequal access towards the advantages of AI innovations.

These concerns highlight the ongoing need for the development of an appropriate legal approach and a set of inclusive measures that utilise AI as a resource for sustainable development rather than a vehicle for socio-economic marginalisation. It is concerning the above this research intends to examine legal and socio-legal issues concerning artificial intelligence in Nigeria. Furthermore, the study will also propose possible solution to the challenges identified.

2. Method

The research utilises a doctrinal legal research methodology, which entails a careful and systematic examination of existing legal rules, principles, statutes and case-law specifically relevant to the regulation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Nigeria and other jurisdictions. The doctrinal research methodology provides an examination of the current state of Nigerian law to govern emerging technologies, focusing primarily on the constitutional provisions, data protection, consumer protection, intellectual property, and cyber regulations that apply to AI adoption. Furthermore, this inclination towards the doctrinal research methodology will involve a critical examination of the primary legal sources, including the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), the Nigeria Data Protection Act 2023, and the Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, etc.) Act 2015 to assess whether the law provides an adequate response to the legal issue arising from the AI context.

Additionally, the research adopts a qualitative and analytical framework, utilising secondary sources such as journal articles, law reports, policy papers, and expert commentaries to interrogate the relationships between AI, law and society. The research examines the gaps in Nigeria's legal framework relevant to AI regulation through content and thematic analysis, and also assesses the socio-legal consequences of those gaps for governance and human rights and socio-economic justice. The doctrinal framework provides a logical and interpretive assessment of the ways existing law can be reformed (or harmonised) to meet the ethical, legal, and societal needs of AI technologies. The methodology, therefore, provides a

[7] C Uriri and C P C Mmom, 'Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Educational Leadership for Sustainable Development in Nigeria' (2025) 1(1) International Journal of Educational Management, Rivers State University 209–220.

[8] C C Nwosu, D C Obalum and M O Ananti, 'Artificial Intelligence in Public Service and Governance in Nigeria' (2024) 4(2) Journal of Governance and Accountability Studies (JGAS) 109–120.

[9] A O Murana, A R Ambali, Y A Sholola and I S Shaba, 'Integrating Artificial Intelligence in Nigeria's Legislative Process: Opportunities and Challenges for the Niger State House of Assembly' (2025) 17(1) Acta Universitatis Danubius. Administratio 28–62.

normative basis in which the recommendations for developing a coherent and sustainable framework for AI governance, reflective of Nigeria's developmental agenda, may be placed and the normative proposals made.

3. Analysis or Discussion

3.1. The Concept, Development, and Use of Artificial Intelligence in Nigeria

term Artificial Intelligence was coined by John McCarthy in 1956. He defined it as "the science and engineering of making intelligent machines[10]Artificial intelligence is a technological innovation in the computer science Sphere, and infant it is the backbone of innovation in modern computing, unlocking value for individuals and businesses[11] It refers to machines developed to perform what human beings can do efficiently and effectively using human intelligence. It's like an artificial human being; it can predict, automate, solve problems and make decisions using algorithms and data[12]. Its types include superintelligence, an artificial intelligence that can reason, learn, and perform in such a way that would normally require human intelligence and in fact, it performs advanced functions which is not unconnected with the ability to understand and translate spoken and written language, analyze data, make recommendations, and more[13].

Artificial intelligence (AI), also known or called at sometimes machine intelligence, is an intelligence shown by machines in contrast to natural human intelligence. This is to say that these machines can be made to implement some activities that are connected with human intelligence, like humans[14]. An artificial intelligence is a machine developed having the ability to react like humans, and this is to an extent that an artificial intelligence is endowed with intellectual processes and characteristics of humans, such as the ability to reason, discover meaning, generalise, or learn from past experiences[15]. The transformative evolution of artificial intelligence in Nigeria is still at an infant stage; meanwhile, deliberate efforts are being made by the government and individuals to devise a mechanism that will ensure the promotion of artificial intelligence development in the country to sustain and ensure continuous development and Use of Artificial Intelligence in

[10] J C Mubangizi, 'Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights and Sustainable Development: An African Perspective' (2024) 13(3) Perspectives of Law and Public Administration 374–389.
[11] I A Kanu, D T Adidi and C C Kanu, 'Artificial Intelligence and Cybercrime in Nigeria: Towards an Ethical Framework' (2024) 34(1) Dialogue and Universalism 207–221.
[12] Ibid
[13] Ibid.
[14] R A Shittu, J Ahmadu, O Famoti, G Nzeako, O N Ezechi, A N Igwe, C A Udeh and D Akokodaripon, 'Ethics in Technology: Developing Ethical Guidelines for AI and Digital Transformation in Nigeria' (2024) 6(1) International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation 1260–1271.
[15] R N Robinson, 'Artificial Intelligence: Its Importance, Challenges and Applications in Nigeria', (2018) 5(5), Journal of Engineering and Information Technology, 36-41,

Nigeria[16]. For instance, to govern, control, and support the development of technological advancement, which includes artificial intelligence, the country established an agency which provides and issues guidelines for the development and use of Artificial intelligence, including the requirements for fairness, accountability and transparency and this agency is called the National Information Technology Development Agency[17].

Many enterprises, companies or businesses and startups in Nigeria run either by private individuals or the government have made efforts to develop and inculcate artificial intelligence devices like predictive analytics, machine learning and chatbots. This company assimilate this into their operation to enhance and improve the efficiency of the services and experience they deliver to their customers and drive innovation[18]. For example, several Banks in Nigeria make use of Artificial Intelligence-driven chatbots to provide customer support and answer frequently asked questions[19].

Various sectors have set out to assimilate artificial intelligence in their operational services, which include economic, healthcare, legal, transportation, and educational sectors. In the financial sector, the importance of artificial intelligence is seen in how it detects financial fraud, how it analyze financial data, and how it can be used to improve credit scoring and risk assessment[20]. In the health sector, artificial intelligence is now used to diagnose diseases, aid in developing treatment plans and effectively enhance patients' outcomes in the hospital[21]. This is to a commendable extent that Artificial intelligence-driven chatbots are often utilised to conduct medical consultations and are also it is used to analyse medical images, such as X-rays and MRIs, to improve diagnosis and treatment. Now, different from conventional practice in educational sectors, personalised learning, improved student outcomes, and a very well and effectively enhanced teaching process are not

[16] O O Ikubanni and A O Oyebanji, 'Legal Aspects of Granting Subjectivity to Artificial Intelligence: Prospects of Using Robots in Legal Practice in Nigeria' (2024) 2(4) Journal of Digital Technologies and Law 835–856.
[17] P A Aidonojie, E Obieshi, A T Majekodunmi and M E Inagbor, 'The Prospect and Legal Issues of Income Tax in the Nigerian Metaverse' (2024) 6(1) Trunojoyo Law Review 17–50.
[18] P A Aidonojie, A K Adebayo, E Obieshi, G O Antai, I O Ogbemudia and M M Mukhlis, 'The Prospect, Legal, and Socio-Economic Implication of Metaverse Operation in Nigeria' (2024) 19(4) Jurnal Wacana Hukum dan Sains.
[19] E Ekpemuaka, O R Odunlade and S F Maiyaki, 'Resilience in Africa's Transition to a Sustainable Digital and Blue Economy: Policy and Regulatory Framework in Nigeria' in Securing Sustainable Futures through Blue and Green Economies (2025) 149–172.
[20] E Ahanor, P O Momoh, C O Ayeni, F E Musa, M A Giftson and J O Alfa, 'Leveraging Machine Learning for Regulatory Intelligence: A Predictive Assessment of Enforcement Gaps in Nigeria's E-Waste Legal Framework' (2025) 1(5) European Journal of Innovative Studies and Sustainability 121–129.
[21] Ibid

made possible in education through the development and use of Artificial Intelligence in education[22].

3.2. Legal Framework and Regulation on the Use of AI in Nigeria

Nigeria has yet to pass a comprehensive legal framework that will expressly regulate artificial intelligence. However, existing legislation addresses aspects relevant to AI, more particularly concerning data protection and privacy.

3.2.1. Nigeria Data Protection Act (NDPA) 2023

The legal framework for protecting personal data in Nigeria is established by the NDPA, and this is relevant to AI systems that handle personal data. Section 24 of the Act outlines the principles that guide data processing operations including fairness, lawfulness, transparency, purpose limitation, data minimization, accuracy, storage limitation, confidentiality, integrity, availability, accountability and duty of care are some of these principles. Section 25[23] outlines the circumstances in which processing personal data is permissible. These include securing the consent of the data subject, the need to fulfill contractual obligations, ensuring compliance with legal requirements, safeguarding vital interests, carrying out tasks in the public interest, and legitimate interests pursued by the data controller or a third party. Section 30[24] lists people's rights about their personal information, such as the right to information, the right to access, the right to rectification, the right to erasure, the right to limit processing, the right to data portability, the right to object, and the right to be informed about automated decision-making and profiling. These rights are important in the aspect of AI systems that involve the automated processing of personal data.

Data controllers and processors are required by section 32 to perform a data protection impact assessment if processing operations pose a significant danger to the rights and liabilities of data subjects, especially when utilizing new technology. This is particularly pertinent to AI applications since they frequently entail creative data processing techniques. Section 37[25] provides that data controllers and processors must put in place the proper organizational and technical safeguards to protect data, including safeguards against accidental loss, destruction or damage as well as against processing that is not authorized or permitted. AI systems must strictly adhere to these security requirements to protect personal data.

3.2.2. Cybercrimes (prohibition, prevention, etc.) Act 2024 as amended

Cybercrime is a term used to describe any criminal conduct or crime involving computers and networks. The primary law governing all acts using computers and

[22] Ibid
[23] Nigeria data protection act 2015
[24] ibid
[25] ibid

internet networks in Nigerian cyberspace is this Act. The Cybercrimes Act 2015 does not explicitly mention AI or directly address AI, but it has provisions that are relevant to AI applications. According to the amended Act, instead of reporting cyber threats to the National Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Center, it is now directed to sectoral security operations centers. In the same vein, entities must now alert the center within 72 hours of identifying cyber threats. A fine and the restriction of internet connection are possible consequences of non-compliance.[26] The act also ensures that insider manipulations involving AI are punishable by expanding the definition of cyber offences to include workers from the public and private sectors who abuse specialized knowledge for fraud or identity theft.[27]

The amended Act makes it an offence for any person to transmit a message via computer systems or networks that is pornographic or any false information aimed at causing a breakdown of law and order or posing a threat to life. This is to say that if a message is shown to be true and not in any way pornographic, then it has not violated the provisions of this section. The act makes identity theft and fraud illegal, including when done with AI-generated phishing emails, automated scam bots, or deep fake technologies. Cyber fraud offences may include AI-driven social engineering attacks, such as AI chatbots that pose as real people to trick users.

3.2.3. Copyright Act 2022

Original works in a variety of media, such as music, art, film, and literature, are legally protected by Nigeria's Copyright Act 2022. A work must fulfill two essential conditions to be eligible for protection: Originality: the work must be the original author's and cannot be replicated, and a physical medium such as writing, film, or digital format must be used to document the work.[28] The Act gives the author the sole authority to copy, distribute, perform, and modify their creations. AI, however, contradicts these ideas, particularly when it comes to identifying ownership and authorship.[29] Having considered this, the question posed is whether Nigerian law recognizes AI as an author. Non-human authorship is not specifically acknowledged by the Copyright Act. According to the law, a work cannot be protected unless it is created by a natural person or a business. So, the question is: who owns the copyright if an AI system creates an artwork? The user who enters the data that results in AI-generated content, the AI itself (which is not yet legally recognized as a rights holder), or the programmer or creator of the AI are all potential responses. A piece of writing needs to be 'original' to be protected by copyright. However, algorithms that examine preexisting works and produce new ones based on trends

[26] Section 5 of Cybercrime (prohibition and prevention) Act (as amended) 2024
[27] Section 6 of the amended act
[28] Section 2 of the copyright act 2022 (as amended)
[29] Section 9 of the copyright act 2022 (as amended)

frequently produce AI-generated content. The originality barrier for AI-generated content is not explicitly defined by Nigerian law. According to the Act, corporations are permitted to possess copyrights if their employees produce the work while they are employed.

3.3. Legal and Socio-Economic Issues Concerning Artificial Intelligence in Nigeria

Legal and socio-economic issues both play a major role in society. Legal issues talk about the unavailability of the legal framework in a society that regulates relationships and transactions daily. But for our research, we shall be looking at the inadequacy of laws regulating the use of artificial intelligence in Nigeria. On the other hand, socio-economic issues focus on the effect of artificial intelligence in our society at large, ranging from individuals, businesses, and corporate organisations etc.

3.3.1. Legal Issues Concerning Artificial Intelligence in Nigeria

The following are some of the legal challenges identified as follows:

It cannot be gainsaying to mention at this junction that, despite the effort Nigeria has taken to embrace the use of artificial intelligence, it must also be mentioned that there are no comprehensive laws and policies to regulate it. In 2018, the Nigerian Government approved the establishment of a new Agency for Robotics and Artificial Intelligence (RAI). It has been recorded that Nigeria was the first country in the region to institutionalize a National Centre for AI and Robotics (NCAIR)[30]. Also, in a bid to encourage the use of technology in corporate governance, legal frameworks such as the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP). Despite this, Nigeria is still lagging in terms of regulatory frameworks regulating the use of artificial intelligence; as a result, not all have embraced it. This is as a result of fear of what may happen in the future, since the space is well covered. Even though other countries of the world have to some extent covered the space of artificial intelligence through legal frameworks, it is pertinent to mention that law is territorial and thus theirs cannot be used to regulate transactions in Nigeria. As we said earlier, artificial intelligence is now in all sectors, thus the need for comprehensive regulatory frameworks to accommodate all spheres of life.

Data privacy is important with the increase in the use of technology today. It protects personal information and promotes trust between individuals and

[30] P A Aidonojie, A K Adebayo, E Obieshi, K J Onwubiko and J J Damina, 'Smart Contract in the Metaverse: A Comparative Legal Analysis of Nigeria and Uganda in the Age of Digital Transaction' (2025) 18(1) Jurnal Legalitas 26–52.

organisations[31]. The data privacy of Nigerians is regulated by the Nigeria Data Protection Act, 2023 (NDPA), which is the primary data protection legislation in Nigeria[32].The consequences of data privacy breaches may range from financial loss, emotional damage, among others. Artificial intelligence, especially machine learning, by nature, thrives on the information supplied to it to test and read algorithms[33]. The reason for collecting such data is to assist in the development of Artificial Intelligence; however, such collections may breach the collection practices. It is important to note that information fed into artificial intelligence machines is not collected with consent, whereby such information is provided consciously by people to someone who is asking for it[34]. In a technical sense, people are not aware of the amount of information collected about them, which is subsequently used to input data into artificial intelligence machines. This information collected is open to the world of the internet, whereby anybody can have access to such information. By doing so, some sensitive information may be exposed to privacy risks.

The Copyright Act[35] plays a vital role in regulating the use of artificial intelligence, especially regarding intellectual property. The Act protects works such as recordings, audio, music, literary works, and broadcasts. Any of these can be protected under the Copyright Act in its original state. In the same manner, the use of the aforementioned intellectual properties by artificial intelligence machines can be breached when it is used without the consent of the owner. There have been several lawsuits against OpenAI for data infringement. For instance, the case of a Hollywood actress, Scarlett Johansson, in May 2024, who alleged that OpenAI had copied her voice for its virtual assistant, Sky, without her consent[36]. Also was the case of the New York Times against OpenAI, the allegation was that OpenAI infringed on their copyright by training ChatGPT on millions of their articles[37]. In response to some of the allegations of infringement by artificial intelligence, they alleged that the information used by them is available for public use[38]. Despite the Copyright Act in Nigeria giving authorship to the owners of intellectual properties. Thus, it is now

[31] B C Ojomah, C L Umeh, N N Adum, N C Odoh and C E Onyekwere, 'Impact of Artificial Intelligence in Sustainable Forest Management in Nigeria' (2025) e-Proceedings of the Faculty of Agriculture International Conference 240–245.
[32] Ibid
[33] P A Aidonojie, T A Majekodunmi, E Obieshi and O J Adeyemi-Balogun, 'Potential and Legal Challenges of the Metaverse for Environmental Awareness and Sustainability in Nigeria: A Comparative Analysis with Singapore' (2024) 5(1) Administrative and Environmental Law Review 33–58.
[34] I S Ibaba, 'Harnessing Artificial Intelligence to Achieve Sustainable Development Goal in Nigeria: Exploratory Notes' (2025) 3(4) Kashere Journal of Politics and International Relations 188–201.
[35] Copyright Act, 2022.
[36] M Alakitan and E Makinde, 'Where Are the Ethical Guidelines? Examining the Governance of Digital Technologies and AI in Nigeria' (2025) 17(1) Policy & Internet e416.
[37] P A Aidonojie, E Obieshi, S Ibeh, G O Antai and A A Kolawale, 'Prospects and Legal Challenges Regarding Intellectual Property Rights in Metaverse Operations in Nigeria' (2024) 30(2) Wacana Hukum 109–129.
[38] Ibid

a question of concern as to the legality of artificial intelligence using available information online. Currently, there are no available frameworks that define who owns the authorship of works generated by artificial Intelligence. This is a call for reformation in our legal frameworks to accommodate the prevailing issues underlying the use of artificial intelligence.

The Act that regulates cybercrime in Nigeria provides for the prohibition, prevention, detection, prosecution, and punishment of cybercrimes in Nigeria. The Act holds liable and punishes anybody who, without authorisation, gains access to unauthorised information[39]. However, artificial-powered machines are still vulnerable to cyberattacks, which pose a threat to users around the globe. For instance, in China, 2018, a camera of a facial recognition authentication system was hijacked, which enabled hackers to impersonate the users. As a result, they were able to defraud tax authorities of some amount of money[40]. This shows the shortcomings that come with the use of artificial intelligent, and thus a need to protect data and curb fraud. Other legal issues include liability and accountability, ethical concerns, etcetera.

3.3.2. Socio-Economic Issues Concerning Artificial Intelligence in Nigeria

The following are some of the legal challenges identified as follows:

As we have mentioned earlier, artificial intelligence is evolving and permeating all areas of our endeavours. This includes the economic aspect of the society. To this extent, artificial intelligence is already bringing about an industrial revolution with much positive impact on manufacturing companies, financial services, and retail[41]. Countries such as China and the United States have started leveraging the use of artificial intelligence in their economy and have recorded some level of success[42]. However, in a closer view, artificial intelligence is not without shortcomings. The fact that other developed countries are benefiting from artificial intelligence does not mean that all countries will do the same. For instance, in Nigeria, few individuals may benefit from it due to infrastructure limitations, and based on the few people who are skilled to use the tools. Consequently, it has been recorded that this can bring about disparity in wealth distribution between the rich and the poor in society, since only a few can benefit from it[43].

---

[39] Cybercrime (Prohibition and Prevention) Act (as amended) 2024, section 6 (2)
[40] Ibid
[41] Nigerians Communications Commission, "Ethical and Societal Impact of Artificial Intelligence" https://ncc.gov.ng/documents/919-ethical-and-societal-impact-of-artificial-intelligence-ai/file, 10th March, 2023.
[42] O E Okeke, B E Agbonghae and A U Green, 'Artificial Intelligence and Security of the People in Nigeria' (2024) 1(2) Journal of Public and Human Rights Law 158–167.
[43] G Onyango, 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Public Policy and Governance in Africa' in Designing Artificial Intelligence for Public Policy and Governance in Africa (2025) 1–17.

Among the most crucial promises of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is its ability to close the digital divide by providing equitable access to technology, knowledge, and economic opportunity. In an ideal world, AI should act as a driver of social and economic equality by improving education, health service delivery, agricultural production, and the efficiency of public services through intelligent systems that respond to local needs. However, for Nigeria, this remains a goal that is still out of reach. Consequently, the distribution of technological infrastructure, a lack of digital skills, and limited connectivity mean that the benefits of AI, especially in Nigeria, are limited to the major urban areas of Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt, while rural or neglected communities are excluded from the benefits of AI-supported livelihoods and a fair share of the digital economy. This gap between urban and rural areas heightens structural inequality, as those benefiting from access to AI tools will realise improved productivity, employment options, and quality of life, while the others are placed further outside of the digital shift. If there are policies at the government level designed for equitable technological diffusion, there has not been adequate investment in developing local digital literacy programs and creating AI research when it comes to rural access as well. Additionally, many of the AI systems designed on the global level do so without consideration for the socio-economic realities in a country like Nigeria. Ultimately, refiguring access to digital infrastructure in underserved rural areas for AI is necessary, but it is also essential to create inclusive policies around ethical AI use, public programming for digital literacy, and equitable distribution of resources within to manage migration issues faced by society in Nigeria. For countries like Nigeria, closing the digital gap in AI will not only be about opening access to infrastructure but will also require paying attention to the conceptual and political governance surrounding equitable distribution of AI resources.

Artificial intelligence and robotics are currently being used in the healthcare sector. They play a role in the areas of diagnosis and treatment[44]. Also, one important aspect of artificial intelligence in healthcare is the ability to predict diseases[45]. On the other hand, the use of robots in the health sector has raised concerns in the minds of many because human well-being may be put at risk in the future, even now. Currently, it has been recorded that 144 persons have died from surgery using robotics, 1391 injuries, and 8061 device malfunctions [46] in 14 years in the United States. Flowing from the above, and to drive it home, the use of artificial intelligence in the Nigerian

[44] Ibid.
[45] Mohamed Ali Trabelsi, "The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Economic Development" https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/jebde-10-2023-0022/full/html, 12th March, 2025.
[46] Nigerians Communications Commission, "Ethical and Societal Impact of Artificial Intelligence" https://ncc.gov.ng/documents/919-ethical-and-societal-impact-of-artificial-intelligence-ai/file, 10th March, 2023.

healthcare may bring more harm than good. This is because of a lack of sufficient and trained personnel.

Artificial Intelligence (AI), while originating from human intelligence, still possesses all the same imperfections in terms of biases, values, etc., that humans have. Because AI systems learn and create predictions from the data humans feed them, they are inherently open to both conscious and unconscious biases that have been incorporated into datasets and result from guiding principles embedded in algorithms. These biases can represent inherent societal biases reflecting views on gender, ethnicity, religion and/or status around socio-economics, thereby individually or collectively affecting AI technologies when they make decisions or effectively classify information. An example would be if training datasets for an AI model did not represent the multicultural population of Nigeria, the resulting learning and, therefore, decision-making would only reinforce an outcome with possible negative consequences for a specific demography. This seems especially troubling when these technologies have been used in areas that require a higher level of scrutiny and scrutiny (e.g. hiring, scoring credit, policing, health care) because outputs that are based on biased training data can deepen already entrenched inequalities of trust, confidence in systems of justice, etc.

Moreover, ethical issues surrounding AI go beyond data bias to include aspects concerning transparency, accountability, and the moral autonomy of machines. Many AI systems are created in a "black box" manner, making it hard to trace back to the reasons for a decision and subsequently hold the responsible party accountable when harm is incurred. In a national context such as Nigeria, where there is little to no regulatory framework for AI ethics, these issues are even more challenging. When there are less comprehensive ethical guidelines enforced for AI, it opens up the potential for the abuse of AI technologies that violate human rights or cultural injunctions. Therefore, addressing ethical issues in AI will entail establishing governance frameworks that promote fairness, explainability, and accountability within AI systems, and that AI technology continues to develop on ethical rationales that serve both moral responsibility and the public good.

4. Conclusion

Artificial intelligence is a fast evolving technological innovation and it developmental use in Nigeria is very important in ensuring and sustaining socio-economic development and in this study we had look at different points of discuss on the topic Legal and Socio-economic Issues concerning AI: A Case study of Nigeria where we look at things on the Concept, Development use of Artificial Intelligence in Nigeria, the Legal Framework and Regulation on the Use of AI in Nigeria, Legal and Socio-economic Issues concerning AI in Nigeria.

Meanwhile, our ample recommendations are: To regulate and effectively govern the evolution, utilisation, and use of Artificial Intelligence in Nigeria, the government

must, without giving it a second thought, swing into developing a very robust and comprehensive regulatory framework. The government should work towards ensuring that citizens are well equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to develop, deploy, and efficiently use artificial intelligence technologies across the different sectors, and this the government can be achieved through an investment in artificial intelligence education and programs. In the event of deploying and utilising an artificial intelligence security of people's data must be protected, and to ensure that the privacy and security of citizens' data are guaranteed, the government must develop a very robust and comprehensive data privacy law that protects the privacy and security of citizens' data.