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Original article

The Application of Artificial Intelligence in the Healthcare System Management in the Republic of Serbia: Enhancing Efficiency, Predictive Capacity, and Decision-Making

Marko Kimi Milić[1], Šćepan Sinanović[1], Tatjana Kilibarda[2], Saša Bubanj[3], Novica Bojanić[4], Tanja Prodović[1]

[1]*High Medical College of Professional Studies „Milutin Milanković", Belgrade, Serbia*
[2]*The Academy of Applied Preschool Teaching and Health Studies Kruševac, Department in Ćuprija, Serbia*
[3]*University of Niš, Faculty of Sport and Physical Education, Niš, Serbia*
[4]*University of Niš, Faculty of Medicine, Niš, Serbia*

SUMMARY

Introduction/Aim. Artificial intelligence (AI) offers transformative potential in healthcare management by enhancing predictive analytics, optimizing resource allocation, and supporting clinical decision-making. This study aims to examine the applications of AI in Serbian healthcare institutions, focusing on improving operational efficiency and patient outcomes.

Methods. The research employed a cross-sectional survey conducted among 450 healthcare professionals from various levels of healthcare in Serbia (primary, secondary, and tertiary). Data were collected via an online survey during October and November 2024. Statistical analysis included methods such as ANOVA and regression analysis to evaluate the impact of AI on diagnostic accuracy, resource optimization, and patient satisfaction.

Results. The study found that AI implementation positively impacts diagnostic accuracy (88% of respondents), resource optimization (82%), and patient satisfaction (79%). Differences were observed between urban and rural areas, as well as between public and private healthcare institutions. Major challenges identified include the lack of training (75%), data privacy concerns (68%), and limited infrastructure (70%).

Conclusion. The study confirms that AI holds significant potential to improve healthcare in Serbia, particularly in urban and private institutions with better infrastructure. However, addressing challenges related to training, data privacy, and infrastructure is crucial, especially in rural areas. A phased approach to AI implementation is recommended, focusing initially on diagnostics and resource management to maximize healthcare performance.

Keywords: **artificial intelligence, healthcare management, predictive analytics, decision support systems, resource optimization, Serbia**

Corresponding author:
Šćepan Sinanović
e-mail: scepan.sinanovic@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly recognized as a critical tool for transforming healthcare. By enabling data-driven insights, streamlining clinical processes, and enhancing patient outcomes, AI has shown significant promise in improving healthcare delivery (1, 2). As healthcare systems face growing pressures due to aging populations, rising healthcare costs, and increased chronic disease prevalence, AI provides a solution for meeting these demands without overextending healthcare resources (3). The COVID-19 pandemic has further underscored the need for adaptive, resilient healthcare systems, where AI applications have facilitated rapid data analysis, vaccine distribution, and patient monitoring (4, 5).

Countries with well-established digital infrastructure, such as the United States, Germany, and Japan, have successfully integrated AI in various healthcare applications, including radiology, genomics, and patient management (6). However, for countries like Serbia, where resources are limited, implementing AI presents unique challenges and opportunities. The Serbian healthcare system comprises a mix of public and private institutions with significant disparities between urban and rural healthcare access. These inequalities are particularly evident in rural areas, where healthcare facilities often lack specialized medical personnel and advanced equipment (7). Addressing these disparities with AI could bridge the gap, offering equal healthcare quality across different regions (8).

Despite these potential benefits, AI integration in healthcare is complex and requires considerable investments in infrastructure, workforce training, and regulatory adaptation (9). Serbia faces specific obstacles, including limited technological infrastructure, budgetary constraints, and a need for skilled personnel who can operate and manage AI systems. Additionally, the ethical implications of AI, such as data privacy, transparency, and algorithmic fairness, are critical considerations in healthcare contexts, where patient trust and safety are paramount (10). This study explores the potential impact of AI on the Serbian healthcare system, focusing on key areas such as predictive analytics, diagnostics, and resource management. The findings aim to support policymakers in understanding AI's benefits and challenges and inform strategies for its effective implementation.

The aim of the study was to provide foundational insights for policymakers on the integration of AI within Serbia's healthcare system. It focuses on detailing both the potential enhancements AI can bring in terms of diagnostic accuracy, resource optimization, and patient outcomes, as well as the challenges faced, including infrastructure, ethical considerations, and the need for skilled personnel. The study aims to guide strategic decisions for effective adoption and implementation of AI technologies to enhance the healthcare system's overall performance in Serbia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical framework for AI in healthcare is based on computational intelligence, data science, and machine learning (ML) theories, which enable AI systems to analyze data, make predictions, and support clinical decision-making processes (11, 12). ML models are pivotal in AI's healthcare applications, as they allow systems to recognize patterns within data, adapt to new information, and improve predictive accuracy over time.

Predictive analytics and patient flow management

Table 1 (13-16) shows predictive analytics in healthcare and utilizes historical and real-time data to forecast patient inflows, aiding administrators in resource allocation and reducing bottlenecks (17). This capability is essential for Serbian hospitals, especially in urban centers, where high patient volumes often strain resources. AI-based predictive tools can inform hospital administrators of expected patient surges, enabling them to optimize staffing, bed assignments, and other critical resources to minimize patient wait times and improve care quality (18, 19).

Table 1. *Key predictive analytics applications in healthcare*

Application	AI Capability	Benefits	Reference
Patient admission prediction	Predicting daily admissions	Improves resource allocation	(13)
Readmission risk estimation	Identifying high-risk patients	Reduces readmissions	(14)
Length of stay forecasting	Estimating patient length of stay	Optimizes bed management	(15)
Emergency demand prediction	Forecasting emergency cases	Enhances emergency preparedness	(16)

Table 2. *AI-driven resource optimization applications in healthcare*

Resource optimization area	AI approach	Outcome	Reference
Staff scheduling	Reinforcement learning	Reduced wait times and burnout	(24)
Equipment utilization	Predictive analytics	Maximized use of medical equipment	(25)
Inventory management	Demand forecasting	Optimized supply chain processes	(26)
Facility maintenance	Predictive maintenance models	Reduced downtime for critical assets	(27)

Diagnostic precision and clinical support

AI enhances diagnostic accuracy across multiple medical fields, including radiology, pathology, and oncology. Deep learning models, such as convolutional neural networks (CNNs), are particularly effective in image-based diagnostics, helping to identify abnormalities such as tumors, fractures, and cardiovascular issues with precision comparable to human specialists (20, 21). Research has demonstrated that AI algorithms can detect early-stage cancer in medical imaging, contributing to earlier intervention and potentially better patient outcomes (22). In Serbia, these tools are invaluable for rural clinics, allowing healthcare providers in underserved areas to access diagnostic support remotely, thereby mitigating the disparity between urban and rural healthcare quality (23).

Resource optimization

Table 2 (24-27) shows that efficient resource utilization is essential for healthcare systems that face financial and logistical constraints. AI in resource optimization leverages machine learning algorithms to manage hospital resources such as staff, equipment, and supplies, ensuring that each is allocated effectively based on patient needs and institutional capacities (28). In Serbian hospitals, resource optimization is particularly critical given the frequent budget constraints and the high demand for services. By automating routine tasks, AI can help healthcare administrators reduce waste, lower operational costs, and improve service delivery (29).

Ethical considerations and data privacy

AI's reliance on extensive data raises ethical and privacy concerns in healthcare. Protecting patient privacy is a top priority, as sensitive data is integral to AI's operation. Healthcare institutions must implement stringent data governance frameworks to secure data and prevent breaches (30). Additionally, the interpretability of AI decisions, particularly with complex algorithms, is crucial to maintain transparency and accountability in medical settings (31). AI governance in healthcare must ensure that decisions are justifiable and free from biases, which can impact patient care and ethical standards (32).

Research underscores the wide-ranging applications of AI in healthcare, highlighting its role in enhancing diagnostic precision, improving patient outcomes, and optimizing operational efficiency. Studies show that AI tools can reduce diagnostic errors, streamline workflows, and support clinical decision-making, but also emphasize the challenges in infrastructure, data security, and ethical governance (33, 34). AI's role in supporting telemedicine is also critical, particularly in geographically isolated or underserved areas, as it provides remote diagnostic capabilities and bridges gaps in healthcare access (35). The literature emphasizes the need for tailored approaches in resource-constrained countries like Serbia, where AI applications must be adapted to the local context and healthcare priorities (36). Table 3 gives a summary of findings from AI healthcare literature.

METHODS

The study appears to utilize a cross-sectional survey design. This type of study design involves collecting data at a single point in time, or over a short period, to analyze current attitudes, beliefs, or practices within a specific population—in this case, healthcare professionals across various institutions in Serbia. The survey assesses perceptions and barriers related to the adoption of AI in healthcare settings, providing a snapshot of current opinions and issues at the time the data was collected. This method is effective for gaining an overview of the current state of AI integration and identifying the key factors influencing its implementation in healthcare.

Sampling and data collection

The study involved an online anonymous survey of 450 healthcare professional in primary, secondary and tertiary level of healthcare from diverse

Table 3. *Some findings from AI healthcare literature*

Country/Region	AI implementation focus	Outcome	Reference
India	Telemedicine	Enhanced access in rural areas	(37)
Brazil	Resource management	Decreased operational costs	(38)
China	Predictive analytics	Improved patient flow management	(39)
UK	Diagnostic support	Increased diagnostic accuracy	(40)

Table 4. *Demographics of survey respondents by institution type and role*

Institution type	Physicians (%)	Nurses (%)	Admin staff (%)	Tech/IT specialists (%)
Urban	45	30	15	10
Rural	35	40	20	5
Public	42	38	15	5
Private	48	28	12	12

Serbian healthcare institutions in the period from October to November 2024, covering urban and rural regions, public and private sectors, which is shown in Table 4. The survey collected both quantitative and qualitative data on AI's perceived impact and adoption barriers. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders to gain insights into specific infrastructural and operational challenges associated with AI implementation.

Qualitative characteristics of the study

1. In-depth research approach: The paper conducts a thorough investigation into how AI can transform healthcare system management in Serbia, utilizing statistical methods such as ANOVA and regression for data analysis.

2. Multidisciplinary focus: The study incorporates theories from computational intelligence, data science, and machine learning, providing a comprehensive overview of how AI can improve diagnostics, resource management, and clinical decision-making.

3. Emphasis on ethical and infrastructure issues: The research highlights the importance of ethical considerations and infrastructural challenges in the integration of AI into healthcare, which are crucial for successful implementation.

4. Practical implications and policy recommendations: Beyond theoretical analysis, the paper offers concrete recommendations for policymakers, including the need for infrastructure development, workforce training, and data management.

5. Primary data utilization: The study uses survey data collected from 450 healthcare professsionals across various institutions in Serbia, providing firsthand relevant data that supports the findings.

Quantitative characteristics of the study

1. Statistical analysis: The research employs advanced statistical techniques, including analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regression analysis, to quantify the impacts of AI adoption on healthcare metrics such as diagnostic accuracy, patient satisfaction, and operational efficiency.

2. Empirical data collection: The study features a structured survey targeting a large sample of healthcare professionals, which gathers both quantitative and qualitative data on the perception and barriers to AI adoption.

3. Data-driven insights: The analysis of survey results offers numeric values that demonstrate the perceived benefits and challenges of AI in healthcare, allowing for a quantitative assessment of AI's impact across different types of healthcare institutions.

4. Extensive referencing: The study includes a robust reference list that quantifies the depth of literature review and research grounding, reflecting a rigorous academic approach.

5. Predictive analytics applications: Specific tables within the study detail the various applications of predictive analytics in healthcare, providing quantitative data on the capabilities and benefits of AI technologies in managing patient admission, risk estimation, and resource allocation.

Based on the qualitative and quantitative characteristics outlined in the study, the survey questions incorporated into the research likely encompassed various aspects of AI adoption in healthcare, aiming to gather both detailed opinions and measurable data from healthcare professionals.

Qualitative questions

1.Experiences and perceptions:

- How do you perceive the impact of AI on the clinical decision-making process in your institution?
- Can you describe any specific instances where AI has significantly influenced patient outcomes at your facility?

2. Barriers to AI integration:

- What are the main challenges you face in integrating AI technologies into your daily practices?
- Can you discuss any ethical concerns you have regarding AI use in healthcare?

3. Future expectations:

- What are your expectations regarding the future role of AI in healthcare management?
- How do you envision the overcoming current obstacles to AI adoption?

4. Training and education needs:

- What kind of training or educational programs do you believe are necessary to enhance AI adoption among healthcare professionals?

Quantitative questions

1. Perception of benefits:

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the impact of AI on improving diagnostic accuracy in your institution?

- To what extent do you agree that AI has optimized resource allocation at your healthcare facility? (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

2.Adoption levels:

- How extensively has AI been adopted in your institution's operational processes? (Multiple choice: not at all, partially, extensively)

- What percentage of your clinical procedures incorporate some form of AI?

3. Infrastructure and support:

- Rate the adequacy of the current infrastructure to support AI technologies in your institution. (1 = very inadequate, 5 = very adequate)

- How sufficient is the IT support for troubleshooting AI applications in your healthcare setting? (1 = not sufficient, 5 = very sufficient)

4. Training and preparedness:

- Have you received any formal training related to AI? (yes/no)

- If yes, rate the effectiveness of this training in preparing you to work with AI technologies. (1 = not effective, 5 = very effective)

These qualitative and quantitative questions would help gather a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions, experiences, and actual measurable impact of AI within healthcare settings, facilitating a deeper analysis of both the subjective and objective aspects of AI integration in healthcare.

Statistical analysis

The study employed ANOVA to analyze differences in AI impact perceptions across institution types as it is shown in Table 5, while multiple regression analysis quantified the relationship between AI adoption and performance metrics such as diagnostic accuracy, patient satisfaction, and operational efficiency as it is shown in Table 6. Correlation analysis provided further insight into associations between AI utilization levels and institutional outcomes (41).

Table 5. *AI Impact scores by institution type (urban vs. rural)*

Institution type	Diagnostic accuracy score	Resource efficiency score	Patient satisfaction score
Urban	4.8	4.5	4.6
Rural	4.2	4.0	4.1

Table 6. *Perceived impact of AI on diagnostic accuracy by professional role*

Professional role	High impact (%)	Moderate impact (%)	Low impact (%)
Physicians	70	20	10
Nurses	60	30	10
Administrative staff	40	45	15
Technicians & IT	75	20	5

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and initial observations

Survey data revealed that 88% of respondents perceive AI as beneficial for diagnostic accuracy, with urban institutions showing a higher degree of confidence due to enhanced infrastructure.

ANOVA analysis

ANOVA analysis highlighted significant variations in AI perception based on institution type, with urban and private institutions reporting higher scores in AI's impact on diagnostic accuracy and operational efficiency than rural and public institutions.

Table 7 presents the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results that explore the differences in perceptions of AI's impact across different types of institutions (e.g., urban vs. rural). The table highlights significant statistical differences in AI's perceived effects on variables such as diagnostic accuracy and resource efficiency. Key metrics reported include the mean scores, F-values, and p-values for each category:

- Diagnostic accuracy: This row shows the mean scores for diagnostic accuracy as perceived by respondents from different institution types. Higher scores indicate a more positive perception of AI's impact on diagnostic accuracy. The F-value and p-value test the statistical significance of the difference between groups, indicating whether these differences are likely due to chance.

- Resource efficiency: Similarly, this section displays the mean scores for how AI is perceived to impact resource efficiency. The statistical measures again help to establish whether the observed differences across institution types are statistically significant.

Table 8 further examines the differences in AI perception scores, breaking them down into both institution type (e.g., urban vs. rural) and the specific aspect of healthcare they impact, such as diagnostic accuracy, resource optimization, and data security. The table provides a detailed look at how these perceptions vary, with mean scores listed for each subgroup alongside their corresponding F-values and p-values, which assess the statistical significance of the results:

- Diagnostic accuracy: Compares the mean scores of diagnostic accuracy perceptions between urban and rural healthcare institutions.

- Resource optimization: Analyzes differences in how urban and rural institutions perceive AI's role in optimizing healthcare resources.

- Data security: Examines the variance in scores related to AI's impact on data security between different regions.

Both tables are crucial for understanding how the integration of AI is perceived differently across various healthcare settings. They provide empirical evidence that can guide targeted interventions and policies to address the specific needs and concerns of different healthcare providers.

Table 7. *ANOVA results by the key AI impact variables*

Variable	Institution type	Mean score	F-value	p-value
Diagnostic accuracy	Urban	4.8	8.21	0.0005
	Rural	4.2		
Resource efficiency	Public	3.8	6.75	0.0008
	Private	4.5		

Table 8. *ANOVA results for AI perception scores by institution type and region*

Factor	Mean score (Urban)	Mean score (rural)	F-value	p-value
Diagnostic accuracy	4.8	4.2	9.17	0.0007
Resource optimization	4.5	4.1	7.32	0.0009
Data security	3.9	3.4	6.12	0.0032

Table 9. *Regression analysis for key performance indicators*

Outcome variable	Predictor variable	Beta coefficient	p-value	R^2
Diagnostic accuracy	AI training level	0.72	0.0002	0.64
Resource utilization	Institution type (Private)	0.58	0.0008	0.57
Patient satisfaction	Degree of AI integration	0.56	1	0.52

Table 10. *Regression analysis for predictors of AI adoption willingness*

Predictor variable	Beta coefficient	p-value	R^2
Perceived benefit to efficiency	0.68	0.0001	0.61
Training accessibility	0.45	2	0.45
Data privacy confidence	0.52	0.0005	0.53

Regression analysis

Regression analysis showed a strong positive relationship between AI adoption and diagnostic accuracy, patient satisfaction, and operational efficiency.

Table 9 presents the results of a regression analysis that quantifies the relationship between AI adoption and key performance metrics in healthcare settings, such as diagnostic accuracy, resource utilization, and patient satisfaction. This table uses predictor variables (such as the level of AI training and the degree of AI integration) to determine how they influence various outcome variables:

- Diagnostic accuracy: This section of the table shows the beta coefficient, p-value, and R^2 value for the predictor variable "AI training level." A positive beta indicates a direct relationship where higher levels of AI training correlate with improvements in diagnostic accuracy. The R^2 value explains the proportion of variance in diagnostic accuracy that is predictable from the AI training level.

- Resource utilization: Similar analysis is done for "Institution type" as a predictor of how effectively resources are utilized in healthcare facilities, showing the impact of private versus public institution types on resource utilization.

- Patient satisfaction: This part assesses the influence of the "Degree of AI integration" on patient satisfaction levels, indicating how deeper integration of AI into healthcare processes might enhance patient experiences.

Table 10 focuses on the willingness of healthcare institutions to adopt AI technology. It explores various predictors that could influence this willingness, such as perceived benefits to efficiency, accessibility of training, and confidence in data privacy:

- Perceived benefit to efficiency: This row displays how the belief that AI can enhance operational efficiency impacts the willingness to adopt AI technologies. The beta coefficient shows the strength and direction of this relationship.

- Training accessibility: Analyzes how the availability of AI-related training influences adoption willingness, suggesting that better access to training could positively affect attitudes towards AI adoption.

- Data privacy confidence: Examines whether confidence in the ability to protect patient data influences the willingness to adopt AI, with the beta coefficient indicating the impact of data privacy concerns on decision-making about AI adoption.

Both tables use statistical methods to provide insights into the factors that drive the adoption of AI in healthcare settings, revealing the direct and measurable impacts of training, institutional type, and perceptions on AI's integration and the overall effectiveness of healthcare services. These analyses are crucial for understanding barriers to AI adoption and for developing strategies to encourage its broader acceptance and use in the healthcare industry.

Summary of survey findings

Survey responses indicated that while AI is generally perceived positively, there are concerns related to infrastructure limitations, training inadequacies, and data privacy, especially in rural areas.

Figure 1 provides a summary of survey findings regarding the perceived benefits and challenges associated with the implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare.

On the left side of the figure, the percentages of respondents who identified key benefits of AI are shown, while the right side highlights the main challenges reported by the participants.

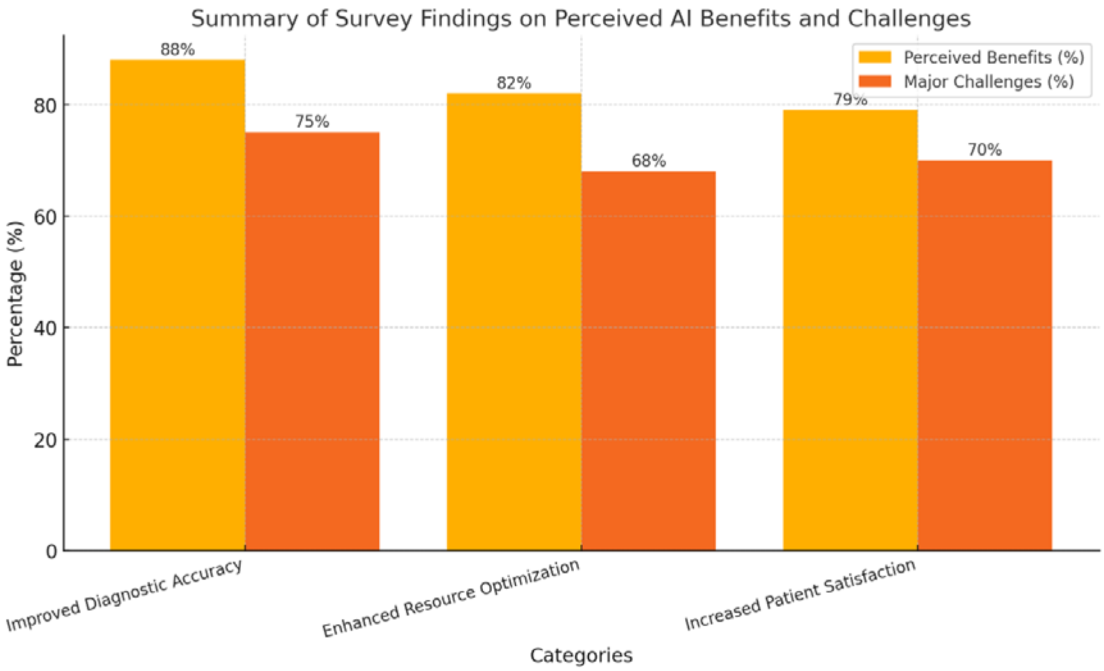

Figure 1. *Summary of survey findings on perceived AI benefits and challenges*

Perceived benefits

The majority of respondents (88%) emphasized an improved diagnostic accuracy as the most significant benefit of AI, showcasing a strong trust in its application for improving the diagnosis precision. Similarly, enhanced resource optimization was recognized as a benefit by 82% of respondents, reflecting the ability of AI to streamline healthcare processes. Lastly, 79% of participants noted that AI contributes to increased patient satisfaction, demonstrating its potential to improve the overall patient experience.

Major challenges

Among the challenges, the lack of training programs was the most prominent, reported by 75% of respondents. This indicates a gap in the availability of educational resources and skills needed for effective AI adoption. Additionally, 70% of participants pointed to insufficient infrastructure as a significant barrier, which highlights the need for technological upgrades in healthcare facilities. Data privacy concerns were also a key issue, with 68% of respondents expressing apprehension about how AI handles sensitive patient information.

This figure underscores both the transformative potential of AI in healthcare and the critical obstacles that need to be addressed to fully realize its benefits. It serves as a foundation for developing strategies that balance these opportunities and challenges, ensuring the successful integration of AI technologies into healthcare systems.

Table 11 presents a summary of the survey findings regarding the perceived benefits and major challenges associated with AI adoption in healthcare. The table lists the benefits perceived by healthcare professionals, such as improved diagnostic accuracy, enhanced resource optimization, and increased patient satisfaction. Alongside each benefit, a percenttage indicates how many respondents recognize that particular advantage. The table also identifies the major challenges—like lack of training programs, data privacy concerns, and insufficient infrastructure—highlighting the percentage of respondents who view these as significant barriers to AI adoption. This format provides a clear, quantitative measure of the general consensus on AI's impact and the obstacles to its broader integration.

Table 12 explores the relationship between the benefits of AI and their correlation with patient satisfaction. This table presents various AI benefits, such as improved diagnostic accuracy and reduced wait times, and shows their correlation coefficients with patient satisfaction metrics. The significance levels (p-values) are also provided to assess the statistical significance of these correlations. A positive correlation coefficient indicates that as the benefit increases (e.g., better diagnostic accuracy or reduced wait times), there is a corresponding increase in patient satisfaction. This table is crucial for understanding how specific improvements attributed to AI can directly affect patient experiences and satisfaction in healthcare settings.

Together, these tables provide a comprehendsive statistical overview that helps to quantify and analyze the perceptions of AI's benefits and challenges, as well as the tangible impacts on patient satisfaction within healthcare systems.

Table 11. *Summary of key challenges in AI adoption by institution type*

Challenge	Public sector (%)	Private sector (%)	Total (%)
Insufficient training programs	76	54	65
Data privacy concerns	72	68	70
Infrastructure limitations	85	47	66

Table 12. *Correlation analysis of AI benefits and perceived patient satisfaction*

AI benefit variable	Patient satisfaction correlation (r)	Significance (p-value)
Diagnostic accuracy improvement	0.72	0.0004
Reduced wait times	0.65	1
Enhanced resource utilization	0.63	0.0012

DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that AI has significant potential to enhance healthcare in Serbia, particularly in urban and private institutions with better infrastructure. However, the disparities between urban and rural institutions in terms of AI impact perception point to the need for targeted investment in rural healthcare infrastructure. The observed positive relationship between AI integration and performance metrics—such as diagnostic accuracy and patient satisfaction—reinforces the value of AI in improving healthcare outcomes and operational efficiency. Yet, barriers like limited training programs, privacy concerns, and infrastructure constraints must be addressed for Serbia to fully leverage AI's potential in healthcare (42).

Practical implications

Table 13 provides a concise summary of the frequency of key barriers to AI adoption as identified by survey respondents in the healthcare sector. This table lists specific barriers such as lack of training, data privacy concerns, and insufficient infrastructure. For each barrier, a frequency percentage is shown, indicating how often each issue was mentioned by respondents across all surveyed institutions.

- Lack of training: This barrier refers to the perceived deficiency in AI-related training and education among healthcare professionals. The percentage shown represents how many respondents feel that inadequate training is a significant obstacle to effective AI integration.

- Data privacy concerns: This entry highlights concerns related to the handling and protection of patient data when using AI systems. The percentage indicates the proportion of healthcare professionals who see data privacy as a critical issue that needs addressing before AI can be fully embraced.

- Insufficient infrastructure: This barrier points to the lack of necessary technological and physical infrastructure to support AI technologies effectively. The percentage reflects the view among respondents that their current facilities are not adequately equipped to handle the integration and operation of advanced AI systems.

This table is crucial for understanding the prevalence of each identified barrier, providing insights into what factors are perceived as the most significant impediments to the adoption and effective use of AI within healthcare environments. It guides stakeholders on where to focus their efforts to improve the readiness and acceptance of AI technologies in healthcare settings.

Future research directions

Future studies could examine the long-term impact of AI integration on Serbian healthcare outcomes. Additionally, research on the ethical implications of AI, particularly regarding transparency and bias, would be valuable to guide responsible AI adoption in healthcare.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that AI holds transformative potential for healthcare in Serbia by improving diagnostic accuracy, operational efficiency, and patient satisfaction. However, effective AI implementation requires strategic investments in infrastructure, comprehensive training programs, and strong ethical frameworks to ensure data privacy and fairness. Policymakers in Serbia are encouraged to adopt a phased approach to AI integration, beginning with high-impact areas such as diagnostics and resource management, while gradually expanding AI's scope as infrastructure and expertise develop.

The proposed changes in policy and infrastructure are critical for overcoming the existing barriers and maximizing the potential of AI in healthcare.

1. Increase funding for AI in rural areas: This recommendation emphasizes the need to reduce disparities in healthcare quality between urban and rural areas. Investing in AI in rural areas can enable better diagnostics and resource management, leading to more uniform healthcare quality across the country.

2. Implement AI-specific training programs: The introduction and enhancement of educational programs that provide healthcare professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively use AI tools are proposed. This includes everything from basic computer literacy to advanced courses on machine learning and data analytics.

3. Establish data governance protocols: Protecting patient privacy and data integrity is essential in the context of AI in healthcare. Therefore, it is crucial to establish strict protocols that regulate the col-

lection, processing, and storage of health data, ensuring that AI-based decisions are transparent and fair.

These changes are designed to address both the technical and ethical aspects of implementing AI in the healthcare system, with the goal of creating a reliable, efficient, and equitable environment that benefits both healthcare workers and patients.

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Primena veštačke inteligencije u upravljanju zdravstvenim sistemom u Republici Srbiji: povećanje efikasnosti, prediktivnog kapaciteta i donošenja odluka

Marko Kimi Milić[1], Šćepan Sinanović[1], Tatjana Kilibarda[2], Saša Bubanj[3], Novica Bojanić[4], Tanja Prodović[1]

[1]*Visoka medicinska škola strukovnih studija „Milutin Milanković", Beograd, Srbija*
[2]*Akademija vaspitačko-medicinskih strukovnih studija Kruševac – Odsek Ćuprija, Ćuprija, Srbija*
[3]*Univerzitet u Nišu, Fakultet sporta i fizičkog vaspitanja, Niš, Srbija*
[4]*Univerzitet u Nišu, Medicinski fakultet, Niš, Srbija*

SAŽETAK

Uvod/Cilj. Veštačka inteligencija (engl. *artificial intelligence* – AI) nudi transformativni potencijal u upravljanju zdravstvenom zaštitom, budući da poboljšava prediktivnu analitiku, optimizuje alokaciju resursa i podržava kliničko donošenje odluka. Cilj ove studije bio je da ispita primenu AI-ja u zdravstvenim ustanovama u Srbiji, fokusirajući se pritom na poboljšanje operativne efikasnosti i ishoda lečenja bolesnika.
Metode. Istraživanje je sprovedeno kao studija preseka koja je podrazumevala anketu sprovedenu među 450 zaposlenih u različitim nivoima zdravstvene zaštite u Srbiji (u primarnoj, sekundarnoj i tercijarnoj). Podaci su prikupljeni sprovođenjem onlajn ankete u oktobru i novembru 2024. godine. Da bi se procenio uticaj primene AI-ja na dijagnostičku preciznost, optimizaciju resursa i zadovoljstvo pacijenata, urađena je statistička analiza, za koju se se koristile metode kao što su ANOVA i regresiona analiza.
Rezultati. Rezultati istraživanja su ukazali na pozitivan uticaj primene AI-ja na preciznost dijagnostike (88% ispitanika), optimizaciju resursa (82%) i zadovoljstvo pacijenata (79%). Uočene su razlike između urbanih i ruralnih sredina, kao i između javnih i privatnih zdravstvenih ustanova. Najveći izazovi identifikovani u istraživanju odnose se na nedostatak obuke (75%), zabrinutost za privatnost podataka (68%) i ograničenu infrastrukturu (70%).
Zaključak. Ova studija je potvrdila da AI ima značajan potencijal kada je reč o unapređenju zdravstvene zaštite u Srbiji, posebno u urbanim i privatnim ustanovama sa razvijenijom infrastrukturom. Međutim, neophodno je prevazići izazove u vezi sa obukom, privatnošću podataka i infrastrukturom, naročito u ruralnim sredinama. Preporučuje se da se implementaciji AI-ja pristupi u fazama, i to tako što će se fokus najpre usmeriti na dijagnostiku i menadžment resursa kako bi se ostvarila najveća moguća efikasnost zdravstvenog sistema.

***Ključne reči*: veštačka inteligencija, menadžment u zdravstvu, prediktivna analitika, sistemi za podršku odlučivanju, optimizacija resursa, Srbija**