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Policymakers should address roadblocks to augment AI integration into healthcare system: ISB Study

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Study highlights how AI startups in healthcare can be a game changer



A new study by the Indian School of Business (ISB) highlights the potential to leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) to revolutionise the Indian healthcare ecosystem while underscoring the need to address the policy gaps hindering the widespread adoption of AI.

A new study titled *'Understanding the Canvas of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Healthcare in India'* conducted by the ISB Institute of Data Science (IIDS) and the ISB-Centre for Business Markets (ISB-CBM), highlighted that AI has the potential to transform healthcare delivery and can support improvements in clinical outcomes, patient experience, and access to quality healthcare.

The study by ISB underscores the urgent need for a policy review to address the gaps in bridging the AI adoption gaps in Indian healthcare. The report recommends several policy interventions for accurate AI adoption in Indian healthcare ecosystems. These include incentivising and standardising electronic health records (EHR) adoption across healthcare providers to create a unified and robust health data infrastructure.

Further, investing in the AI workforce through upskilling, and facilitating public-private partnerships to foster innovation and accelerate the development of India-centric AI solutions, is needed. Establishing clear regulatory frameworks regarding data privacy, accountability, and ethical considerations for AI usage in healthcare should all be taken into consideration.

Based on in-depth interviews with leading hospitals and a comprehensive analysis of the AI Startup ecosystem, the study found emerging AI applications in healthcare such as disease detection, process optimisation, patient-facing applications powered by chatbots, and treatment interventions by assisting in personalised treatment.

Presently, around 4,000 companies in India are dedicated to developing AI solutions for healthcare. Additionally, there are government initiatives to support this transition, with the Ayushman Bharat Scheme and National Digital Health Infrastructure, among others.

However, despite the promising practices and initiatives of AI integration in healthcare in India, there are several critical roadblocks for AI adoption in India that the study identifies, like data accessibility, skills gap, high infrastructure and development cost, regulatory uncertainty regarding data privacy and accountability in case of AI errors.