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EVALUATING CHATGPT AS A CLINICAL DECISION SUPPORT AND MEDICATION COUNSELING AID: ACCURACY, SAFETY, AND STUDENT READINESS AMONG CLINICAL (SENIOR) PHARMACY STUDENTS

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Abstract

Background: Artificial intelligence (AI), particularly tools like ChatGPT, is increasingly integrated into healthcare education and practice. Despite its potential benefits in medication counseling and clinical decision support, concerns remain regarding its accuracy, safety, and ethical implications.

Objectives: This study aimed to assess pharmacy students' knowledge, attitudes, safety perceptions, and readiness to use ChatGPT as a clinical decision-support and medication counseling tool in Palestine.

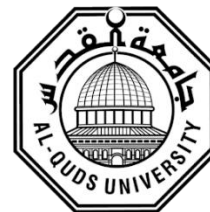
Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted between December 2025 and March 2026 among senior pharmacy students in Palestinian universities. Data were collected using a structured electronic questionnaire covering demographics, AI exposure, knowledge, attitudes, safety perceptions, ethical concerns, and readiness. Data were analyzed using SPSS with descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: A total of 305 students participated, of whom 93.1% were under 25 years and 83.6% were female. Most students reported prior exposure to AI tools (74.8%), while only 19.7% had received formal AI training. Overall knowledge of ChatGPT was good (mean = 3.88 ± 0.56), with high awareness of its risks (mean = 4.15 ± 0.77). Attitudes were generally positive but cautious (mean = 2.34 ± 0.52), with 72.5% agreeing that AI should be used only under pharmacist supervision. Trust in ChatGPT's accuracy was low (mean = 1.91 ± 0.80), while 82.0% agreed that responses should always be cross-checked with trusted clinical references. Ethical and legal concerns were notable (mean = 2.44 ± 0.45), particularly regarding unclear legal responsibility (67.5%). Despite these concerns, students showed high readiness for AI integration (mean = 2.57 ± 0.51), with 79.0% willing to use ChatGPT as a supportive tool but not as an independent clinical authority.

Conclusion: Pharmacy students in Palestine demonstrate a balanced perspective toward ChatGPT, recognizing its potential benefits while emphasizing the need for supervision and verification. The findings



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highlight the importance of integrating structured AI education, along with clear ethical and regulatory frameworks, to ensure safe implementation in clinical pharmacy practice.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, ChatGPT, pharmacy students, safety perception, ethical concerns, Palestine.