

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Legal Practice in Nigeria: Opportunities and Challenges

Ademola Elufisoye Elubode* and Tolulope O. Fateropa, PhD**

Abstract

This essay explores how artificial intelligence is changing the legal profession in Nigeria, evaluating its potential to improve productivity, cut expenses, and democratise justice while critically examining the moral, legal, and practical obstacles to long-term adoption. This study shows that AI serves as a supplemental tool rather than a replacement for attorneys, dispelling concerns that it will displace them or jeopardise legal education. AI improves the skills of legal professionals by automating repetitive duties, facilitating more in-depth analytical work, and enhancing decision-making—far from reducing the need for legal training. In order to assess AI's influence on Nigerian legal practice, the article uses a doctrinal methodology, evaluating cases, legal frameworks, and current literature. The study comes to the conclusion that, despite moral dilemmas and infrastructure obstacles, AI will probably be viewed as an essential ally rather than a threat in Nigerian law in the future, changing the field while upholding its fundamental principles.

Keywords: *Artificial intelligence, Legal practice, Regulatory framework, Regulation, Legal professionals, Nigeria, Technology.*

1. Introduction

The development and application of advanced machines that can do tasks that typically require human cognitive abilities is referred to as artificial intelligence (AI).¹

Artificial intelligence is the capacity of a computer or computer-controlled robot to perform tasks commonly associated with human cognitive processes, such as reasoning.² Certain AIs can execute particular jobs just as effectively as humans, even if there are currently no AIs that can fully mimic human flexibility across broader domains or in tasks requiring a great deal of everyday knowledge.³ These AI systems leverage advanced algorithms and machine learning techniques to meticulously analyse vast amounts of data, identify intricate patterns, and generate predictions or

* Lecturer, Department of Private and Property Law, Faculty of Law, Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin, Ondo State. E-mail: lukoyechambers@gmail.com; +2348084628449.

**Senior Lecturer, Department of Liberal Studies, The Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State. Corresponding Author. Email: tolulopeajayi1783@yahoo.com; +2348081167428.

¹ Copeland B. J., 'Artificial Intelligence', <https://www.britannica.com/technology/artificial-intelligence> accessed 11th May 2025.

² *Ibid.*

³ Copeland B. J., (n1) *supra*.

informed decisions based on their findings.⁴ An AI algorithm is like a smart recipe that teaches computers how to learn from data, recognise patterns, and make decisions without being explicitly programmed for every step.⁵ Instead of just following fixed rules, AI algorithms improve over time by analysing examples.

The use of AI technology in the legal field has grown in popularity and is transforming a number of important fields. AI technologies, for example, can quickly search through large databases of statutes, case law, and legal literature in legal research, giving attorneys access to pertinent material more quickly than human search techniques.⁶

The law is often characterised by a fundamental tension. It must be dynamic enough to adapt to societal progress, yet certain enough to provide stability and justice. Far from being a contradiction, this duality is a necessity: legal systems thrive when they embrace change while preserving core principles.⁷ Today, this balance faces unprecedented challenges with the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and robotic lawyering.⁸ AI offers both opportunities and disruptions for the legal profession in Nigeria, which is already adjusting to fast technical and socioeconomic changes. Efficiency and access to justice may be improved by AI-driven conflict resolution, predictive analytics, and automated legal research. But they also bring up important issues regarding morality, working in the legal field, and the definition of legal knowledge itself.⁹

The legal industry has traditionally been characterised by a labyrinth of paperwork, cumbersome contracts filled with complex jargon, and laborious document reviews that can stretch on for hours. Each layer of documentation often feels like a mountain, obscuring clarity and consuming valuable time needed for more strategic pursuits.¹⁰ However, AI is transforming contract analysis by enabling automated review of legal documents, highlighting potential risks and inconsistencies, and ensuring compliance with regulatory standards. This not only streamlines the drafting process but also enhances accuracy and reduces human error.¹¹ During document review, AI systems can categorise and sort large volumes of electronic documents, helping legal teams to identify significant information, relevant evidence, or privileged materials expediently.

4 Erojikwe T., 'Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Legal Practice in Nigeria', <https://www.lawyard.org/lawyard-spotlight/artificial-intelligence-and-the-future-of-legal-practice-in-nigeria-by-tobenna-erojikwe/> accessed 4th May 2025.

5 Saxena A., 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) Algorithms: A Quick Overview', <https://www.appliedaicourse.com/blog/ai-algorithms/> accessed 6th May 2025.

⁶ Erojikwe T., (n4) *supra*.

⁷ Omengala K.A., Abdulrahman S.T., and Isiaka J., 'Artificial Intelligence (ChatGPT) and the Legal Profession in Nigeria: Prospects and Challenges', *African Journal of Law, Ethics and Education* (2025) Vol 8, No. 1 <https://ajleejournal.com/index.php/ajlee/article/view/239/230> accessed 4th May 2025.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Chakravorty A., 'AI for Legal Documents: How Technology is Transforming Legal Workflows', <https://www.sirion.ai/library/contract-ai/ai-legal-documents/> accessed 4th May 2025.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

shared that it had started drafting Nigeria's code of practice for AI tools, including ChatGPT.²⁰ This code aims to tackle issues related to generative AI tools, such as fake news, transparency, data privacy, bias, and accountability.

The Federal Government has invited Nigerian and non-Nigerian top researchers across the globe to help the country design its National Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy. FG made this known through the Minister of Communications, Innovation, and Digital Economy, Dr Bosun Tijani.²¹ According to the Minister, *"We're curating a list of the top researchers of Nigerian descent from all over the world to join us in co-creating a National AI Strategy. The strategy will help shape our approach to building innovative tech solutions to our most pressing national problems"*.²²

While Nigeria currently lacks an AI-specific regulatory framework, the Federal Government's National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (2020–2030), published in November 2019, recognised AI as a key emerging technology for advancing the digital economy. Developed under Dr. Isa Pantami's leadership as Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, the policy highlights AI's potential to drive national development.²³ Also, AI companies need to be aware of various laws. These laws are divided into general rules that apply to all businesses and specific rules for certain industries. Understanding both types of laws is important for managing issues like data privacy, intellectual property rights, and ethical practices in AI development.

2.1 General and Specific Laws on AI in Nigeria

2.1.1 Data Privacy and Protection

When using AI, a key consideration is data privacy and protection.²⁴ AI needs a large amount of data to train its algorithms for accurate results. This data often includes personal information, which is protected by the Nigerian Data Protection Act, 2023 (NDPA) and the Nigerian Data Protection Regulation, 2019 (NDPR). Companies must collect, store, and process personal data according to Nigeria's data protection laws.²⁵ They should ensure that they have obtained consent from the owners of personal data, known as "data subjects." Additionally, companies must have a privacy policy, terms of use, and a data protection policy in place. They should also conduct regular audits of their data protection practices with the help of a Data Protection Compliance Organisation.²⁶

2.1.2 Intellectual Property

20 Ojukwu E., 'NITDA Drafting The Nigeria Code of Practice For Artificial Intelligence Tools Such as ChatGPT And Others', <https://www.tekedia.com/nitda-drafting-the-nigeria-code-of-practice-for-artificial-intelligence-tools-such-as-chatgpt-and-others/> accessed 6th May 2025.

21 Busari B., 'Communications Minister Invites Researchers to Develop AI Strategy', (Vanguard News, 28th August, 2023), <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/08/communications-minister-invites-top-researchers-to-develop-national-ai-strategy/> accessed 6th May 2025.

22 *Ibid.*

23 NITDA, 'National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (2020-2030)', <https://nitda.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/National-Digital-Economy-Policy-and-Strategy2.pdf> accessed 6th May 2025.

24 Timi-Koleolu S., and Atanda O., 'Artificial Intelligence In Nigeria: Legal And Regulatory Guidance', <https://pavestoneslegal.com/artificial-intelligence-in-nigeria-legal-and-regulatory-guidance/> accessed 6th May 2025.

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Ibid.*

AI and Intellectual Property (IP) intersect where the AI algorithm and the device through which it operates may be protected under IP law. In Nigeria, the code powering the AI is automatically protected by copyright once published, and the author (often the company) owns it without needing to register it.²⁷ However, companies can file the code with the Nigerian Copyright Commission to obtain a certificate, which serves as proof of ownership in case of disputes. Additionally, companies are advised to register trademarks (like the AI's name or logo), seek patents for the AI device, and protect its design as an industrial design.²⁸ It must be noted, however, that technological devices and their names, logos, or taglines can only be registered as trademarks, patents, or designs if they meet the eligibility criteria set by the Trademarks, Patents, and Designs Registry.²⁹

2.2 Specific Considerations

2.2.1 Licencing

In Nigeria, AI-powered services in regulated sectors must obtain sector-specific licences to ensure compliance with legal and consumer protection standards. Financial services using AI, like digital banking or automated lending, require a CBN licence, while AI-driven investment platforms must register with the SEC.³⁰ Healthcare AI tools, such as diagnostic systems, need approval from NAFDAC or MDCN, and telecom-based AI services may require an NCC VAS licence. Additionally, NITDA's AI guidelines and NDPR data rules apply across sectors.³¹ Non-compliance risks fines or shutdowns, but proper licencing builds consumer trust and investor confidence. Before launch, companies should conduct a regulatory audit and seek legal guidance to ensure full compliance.

2.2.2 Registrations

Any business in Nigeria that enters into a technology-related contract with its foreign parent firm or an unaffiliated foreign third party must register the contract with the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP) as required by law.³² These agreements, which are frequently referred to as Technology Transfer Agreements (TTAs), cover contracts pertaining to the purchase or application of proprietary technology, including software licenses, patents, trademarks, and technical know-how. When a transaction is registered with NOTAP, it is formally acknowledged that it conforms with Nigerian regulations governing the importation of foreign technology. The ability for the Nigerian business to legally use the official foreign exchange market to pay for licence fees or royalties owed under the agreement is one of the main benefits of registering the agreement.³³

3. Varieties of AI Relevant to Legal Practice

²⁷ Timi-Koleolu S., and Atanda O., (n23) *supra*.

²⁸ Pavestones, 'Does Your Invention Qualify for a Patent in Nigeria?', <https://pavestoneslegal.com/doing-business-simplified-does-your-invention-qualify-for-a-patent-in-nigeria/> accessed 11th May 2025.

²⁹ *Ibid*.

³⁰ *Ibid*.

³¹ *Ibid*.

³² Section 5 of NOTAP Act 2004.

³³ Section 8 of NOTAP Act 2004.

3.1 Lawrathon AI

Lawrathon AI is a cutting-edge legal-tech chatbot created by Hill AI Technologies with the goal of improving the provision of legal services in Nigeria. It acts as a virtual legal assistant by conversing with users and offering immediate legal advice. Through the use of artificial intelligence, namely conversational technology, Lawrathon AI enables users who lack legal knowledge to communicate with the system and obtain valuable assistance. This makes it a useful tool for both the general public in need of easily available legal assistance and solicitors looking to increase productivity.³⁴

Its capacity to use Natural Language Processing (NLP) to interpret enquiries in plain English is one of its most remarkable features. With the chatbot offering concise, context-driven responses, users may converse casually and avoid the technical complexity of legal language.³⁵ As a first-line assistant, Lawrathon AI handles high-volume but simple interactions, provides basic legal information, and answers frequently asked client questions. Small law firms and single practitioners, who might not have the staff to handle every regular query but still need to maintain consistent client involvement, find this functionality especially helpful.³⁶

Lawrathon AI's ability to revolutionise Nigerians' access to justice is what gives it its wider significance. The platform lowers barriers that have historically kept underprivileged groups from obtaining legal assistance by offering quick, inexpensive, and user-friendly assistance.³⁷ Automating repetitive client interactions also frees up lawyers' valuable time so they can focus on more strategic and sophisticated duties like high-value advising work, litigation, and negotiations. In this sense, Lawrathon AI enhances the effectiveness and competitiveness of law firms navigating Nigeria's quickly changing legal landscape in addition to providing the public with easily available legal assistance.

3.2 Timi

LawPavilion created Timi, Nigeria's first AI-powered legal assistant, which was introduced in 2018. Designed as an interactive conversational chatbot, this cutting-edge tool helps lawyers effectively navigate the complexity of legal proceedings by acting as an adviser.³⁸ Timi was developed specially to fill a major legal competency gap by assisting users in understanding the Nigerian courts' Civil Procedure Rules (CPR). Significantly, procedural problems account for about 48% of appellate case failures, underscoring the urgent need for such a resource.³⁹

With ambitions to broaden its scope to incorporate the Federal High Court and regulations from other states in Nigeria, Timi is now concentrated on the CPR for Lagos State. With the use of the

³⁴ Yusuf Ali, 'Artificial Intelligence, The Bar and The Bench in Nigeria', <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/artificial-intelligence-bar-bench-nigeria-yusuf-o-ali-and-co--s86uf/> accessed 17th August 2025.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ See (n34), *supra*.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ LegalNaija, 'TIMI, the AI Companion For Every Young Lawyer', [TIMI, the AI Companion For Every Young Lawyer - Legalnaija](#) accessed 15th August 2025.

³⁹ LawPavilion, 'Evaluation Study of AI-Enabled Legal Research Tools: The LawPavilion Electronic Law Report as a Nigerian "Guinea Pig"', [LawPavilion LPELR - Best Legal Research Tool in Nigeria](#) accessed 15th August 2025.

platform's interactive chat interface, users may ask targeted questions and get organised advice on a range of topics related to the litigation process, such as deadlines for filing, requirements, the repercussions of acts made, and potential remedies.⁴⁰ Timi also provides thorough help with the drafting of necessary documents, including motions, originating proceedings, and other important court filings. It easily connects with the LawPavilion Electronic Law Report (LPELR), a comprehensive electronic law library that offers access to precedent forms, templates, and pertinent procedural authorities.⁴¹

Timi offers junior solicitors a useful tool by providing real-time procedural support, which greatly lowers the possibility of mistakes being made when preparing documents. By removing procedural obstacles that would cause court hearings to be disrupted, this capability facilitates more efficient litigation processes. According to LawPavilion, Timi frees solicitors from repetitive duties so they can concentrate on more strategic planning and in-depth client interaction, which improves legal practice as a whole.⁴²

Timi is more than simply a standalone tool; it serves as a foundation for LawPavilion's more sophisticated AI solutions. LawPavilion Prime, Nigeria's first AI-enabled legal analytics and research platform, was one of these products when it was introduced in 2016.⁴³ Features including search analytics, dispute detection, and judicial hierarchy insights are offered by this platform. Additionally, generative AI and huge language models tailored to the legal domain are utilised by the next-generation tools, such as LawPavilionGPT, PrimeGPT, and PrimsolGPT.⁴⁴ To further improve the skills available to Nigerian legal professionals, these tools are made for drafting, summarising, constructing legal arguments, and identifying legal reasoning.

3.3 CoMiS

A sophisticated web-based case management platform called CoMiS, or Court Management Information System, was created in collaboration with Cinfores Limited to modernise Nigerian legal procedures. An automated, centralised hub for court administration was intended to take the role of the cumbersome and prone to mistakes paper-based approach.⁴⁵ E-filing for case initiation, e-assessment for fee calculation, e-payments for safe remittances, case number assignment for convenient tracking, and case management across various registries are just a few of the many digital tools available on the platform that address almost every facet of judicial workflow. Additionally, it facilitates the management of probate and applications, the handling of *lis pendens*, automatic notifications, virtual hearings via video conferencing, and capacity-building modules for ongoing certification and training.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ See (n39), *supra*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Joseph Onyekwere, 'LawPavilion Unveils Nigeria's First Artificial Intelligence Legal Assistant', [LawPavilion unveils Nigeria's first artificial intelligence legal assistant | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News](#) accessed 15th August 2025.

⁴³ See (n39), *supra*.

⁴⁴ LawPavilion, 'Introducing LawPavilionGPT: The AI Redefining Legal Research for Nigerian Lawyers', [Introducing LawPavilionGPT: The AI Redefining Legal Research for Nigerian Lawyers](#) accessed 15th August 2025.

⁴⁵ [Court Management Information System \(CoMiS\) – Cinfores Limited](#) accessed 16th August 2025.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

Nigeria's justice delivery system has seen substantial changes since the implementation of CoMiS. It guarantees increased accountability, efficiency, and openness in case management by centralising and simplifying court procedures. By eliminating the need for physical presence, its remote-access features enable judges, registrars, and attorneys to start filings, keep an eye on cases, and complete work from any location.⁴⁷ Additional benefits include enhanced revenue collection through electronic payment systems, quicker case resolution, automatic calendaring for deadlines, and the provision of verifiable e-affidavits to prevent forgeries. When taken as a whole, these characteristics improve citizen service delivery and increase public confidence in the judiciary.⁴⁸ CoMiS has already been implemented in a number of Nigerian jurisdictions, signalling a slow but important shift towards digital court administration. It was introduced in the Magistrate and Small Claims Courts of Lagos State in 2023 after being initially implemented in Rivers State in 2019.⁴⁹ Under the direction of Justice Munta Abimbola, who was the Chief Judge at the time, the Oyo State Judiciary likewise approved it, with assistance from Gavel and the National Judicial Council.⁵⁰ The approach has also been adopted by other jurisdictions, including Kebbi State, Osun, and the FCT Court of Appeal.⁵¹

3.4 ModulawAI

Abiola Ogodo has co-founded the cutting-edge legal technology platform ModulawAI to meet the expanding demands of Nigerian legal practitioners. It combines the strength of artificial intelligence with an intelligent case management system to create a comprehensive tool for contemporary legal practice. In an increasingly digital age, this integration provides a one-stop solution that optimises administrative and research procedures, enabling lawyers, law firms, and legal departments to function more effectively.⁵²

The core component of ModulawAI is its specially trained legal language model, which was created to address the unique characteristics of Nigerian case law. With the use of this engine, attorneys can quickly search and examine over 10,000 Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, and National Industrial Court rulings.⁵³ ModulawAI guarantees quicker access to pertinent precedents and authority by doing away with the laborious manual process of sorting through large amounts of case law. The software offers a comprehensive case management suite in addition to its research

⁴⁷ Stella, 'WHAT IS LAGOS CoMiS?', [Lagos CoMiS Help Center | WHAT IS LAGOS CoMiS?](#) accessed 16th August 2025.

⁴⁸ Ojo Y. A., 'Leveraging Automation for Prompt Justice Delivery System', [Leveraging automation for prompt justice delivery system | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News](#) accessed 16th August 2025.

⁴⁹ Ojo Y. A., 'Lagos Judiciary Goes Digital With Cinfores CoMiS', [Lagos judiciary goes digital with Cinfores CoMiS | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News](#) accessed 16th August 2025.

⁵⁰ TML, 'CoMiS: Oyo Judiciary's One-Stop-Solution to Quick Justice Dispensation', [CoMiS: Oyo Judiciary's One-Stop-Solution To Quick Justice Dispensation - The Metro Lawyer](#) accessed 16th August 2025.

⁵¹ See (n49), *supra*.

⁵² Chisom Michael, 'ModulawAI Launches to Transform Legal Research and Case Management in Nigeria', [ModulawAI launches to transform legal research and case management in Nigeria - Businessday NG](#) accessed 16th August 2025.

⁵³ See (n52), *supra*.

features, which let professionals manage client matters, keep track of court dates, and safely store private documents in one place.⁵⁴

ModulawAI is developing further by adding agentic AI capabilities, building on these fundamental characteristics.⁵⁵ With the help of this new layer, autonomous AI agents may manage legal workflows, carry out intricate, multi-step legal research, and do deeper analysis with little assistance from humans. When used effectively, these AI agents function as virtual assistants, supporting legal practitioners with routine yet necessary duties like scheduling, reviewing documents, and monitoring cases. The technology may now "think and act" in ways that give legal work more autonomy, according to Charles Oseghale, the company's COO. Because of this, ModulawAI is not just a useful research tool but also a force for change in the way Nigerian lawyers practice and administer justice in the digital era.

4.1 Prospects of AI in Nigerian Legal Practice

4.1.1 Improved Productivity in Everyday Legal Work

In Nigeria, typical legal activities are being performed with amazing efficiency thanks to artificial intelligence (AI). AI-driven solutions have made it possible to complete tasks that would typically take endless hours, like legal research, document review, and contract analysis, more quickly and accurately. Lawyers can search through thousands of case law reports, legislative provisions, or contractual clauses in a matter of minutes using technologies like Law Pavilion's TIMI and other e-discovery platforms.⁵⁶ This gives them the opportunity to point out important clauses and pertinent precedents, which eventually frees up more time for strategic activities like client consultation, negotiation, and courtroom argument. As a result, both productivity and the calibre of legal services provided have significantly increased.⁵⁷

4.1.2 Case Outcome Projections

AI is changing litigation tactics by providing predictive insights in addition to efficiency. Artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms can spot trends and forecast the probable result of a dispute by examining past case decisions. Lawyers can determine, for example, whether a judge is likely to support particular arguments or legal interpretations. This predictive ability aids solicitors in determining whether to suggest to their clients that a settlement is a better course of action or to go to trial.⁵⁸ This kind of data-driven foresight lowers litigation uncertainty, boosts client

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ LegalTechTalk, 'Nigeria's LegalTech Startup Goes Fully Agentic, Pioneers Smarter Legal Systems for Africa', [Nigeria's LegalTech Startup Goes Fully Agentic, Pioneers Smarter Legal Systems for Africa - LegalTechTalk](#) accessed 16th August 2025.

⁵⁶ Marble Partners LP, 'The Legal Profession And The Growth Of Artificial Intelligence In Nigeria: Adapting To A New Era', [THE LEGAL PROFESSION AND THE GROWTH OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN NIGERIA: ADAPTING TO A NEW ERA. - Marble Partners LP](#) accessed 16th August 2025.

⁵⁷ Aminu Hassan, 'The Legal, Ethical issues And impact of Artificial Intelligence on Legal Profession: Which Way Nigeria?', [The Legal, Ethical issues And impact of Artificial Intelligence on Legal Profession: Which Way Nigeria? -By Aminu Hassan - LawPavilion Blog](#) accessed 16th August 2025.

⁵⁸ See (n56), *supra*.

confidence, and helps attorneys develop more successful tactics based on the expected course of their cases.

4.1.3 Access to Justice

In a society where many people cannot afford the high expenses of legal services, AI further expands access to justice. AI lowers expenses for clients and helps close the gap between the public and the legal profession by cutting down on the time and resources needed to process legal matters. For underprivileged groups in rural or economically deprived locations, where access to solicitors is restricted, this is especially crucial.⁵⁹ Basic legal assistance can be given by chatbots, online legal advice platforms, and automated document drafting systems, enabling people to comprehend their rights and remedies without having to shoulder significant financial constraints.

4.1.4 Systematic Advantage Over Competitors

AI integration gives law firms a strategic edge over their competitors. Businesses that use AI can position themselves as cutting-edge, client-focused, and efficient, providing services that are not just quicker but also more economical.⁶⁰ Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) and tech startups, which frequently need prompt, reasonably priced, and trustworthy legal assistance, may find this particularly tempting. Businesses can stand out in a crowded legal market, draw in creative clients, and stay relevant in a business climate that is changing quickly and where efficiency and speed are essential by utilising AI.⁶¹

4.1.5 Support through Digital Skills Development

Lastly, the development of digital skills and capacity building are essential to the long-term viability of AI adoption in Nigeria's legal ecosystem. Programs like the 3 Million Technical Talent (3MTT) Program of the federal government,⁶² which seeks to educate Nigerians about AI and other technologies, is essential to training lawyers for the digital era. The legal profession can bridge the knowledge gaps that impede the use of new technologies by providing judges, attorneys, and law students with AI and digital literacy skills. This guarantees that Nigeria's legal system stays competitive globally and in line with technology developments influencing the administration of justice globally, in addition to facilitating a seamless transition into AI-driven practice.

4.2 Challenges to AI Adoption in Nigerian Legal Practice

4.2.1 Infrastructure and Cost Barriers

Nigeria's legal practices' adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) is severely hampered by cost and infrastructure-related obstacles. Inadequate digital infrastructure, erratic electrical supplies, and

59 Ladipo Soetan, 'What AI Means for the Future of Law Practice in Nigeria', [The Legal, Ethical issues And impact of Artificial Intelligence on Legal Profession: Which Way Nigeria? -By Aminu Hassan - LawPavilion Blog](#) accessed 16th August 2025.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² The 3MTT Programme is a Nigerian federal government initiative, launched in October 2023 under the Renewed Hope Agenda, aimed at training three million Nigerians in technical and digital skills by 2027.

erratic internet access are still commonplace in many courts and legal firms, despite the fact that these factors are necessary for the effective operation of AI systems.⁶³ There is a digital divide in the legal industry since most small and medium-sized firms cannot afford the high subscription prices of sophisticated systems like Kira Systems or Lexis+, even in cases where infrastructure is available.⁶⁴

4.2.2 Digital Literacy & Resistance to Change

Beyond infrastructure, resistance to change and the difficulty of digital literacy continue to be major issues. Many attorneys, and even judges, do not have the requisite training to make good use of AI tools. The profession finds it challenging to create a seamless transition to technology-driven practices due to this lack of digital competency.⁶⁵ Furthermore, many practitioners continue to favour traditional approaches to investigation, documentation, and case preparation due to a cultural unwillingness to break with long-standing legal traditions.

4.2.3 Lack of Regulatory Framework

The lack of a defined regulatory framework is a third barrier. Nigeria currently lacks clear laws or regulations governing the moral, open, and responsible application of AI in the profession of law.⁶⁶ This lack of regulations makes it difficult to determine who should be held accountable when AI systems give inaccurate or deceptive advice. Even when mistakes come from AI-generated outputs, lawyers are nonetheless subject to liability in the absence of defined regulations.

4.2.4 Data Limitations & Quality

The efficacy of AI in Nigeria's legal industry is further constrained by data-related issues. Crucial legal data, including statutes, case law, and court rulings, are not always fully digitised and are frequently either insufficient or not available in machine-readable formats. Since AI technologies rely substantially on complete and high-quality datasets to operate effectively, this uneven digitisation lowers their trustworthiness.⁶⁷

4.2.5 Ethical, Privacy, and Bias Concerns

Adoption of AI is made more difficult by ethical, privacy, and prejudice issues. Many AI systems function as "black boxes," generating outcomes without disclosing how they arrived at their conclusions. This ambiguity erodes confidence in AI-generated results, as does the possibility of algorithmic bias.⁶⁸ Additionally, as sensitive legal data may be accessed or exploited during processing, the employment of AI raises questions regarding protecting attorney-client confidentiality. Crucially, the lawyer is still professionally responsible for any mistakes or violations that arise from the use of AI.

63 See (n34), *supra*.

64 *Ibid*.

65 Ezeoha Markanthy, 'Artificial Intelligence and the Nigerian Legal Ecosystem', [ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE NIGERIAN LEGAL ECOSYSTEM – Nnamdi Azikiwe University Law Review](#) accessed 17th August 2025.

66 Sulaimon Adebodun, 'The Future of Artificial Intelligence and the Administration of Law & Justice in Nigeria', [The Future of Artificial Intelligence and the Administration of Law & Justice in Nigeria - Sulaimon Adebodun - LawGlobal Hub](#) accessed 17th August 2025.

67 See (n56), *supra*.

68 Angel M. J., Aiswarya M. U., and Jerrin T. P., 'Ethical Challenges of Using Artificial Intelligence in Judiciary', [\[2504.19284\] Ethical Challenges of Using Artificial Intelligence in Judiciary](#) accessed 17th August 2025.

4.2.6 Accuracy and Accountability Risks

Lastly, there is the matter of accountability and accuracy. Artificial intelligence (AI) techniques are not perfect and can provide inaccurate or misleading content. The instance in the United States when a lawyer used ChatGPT for legal research and ended up quoting false cases, which resulted in court sanctions, is a notable example.⁶⁹ These dangers highlight how crucial human supervision is when using AI. Although AI can assist in the practice of law, excessive reliance without adequate verification could jeopardise the administration of justice and harm attorneys' reputations.

4.3 Legislation on AI from Other Jurisdictions

A number of countries have passed extensive laws that expressly regulate artificial intelligence. Here are some significant examples:

4.3.1 European Union (EU)

By passing the AI Act (Regulation 2024/1689), the first comprehensive and legally enforceable framework for artificial intelligence, the European Union (EU) established a precedent that was followed by other countries.⁷⁰ The Act, which goes into effect on August 1, 2024, establishes a risk-based regulatory framework by outlawing harmful usage, imposing responsibilities on transparency, and requiring thorough risk assessments for high-risk AI systems.⁷¹ Its goals are to uphold accountability, protect fundamental rights, and harmonise AI governance among all participating nations.

4.3.2 South Korea

The AI Basic Act, one of the first pieces of national standalone AI legislation, was passed by South Korea in December 2024, just after. The Act synchronises regulation with the nation's long-term AI plans, creates a National AI Committee and Safety Institute, and requires effect and risk evaluations for high-impact systems.⁷² In a similar vein, Japan established an AI Strategy Centre for coordination and adopted a principles-based model that guides AI research, strategic planning, and oversight when it passed the Act on Promotion of Research and Development and Utilisation of Artificial Intelligence-Related Technologies in May 2025.⁷³

4.3.3 Asia and Latin America

Other regions outside of Asia and Europe have also embraced comprehensive frameworks. One notable early Middle Eastern attempt to enact legislation pertaining to AI is Bahrain's AI Law No.

69 'Nigeria: Artificial Intelligence and the Law - The Future of Legal Practice (Part 3)', This Day (Lagos, 5th November 2024), [Nigeria: Artificial Intelligence and the Law - The Future of Legal Practice \(Part 3\) - allAfrica.com](#) accessed 17th August 2025.

70 EUR-Lex, 'Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of The European Parliament And of The Council of 13 June 2024', [Regulation - EU - 2024/1689 - EN - EUR-Lex](#) accessed 8th September 2025.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

72 International Trade Administration, 'South Korea Artificial Intelligence (AI) Basic Act', [South Korea Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Basic Act](#) accessed 8th September 2025.

73 Dominic Paulger, 'Understanding Japan's AI Promotion Act: An "Innovation-First" Blueprint for AI Regulation', [Understanding Japan's AI Promotion Act: An "Innovation-First" Blueprint for AI Regulation](#) accessed 8th September 2025.

56 of 2023, which covers licenses, liability, bans, and penalties in great detail.⁷⁴ In Latin America, Brazil adopted a risk-based system modelled after the EU in December 2024 with Bill No. 2338/2023, emphasising human rights protections and enforcement tools.⁷⁵ Though regulatory approaches vary depending on political, economic, and cultural circumstances, taken together, these events show a growing international consensus on the need for comprehensive AI law.

As of now, no jurisdiction has passed complete laws that are especially concerned with controlling the application of AI in legal practice, that is, AI that is adapted to the procedures, morals, and behaviour of lawyers in court.⁷⁶

4.4 The Importance of Regulating AI in Legal Practice

Research, case management, and conflict resolution are all changing as a result of AI's incorporation into the legal profession. Although AI is efficient and increases access to justice, its unregulated use runs the risk of compromising the integrity of legal procedures through errors, biased results, and moral failings.⁷⁷ Therefore, regulation is necessary to guarantee that AI technologies used in legal proceedings are open, verifiable, and compliant with the professional norms that oversee the administration of justice.

Accountability is among the most urgent issues. It is unclear who is responsible when AI-generated outputs deceive clients or practitioners in the absence of defined regulatory frameworks—the developer, the attorney, or both.⁷⁸ To protect professional responsibility, maintain attorney-client privilege, and make sure AI complements human judgment in delicate legal situations rather than takes its place, regulatory monitoring is required. Mandatory fairness evaluations and bias audits can also stop AI from reinforcing past discrimination in court and legal decision-making.⁷⁹

The safeguarding of access to justice is equally vital. Without controls, poor clients may become victims of unreliable and deceptive legal instruments. However, when properly controlled, AI can democratise legal services by offering underprivileged people affordable aid.⁸⁰ Harmonising procedures and boosting confidence in AI-enabled legal services can be achieved by regulations that are in line with international standards, such as the OECD AI Principles and the EU's AI Act.

74 Nemko Digital, 'AI Regulation Bahrain', [AI Regulation Bahrain: Key Policies & Regulatory Standards](#) accessed 9th September 2025.

75 'Regulatory Framework for Artificial Intelligence Passes in Brazil's Senate', Mattos Filho (11th December 2024), [Regulatory framework for artificial intelligence passes in Brazil's Senate - Mattos Filho](#) accessed 9th September 2025.

76 'Navigating AI Laws and Regulations Across Practice Areas', Thomson Reuters (28th July 2025), [AI laws across U.S. and global practice areas](#) accessed 9th September 2025.

77 Anubhav Singla, and Ekta Gupta, 'The Impact of Technology on Legal Profession', *International Journal of Law*, Volume 10, Issue 2, 2024, pp. 112-120, [The impact of technology on legal profession](#) accessed 9th September 2025.

78 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) Regulation in Nigeria: Key Considerations, Recommendations, Legal Framework, and Policy Development for Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Nigeria', OAL (4th October 2023), [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Regulation in Nigeria: Key Considerations, Recommendations, Legal Framework, and Policy Development for Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) in Nigeria](#) accessed 9th September 2025.

79 Simon, M. S., and Andrew Pery, 'AI and Attorney-Client Privilege: A Brave New World for Lawyers', [AI and Attorney-Client Privilege: A Brave New World for Lawyers](#) accessed 9th September 2025.

⁸⁰ See (n76), *supra*.

In the end, regulation makes sure AI continues to serve justice by enhancing productivity while maintaining ethics, justice, and the rule of law.⁸¹

4.5 Is Artificial Intelligence a Threat to Lawyers?

The idea that artificial intelligence functions similarly to the human brain frequently gives rise to worries over its application in the legal profession. Concerns that AI may displace human occupations, particularly those of legal experts, add to this anxiety. But a lawyer's work involves more than just mechanised chores; it also involves strategy, creativity, and persuasion—skills that no AI system can completely replace.⁸² Additionally, history demonstrates that although technology may eliminate certain jobs, it also opens up new opportunities in other fields. For example, as banks grew, ATMs created additional jobs for bank tellers, and now AI is generating jobs like trainers and AI legal knowledge engineers. Therefore, even though AI increases productivity, human knowledge is still essential in the legal field.⁸³

Beyond employment issues, there are also significant barriers to AI's legal use. Even while AI models are meant to mimic legal thinking, they frequently generate documents that appear accurate but lack the in-depth legal analysis necessary for wise decision-making.⁸⁴ Because laws differ from one jurisdiction to another and lack a common framework, this deficiency is made worse by the lack of a single international legal system. It is therefore very difficult to create algorithms that can understand and apply legal principles globally.⁸⁵ Therefore, relying solely on AI may result in serious mistakes, highlighting the necessity of human supervision and interpretation in the practice of law.

5.1 Conclusion

The Nigerian legal sector stands at the brink of a major evolution, propelled by the rapid advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI promises to revolutionise legal practice by streamlining routine tasks, improving legal research efficiency, and enabling more precise, data-backed decision-making.⁸⁶ However, while AI offers transformative potential, it is essential to emphasise that it serves as a supportive tool to enhance—rather than replace—human legal expertise. The successful integration of AI in Nigeria's legal system will depend on balancing technological innovation with ethical considerations, regulatory oversight, and the irreplaceable value of professional legal judgment.⁸⁷

5.2 Recommendations

81 Law & More Attorneys, 'Complete Guide to EU Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act)', [Complete Guide To EU Artificial Intelligence Act \(AI Act\) | Law & More](#) accessed 9th September 2025.

82 *Ibid.*

83 *Ibid.*

84 *Ibid.*

85 *Ibid.*

86 <https://nbaslp.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Guidelines-for-the-Use-of-Artificial-Intelligence-in-the-Nigerian-Legal-Profession-1.pdf> accessed 6th May 2025.

87 *Ibid.*

The following crucial steps are advised for those involved in Nigeria's legal sector in order to maximise the advantages of artificial intelligence while maintaining moral and professional standards:

5.2.1 Legal Education Reform

Digital ethics, technology law, and artificial intelligence should all be included in the curricula of law schools and the Nigerian Law School. Future solicitors will be prepared with the abilities required for contemporary legal practice thanks to this reform.⁸⁸ To ensure that graduates are equipped to handle the changing nexus of legal services and technological innovation, interdisciplinary learning, which combines law and technology, should also be encouraged.

5.2.2 Policy and Regulatory Reform

The Rules of Professional Conduct (RPC) ought to be revised to take into account the ethical application of artificial intelligence (AI), data security, and digital communication, among other aspects of modern digital practice. When AI tools are used in legal services, clear policies are required to handle liability for malpractice, accountability, and transparency. A strong basis for the ethical incorporation of AI in the field will be established by these improvements.

5.2.3 Capacity Building

AI literacy and practical digital skills should be incorporated into nationwide Continuing Legal Education (CLE) programs. Both senior practitioners, who could have a steeper learning curve, and junior solicitors, who are typically more tech-inclined, must be the focus of such training. For a consistent, inclusive shift to AI-driven legal practice, this generational divide must be closed.⁸⁹

5.2.4 Strategic Partnerships

It should be encouraged for law firms, tech startups, legal IT suppliers, and academic institutions to work together. These collaborations can aid in the development of locally relevant AI solutions that are adapted to Nigerian legal and judicial procedures.⁹⁰ Instead of depending entirely on foreign technology, Nigeria's legal system might create indigenous instruments that represent its own circumstances by encouraging innovation through cooperation.

5.2.5 Establish AI Regulation for Legal Practice

The application of AI in legal services should be governed by a specific regulatory framework. In order to completely secure client rights and confidentiality, such a framework must strike a compromise between international best practices and Nigerian legal norms.⁹¹ Nigeria may actively influence the moral application of AI while maintaining public confidence in the legal system by establishing unambiguous legislation.

⁸⁸ See (n34), *supra*.

⁸⁹ White & Case, 'AI Watch: Global Regulatory Tracker – Nigeria', [AI Watch: Global regulatory tracker - Nigeria | White & Case LLP](#) accessed 17th August 2025.

⁹⁰ LegalDigital, 'The AI Revolution in Law: How LegalDigitalNG is Shaping the Future of Legal Practice in Nigeria', [The AI Revolution in Law: How LegalDigitalNG is Shaping the Future of Legal Practice in Nigeria - LegalDigitalNG](#) accessed 17th August 2025.

⁹¹ Laura Ebrusike and Nonso Anyasi, 'The Status of AI Regulation in Nigeria', [The Status of AI Regulation in Nigeria – Laura Ebrusike and Nonso Anyasi](#) accessed 17th August 2025.