Journal of Research Administration
Society of Research Administrators International

TELEHEALTH ADOPTION IN FRAGILE STATES: A TRUST-BASED MULTIDIMENSIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR LIBYA

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ABSTRACT

Telehealth offers transformative potential for improving healthcare access and service delivery, particularly in low-resource and fragile state contexts. However, its adoption in countries like Libya remains limited due to a confluence of infrastructural, institutional, and socio-cultural barriers. This study develops and proposes a multidimensional framework for telehealth adoption in Libya, emphasizing the critical mediating role of trust in technology. By integrating elements from the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework, the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), the framework provides a comprehensive lens through which to examine the complex dynamics of telehealth adoption in resource-constrained settings. The study identifies key adoption determinants, technological readiness, organizational leadership, regulatory environment, and individual user factors, and explores how trust in telehealth platforms mediates the relationship between these determinants and actual usage behavior. In the Libyan context, where political instability, weak institutional capacity, and public aspect toward government-led ICT initiatives prevail, trust is shaped by perceptions of system reliability, data privacy, institutional credibility, and prior user experience. The study's findings underscore the importance of embedding trust-building strategies into policy and implementation efforts, including clear regulatory frameworks, transparency in digital health initiatives, and targeted capacity-building for both healthcare providers and patients. This research advances existing telehealth adoption literature by centering trust as a key mediating factor, offering a contextually grounded model applicable not only to Libya but also to other LMICs facing similar healthcare and governance challenges. The framework provides actionable insights for policymakers, healthcare leaders, and technology developers seeking to promote sustainable telehealth integration in fragile and resource-constrained environments.

Keywords: *Telehealth adoption, Trust in technology, Fragile states, Libya, Digital health systems*

INTRODUCTION

Access to quality healthcare is a fundamental determinant of national well-being and economic stability, particularly in post-conflict and developing countries such as Libya. Despite the provision of free healthcare services in public facilities, Libya faces ongoing political and infrastructural challenges that have resulted in limited resources, workforce shortages, and significant disparities in healthcare accessibility between urban and rural areas. These issues have left nearly 1.3 million Libyans without access to essential medical care (Fitzgerald, 2023; WHO, 2023). Given these systemic constraints, there is an urgent need to optimize healthcare delivery

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mechanisms, making the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in healthcare, a field increasingly known as telehealth, a critical strategic avenue for reform. Telehealth refers to the delivery of healthcare services and information through telecommunications technologies, effectively bridging the physical distance between patients and healthcare providers (CDC, 2023). Beyond synchronous video consultations, telehealth encompasses remote patient monitoring, store-and-forward imaging, mobile health (mHealth) applications, and virtual health education (Effiong, 2022; HRSA, 2022). Globally, the telehealth market has experienced accelerated growth driven by rising healthcare costs, aging populations, and the increasing burden of chronic diseases (Dimension Market Research, 2024). The COVID-19 pandemic further acted as a catalyst by demonstrating telehealth's vital role in ensuring continuity of care, minimizing infection risk, and alleviating pressure on overburdened healthcare systems (Garfan et al., 2022).

Despite such global progress, the adoption of telehealth in developing countries, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, remains inconsistent and fragmented. Libya's telehealth initiatives are still in their infancy, characterized largely by pilot projects, limited ICT infrastructure, and fragmented policy frameworks that hinder full-scale implementation (Ahmed et al., 2023; Osman et al., 2023). Several challenges impede the widespread adoption of telehealth in Libya, including inadequate ICT infrastructure, insufficient digital literacy among healthcare professionals, and limited institutional support (Al-Samari et al., 2020). Moreover, the lack of reliable internet connectivity in remote and rural areas, coupled with a shortage of trained healthcare workers, exacerbates inequalities in service delivery, particularly across Libya's southern and western regions (Elhadi et al., 2021; UNDP, 2022). These challenges illustrate that successful telehealth integration in resource-limited settings is not solely dependent on technological readiness but also requires attention to complex socio-organizational dynamics.

Existing literature highlights the relevance of theoretical models such as the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework, Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) in understanding technology adoption behaviors (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990; Rogers, 2003; Venkatesh et al., 2003). These models collectively emphasize the influence of innovation characteristics, organizational support, external environmental pressures, and user perceptions in technology uptake. However, these frameworks often lack integration and frequently fail to capture context-specific mediators critical to technology adoption in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), such as Libya. One particularly underexplored but crucial factor in telehealth adoption is trust in technology, which refers to the extent to which users believe telehealth systems are secure, reliable, and effective (Distel, 2021; Kuen et al., 2023). In healthcare, where decisions can be life-or-death, trust becomes a central determinant of the willingness of both healthcare professionals and patients to engage with digital platforms (Parimbelli et al., 2018; Gallardo et al., 2024). Trust is multidimensional and shaped by perceptions of system reliability, data privacy, ease of use, and institutional reputation (Aji & Ramadani, 2024). This factor is especially salient in developing contexts like Libya, where skepticism toward government-led ICT initiatives is prevalent and regulatory

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frameworks remain weak. As such, building and maintaining trust in digital healthcare platforms is essential for achieving sustainable telehealth adoption.

Research suggests that trust functions as a mediating variable, moderating the influence of technological, organizational, environmental, and individual factors on telehealth adoption (Arfi, 2021; Alviani et al., 2023). For instance, in well-resourced environments, high performance expectancy or system compatibility alone may not guarantee adoption if users do not trust the platform. Conversely, in lower-resource settings, trust can compensate for infrastructural limitations by fostering the behavioral intention to use telehealth services (Shao et al., 2022; Bibri, 2015). Therefore, understanding how trust mediates relationships between contextual determinants and telehealth adoption is particularly valuable for countries like Libya.

This study proposes a comprehensive framework that integrates the TOE, DOI, and UTAUT theories, while explicitly examining the mediating role of trust in technology adoption. The research investigates four primary categories of factors influencing telehealth uptake: individual factors such as digital literacy and behavioral intention; technological factors including system reliability, ICT infrastructure, and data security; organizational factors encompassing leadership support and resource readiness; and environmental factors such as regulatory environment and socio-cultural norms. By incorporating trust as a mediator, this research aims to provide a more holistic understanding of telehealth readiness within Libya's public healthcare context.

To empirically test the framework, a quantitative research design was employed, surveying 500 healthcare professionals, doctors, nurses, and administrators, from public medical institutions in Tripoli, Benghazi, and Sabha. These cities represent Libya's geographical and infrastructural diversity, enhancing the generalizability of the findings. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), an approach well-suited for estimating complex models and assessing indirect effects (Hair et al., 2021). The outcomes of this analysis are intended to inform a validated framework for telehealth adoption in Libya, providing empirically grounded insights for policymakers, healthcare leaders, and technology developers.

The significance of this study lies in its ability to fill critical gaps in existing research. First, it addresses the scarcity of empirical studies on telehealth in post-conflict, resource-constrained environments. Second, it advances theoretical models by incorporating trust as a mediating construct, thereby offering a more nuanced understanding of technology adoption in healthcare. Finally, it contributes practical guidance for Libyan stakeholders, including policy recommendations, infrastructure development strategies, and user-centered design principles, aimed at fostering a more inclusive digital health ecosystem. In conclusion, Libya's unique socio-political context presents both challenges and opportunities for telehealth innovation. As global healthcare systems increasingly embrace digital transformation, it is imperative that countries like Libya are not left behind. By identifying and empirically validating key determinants and mediators of telehealth adoption, this study seeks to facilitate the development of a resilient, technology-enabled public healthcare infrastructure that can serve as a model for other developing nations navigating similar transitions.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Telehealth has become a significant innovation in addressing enduring global challenges related to healthcare accessibility, delivery efficiency, and cost containment. By harnessing telecommunications technologies, telehealth facilitates the remote provision of medical services, enhances clinical outcomes, and mitigates the operational burdens faced by healthcare systems worldwide (Effiong, 2022; HRSA, 2022). Its applications extend well beyond real-time video consultations, encompassing remote patient monitoring, mobile health (mHealth) applications, and digital health education platforms. These technologies have been especially instrumental during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted the urgent need for remote healthcare solutions amidst social distancing requirements and overwhelmed healthcare infrastructures. In developed countries, telehealth has rapidly become integrated into mainstream healthcare systems, supported by strong digital infrastructure, comprehensive policy frameworks, and widespread digital literacy among healthcare providers and patients alike. Despite these advances, the pace and scope of telehealth adoption in developing countries, particularly those marked by conflict and political instability such as Libya, remain limited and fragmented.

Libya's case represents a particularly complex and instructive example of telehealth implementation challenges. The country's healthcare system has been significantly weakened by ongoing political instability and a fragile post-conflict environment, resulting in chronic workforce shortages, inequitable distribution of services, and underfunded medical institutions. These systemic weaknesses are compounded by poor information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and the absence of a coordinated national digital health strategy. While telehealth has the potential to address many of these issues by expanding healthcare access to underserved and conflict-affected areas, its actual deployment has been restricted mostly to small pilot projects and isolated initiatives. This limited progress underscores the necessity of exploring the multifaceted determinants that influence telehealth adoption in such resource-constrained and politically volatile settings.

Effective telehealth integration in contexts like Libya demands an approach that transcends mere technological readiness and considers the intricate interplay among technological, organizational, environmental, and individual factors. Technological considerations include the availability and reliability of ICT systems, ease of use, and robust data security and privacy protections. Organizational determinants encompass leadership commitment, institutional preparedness, internal policies that support digital transformation, and the allocation of sufficient resources to sustain telehealth services. Environmental factors involve the broader regulatory environment, funding mechanisms, socio-cultural attitudes toward technology, and infrastructural conditions that may either facilitate or impede telehealth adoption. At the individual level, factors such as digital literacy, previous experience with technology, personal attitudes toward innovation, and behavioral intentions critically influence the willingness of healthcare professionals and patients to engage with telehealth platforms.

A particularly crucial mediating factor in this ecosystem is trust in technology. In healthcare, where decisions have direct consequences on patient wellbeing, trust shapes perceptions of system

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reliability, privacy, security, and overall competence of telehealth solutions. Without adequate trust, even the most advanced technological platforms may fail to gain user acceptance or be sustained over time. In Libya, where public confidence in government institutions and digital infrastructure remains low due to enduring political instability and governance challenges, building and maintaining trust is essential for successful telehealth adoption. Understanding toward government-led ICT initiatives, compounded by weak regulatory frameworks and fragmented health governance, complicates efforts to foster this trust.

Research increasingly highlights the mediating role of trust in shaping telehealth adoption, suggesting that it can moderate the influence of technological, organizational, environmental, and individual factors on users' acceptance and sustained use of digital health services. In resource-rich settings, high system performance expectancy or platform compatibility alone does not guarantee adoption if users do not trust the technology. Conversely, in resource-limited environments such as Libya, trust can offset infrastructural shortcomings by encouraging positive behavioral intentions to use telehealth services. Consequently, understanding the mechanisms through which trust mediates telehealth adoption is critical for devising effective strategies tailored to such challenging contexts.

The evolution of telehealth over the past two decades has been marked by substantial technological advancements and an expanding scope of services. Telehealth encompasses synchronous interactions such as real-time video consultations, asynchronous or "store-and-forward" technologies enabling the transmission of medical data like diagnostic images and patient histories for later review, remote patient monitoring systems, and mHealth applications designed to support patient self-management and education (CDC, 2023; Andrii, 2022). These innovations have proved effective in overcoming geographic and systemic barriers, particularly benefiting populations in rural or underserved areas by reducing travel burdens and facilitating more consistent engagement with healthcare services (Bocas, 2022). The global trajectory of telehealth adoption witnessed unprecedented acceleration during the COVID-19 pandemic, as healthcare systems faced the dual challenge of limiting infection risks and maintaining continuity of care. Regulatory relaxations, increased funding, and rapid digital transformation underscored telehealth's strategic value, demonstrating its utility not only in managing COVID-19 but also in supporting mental health services, chronic disease management, and routine care during lockdowns (Garfan et al., 2022).

Despite these global advances, telehealth implementation remains uneven, particularly in developing and post-conflict countries such as Libya. The foundational ICT infrastructure necessary to sustain telehealth is often lacking or inadequate. In Libya, internet connectivity is unreliable outside major urban centers, which hinders continuous digital communication between providers and patients. Medical facilities frequently lack modern equipment required for remote diagnostics and monitoring. Moreover, limited digital literacy among healthcare providers and the absence of formal training programs to build capacity undermine institutional readiness for telehealth integration (Ahmed et al., 2023). These technological constraints are further complicated by systemic issues like political instability, fragmented governance, and scarce

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investment in ICT infrastructure, which together impede the expansion of telehealth services within Libya's public healthcare system (CDC, 2023; Andrii, 2022; Bocas, 2022; Ahmed et al., 2023).

Telehealth offers immense potential for improving healthcare accessibility and quality in developing countries, yet structural and socio-cultural challenges often hinder its broad implementation. According to Ndwabe et al. (2023), key barriers in African contexts include insufficient funding, low digital literacy among providers and patients, cultural resistance to technology-mediated care, and the absence of comprehensive national policies to guide telehealth adoption. These factors create an environment where even basic technological solutions struggle to become embedded, further complicated by fragmented healthcare delivery systems operating without unified digital health strategies. Libya exemplifies many of these challenges. As a post-conflict nation with ongoing instability and economic uncertainty, its healthcare system remains fragile and under-resourced. The country's ICT infrastructure is fragmented and outdated, limiting telehealth feasibility, especially in rural areas. The shortage of trained personnel capable of using and maintaining telehealth platforms also limits scalability and institutional readiness (Elhadi et al., 2021). These challenges are not merely technical but are deeply tied to governance deficits and underinvestment in the health sector, which hinder modernization efforts and digital health integration.

Despite these formidable barriers, telehealth holds the promise of addressing significant healthcare disparities in Libya, particularly in underserved southern regions where healthcare infrastructure is sparse and access to specialists is limited. Remote consultations, diagnostics, and continuous patient monitoring could reduce the need for patients to travel long distances or experience delays due to inadequate service availability. However, telehealth in Libya has so far been limited to isolated pilot programs and informal uses of mobile communication technologies between providers and patients. This constrained implementation reflects infrastructural deficiencies, but also a lack of coherent institutional strategies and regulatory frameworks necessary to support sustained digital health development (Osman et al., 2023).

Moreover, empirical evidence emphasizes that technology availability alone does not guarantee meaningful telehealth engagement. Trust and familiarity with digital platforms are essential determinants of adoption. In Libya, widespread skepticism about digital health solutions, concerns regarding privacy and data security, and limited familiarity with telehealth functionalities significantly reduce willingness among providers and patients to utilize such services. Alviani et al. (2023) argue that without deliberate efforts to build trust through education, training, and transparent communication, even technically sound telehealth systems will struggle to achieve widespread uptake. Addressing these human and cultural factors alongside infrastructure development and policy reform is therefore critical to the successful implementation and scaling of telehealth in Libya.

In light of these complex challenges, future research and policy must emphasize trust-building as a core pillar of telehealth initiatives in Libya. Strengthening data security protocols, fostering institutional transparency, tailoring technologies to user needs and cultural contexts, and enhancing

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digital literacy among healthcare workers and patients are crucial components of this endeavor. Furthermore, investment in ICT infrastructure and the establishment of comprehensive regulatory frameworks that protect privacy and promote equitable access are imperative. Integrating these strategies within national health plans can help bridge the digital divide and support the sustainable expansion of telehealth services.

In conclusion, while telehealth represents a powerful tool to address healthcare accessibility challenges in Libya by enabling remote service delivery, its effective adoption depends on more than the mere presence of technology. The complex interaction among organizational readiness, environmental factors, individual capabilities, and, critically, trust in technology defines the landscape of telehealth integration in this post-conflict setting. Recognizing trust as a mediating factor underscores the need for nuanced, contextually informed approaches to policy development and implementation. As Libya and other developing countries seek to leverage digital health innovations, building robust trust frameworks alongside infrastructural and human capacity development will be essential to fulfilling telehealth's promise of expanding access, improving health outcomes, and enhancing system efficiency (Effiong, 2022; HRSA, 2022).

The adoption of telehealth technologies, particularly within low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs), presents a complex and multifaceted challenge shaped by an interplay of contextual, organizational, technological, and individual factors. Understanding and predicting how telehealth is integrated into healthcare systems in these settings requires the application of comprehensive theoretical frameworks that account for this complexity. Over the years, scholars and practitioners have turned to several influential models to explore technology adoption, among which the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework, the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) stand out as foundational approaches. Each of these models contributes a unique perspective on the mechanisms that drive adoption, offering valuable insights into the motivations, capabilities, and constraints experienced by organizations and individuals in the digital health landscape.

The Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework, initially conceptualized by Tornatzky and Fleischer (1990), provides a broad, systemic perspective on innovation adoption by delineating three core dimensions: technological context, organizational context, and environmental context. The technological dimension encompasses the characteristics of technologies that an organization might adopt, focusing on factors such as compatibility with existing systems, complexity of use, and perceived relative advantage over incumbent solutions. This dimension highlights how the intrinsic attributes of telehealth technologies, such as their usability, interoperability, and reliability, play a significant role in shaping adoption decisions. The organizational context captures internal factors such as leadership structure, availability of financial and human resources, institutional culture, and the organization's overall preparedness to implement new technologies. Within healthcare systems, this includes the capacity of health facilities to integrate telehealth into routine workflows, staff readiness, and managerial support. The environmental context situates the organization within a broader ecosystem, considering regulatory conditions, competitive pressures, socio-economic factors, and external stakeholder

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influences, such as government policies and infrastructural support. The strength of the TOE framework lies in its holistic view of innovation adoption, emphasizing the dynamic interplay between internal capacities and external conditions, which is especially relevant when studying telehealth integration in complex and resource-limited health systems where both organizational readiness and external support are critical.

Parallel to the TOE framework, the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, as articulated by Rogers (2003), focuses more narrowly on the attributes of the innovation itself and their influence on the rate and pattern of adoption within populations. DOI theory posits that five key characteristics of an innovation, relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability, significantly affect the willingness of individuals and organizations to adopt new technologies. Relative advantage refers to the degree to which telehealth offers clear benefits compared to existing care delivery methods, such as improved access, reduced costs, or enhanced clinical outcomes. Compatibility assesses how well telehealth aligns with existing values, workflows, and technologies within healthcare settings. Complexity pertains to the perceived difficulty of understanding and using telehealth platforms, which can be a formidable barrier in environments where digital literacy is limited. Trialability denotes the opportunity to pilot telehealth solutions before committing fully, allowing stakeholders to assess feasibility and impact in a low-risk manner. Finally, observability concerns the visibility of telehealth benefits to potential adopters, including demonstrable improvements in patient care or system efficiency. DOI's focus on these innovation attributes offers critical insights into how telehealth solutions may either diffuse rapidly or face resistance based on their perceived value and ease of integration into existing practices.

Complementing these structural and innovation-centric models is the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), introduced by Venkatesh et al. (2003), which provides a behavioral and psychological framework for understanding technology acceptance at the individual user level. UTAUT synthesizes constructs from eight earlier models into four core determinants of technology use: performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Performance expectancy reflects users' beliefs that telehealth will improve their job performance or patient outcomes, while effort expectancy addresses the perceived ease of using telehealth systems. Social influence captures the extent to which users perceive that important peers or authority figures endorse the technology, thereby shaping normative pressure to adopt it. Facilitating conditions refer to the degree to which users believe that organizational and technical infrastructures are in place to support effective use. Furthermore, UTAUT incorporates moderating variables such as age, gender, experience, and voluntariness of use, enhancing its applicability across diverse user populations and settings. In healthcare environments, particularly those characterized by resource constraints and workforce challenges, the psychological readiness and social environment surrounding technology adoption are often as decisive as technical features. For instance, physicians' willingness to embrace telehealth may hinge on both their confidence in the system's clinical utility and the perceived endorsement by peers and institutional leaders.

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While TOE, DOI, and UTAUT each offer valuable theoretical foundations for understanding telehealth adoption, their isolated application may prove insufficient for fully capturing the complex realities of LMICs such as Libya. In these contexts, technological, organizational, and environmental factors are often deeply intertwined and cannot be adequately understood in isolation. The post-conflict environment in Libya adds further layers of complexity, including ongoing political fragmentation, economic instability, and weakened institutional governance. These factors undermine infrastructural development and disrupt policy continuity, creating a volatile environment where telehealth adoption is impeded by systemic instability as much as by technical or organizational issues. For example, while TOE's environmental context accounts for regulatory and socio-economic conditions, the rapid shifts in Libya's political landscape may render such external factors highly unpredictable. Similarly, UTAUT's focus on individual acceptance may overlook macro-level barriers such as limited broadband access or uneven distribution of healthcare resources, which constrain the feasibility of telehealth regardless of individual willingness. Moreover, the fragmented nature of Libya's health governance often leads to disjointed strategies and inconsistent funding, complicating efforts to build cohesive telehealth infrastructure or foster institutional readiness.

Given these interdependencies and contextual nuances, an integrated, multidimensional framework that synthesizes the strengths of TOE, DOI, and UTAUT while addressing the specificities of developing and fragile contexts is necessary. Telehealth adoption in Libya must be viewed not only through the lens of technological readiness, such as internet availability, hardware access, and system usability, but also through organizational capacity, including leadership commitment, staff training, and institutional policies. Equally important are environmental conditions like regulatory frameworks, funding mechanisms, and political stability. The individual behavioral dimension, particularly trust in digital health systems, user confidence, and perceptions of benefit and security, also plays a crucial mediating role in shaping adoption outcomes. This integrated approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of how various determinants interact dynamically within resource-limited and politically volatile settings, providing a comprehensive picture of telehealth integration challenges and opportunities.

For example, perceived system reliability, a concept emphasized by DOI and UTAUT, may interact significantly with organizational initiatives such as training programs and infrastructure investments highlighted in TOE. If healthcare providers in Libya receive adequate training and institutional support, their confidence in telehealth platforms is likely to increase, mitigating concerns about complexity and enhancing effort expectancy. Simultaneously, this occurs within the broader policy environment where government leadership, regulatory clarity, and infrastructural investments either enable or inhibit telehealth deployment. The mediating role of trust is particularly salient in Libya, where skepticism toward government-led digital initiatives and concerns about data privacy may undermine acceptance even when technological and organizational conditions appear favorable. Trust acts as a critical lens through which users interpret the reliability and security of telehealth systems, thereby influencing their behavioral

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intentions and actual usage. Without trust, investments in telehealth infrastructure and training may fail to translate into sustained adoption or improved health outcomes.

In addition, this integrated framework must consider socio-cultural factors unique to Libya's healthcare context, such as patients' and providers' attitudes toward digital care modalities, prevailing norms regarding privacy and confidentiality, and the influence of informal healthcare networks. Behavioral theories embedded within UTAUT are essential for understanding these human dimensions, but must be expanded to incorporate the influence of broader environmental instability and infrastructural gaps. The interplay of these factors creates feedback loops, for instance, low digital literacy among healthcare workers may reduce institutional readiness, which in turn exacerbates technological underutilization and reinforces mistrust among users. Addressing such cyclical challenges requires coordinated strategies that simultaneously target technological improvements, capacity building, regulatory development, and cultural adaptation.

In conclusion, while the Technology-Organization-Environment framework, Diffusion of Innovation theory, and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology each contribute valuable insights into the complex phenomenon of telehealth adoption, their standalone application falls short of addressing the multifactorial and context-sensitive realities of LMICs like Libya. The integration of these models into a cohesive analytical framework enables a more robust and holistic understanding of telehealth adoption, accounting for the nuanced interactions among technological capabilities, organizational readiness, environmental contingencies, and individual behaviors. Such a multidimensional approach is critical for informing policy development, implementation strategies, and capacity-building initiatives aimed at advancing telehealth in resource-constrained, politically unstable settings. As telehealth continues to emerge as a vital tool in addressing global healthcare disparities, particularly in fragile health systems, the development and application of integrative theoretical frameworks will be essential for guiding equitable, sustainable, and effective digital health transformations (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990; Rogers, 2003; Venkatesh et al., 2003).

The adoption of telehealth technologies is inherently multifaceted, shaped by a broad range of factors that span technological, organizational, environmental, and individual contexts. These determinants collectively influence how telehealth systems are embraced, integrated, and sustained within healthcare environments, especially in resource-constrained settings such as Libya. In such contexts, technological infrastructure limitations, organizational preparedness, external environmental influences, and the attitudes and perceptions of individuals all critically shape the success or failure of telehealth initiatives. While numerous studies have explored these factors independently, emerging research underscores the significant role of trust in technology as a key mediator that affects the dynamic interaction between these determinants and ultimately determines the adoption and effective use of digital health platforms.

The technological context is often the most visible and tangible barrier to telehealth adoption in LMICs like Libya, where technological infrastructure and system quality frequently lag behind global standards. Central to this context are elements such as broadband internet coverage, system reliability, user-friendliness, and the ability of telehealth platforms to interoperate with existing

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health information systems (Gonzalo et al., 2017). Libya's telecommunication infrastructure remains underdeveloped, characterized by intermittent internet connectivity, unstable electricity supply, and widespread use of outdated hardware, all of which significantly hinder the deployment of telehealth services (Makhluf & Abdulshahed, 2020). Rural regions are particularly disadvantaged, as poor broadband availability restricts access to essential services such as high-quality video consultations and remote diagnostics, effectively excluding large segments of the population from telehealth benefits. Beyond connectivity, the scarcity of modern digital health equipment and tools further constrains healthcare providers' capacity to deliver efficient telehealth services. Compounding these technical limitations is the insufficient development of data protection and cybersecurity frameworks, raising serious concerns about patient privacy and the confidentiality of health information. These concerns dampen confidence among both providers and patients, further impeding adoption (Osman et al., 2023). Research from analogous contexts emphasizes the necessity of designing telehealth platforms that are not only secure and reliable but also tailored to local infrastructure capabilities, ensuring accessibility and usability despite technological constraints (Ye et al., 2023). Therefore, the technological dimension encompasses more than hardware or connectivity; it involves adapting telehealth innovations to operate effectively within the realities of limited and uneven digital infrastructure (Parimbelli et al., 2018; Kuen et al., 2023; Aji & Ramadani, 2024; Gallardo et al., 2024; Arfi, 2021; Hoang & Do Le, 2024; Distel, 2021; Bibri, 2015).

Complementing technological challenges are organizational factors, which constitute a crucial dimension in determining the successful implementation of telehealth initiatives. Organizational readiness entails multiple components, including the commitment of leadership, adequate funding allocation, workforce training, and fostering a supportive institutional culture that embraces technological change (Anthony, 2023; Bokolo, 2023). In Libya, healthcare organizations often grapple with fragmented governance structures, resulting in disjointed strategic planning and the absence of clear, unified policies to guide telehealth integration. This lack of coordination complicates decision-making processes and limits the ability of institutions to mobilize resources efficiently. Leadership in many Libyan healthcare facilities tends to exhibit limited awareness or skepticism regarding the potential advantages of information and communication technologies (ICTs), which translates into weak institutional advocacy and minimal strategic prioritization of telehealth projects. Front-line healthcare workers frequently face barriers in the form of insufficient training and limited exposure to digital health tools, leaving them ill-prepared to incorporate telehealth systems into clinical workflows (Ahmed et al., 2023). This skills gap contributes to resistance and low adoption rates. Furthermore, organizational inertia and apprehension about change present additional obstacles; healthcare professionals may hesitate to embrace telehealth due to doubts about system reliability or fears that digital platforms might undermine their professional autonomy or complicate established routines. Such resistance, combined with lackluster leadership support, diminishes the prospects of successfully embedding telehealth within the healthcare delivery ecosystem (El Saadani & Suleiman, 2017). Organizational

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factors thus reflect a complex interplay of structural capacity, leadership vision, human capital development, and cultural readiness that fundamentally shape telehealth adoption trajectories.

Beyond internal organizational dynamics, the environmental context plays an equally significant role in influencing telehealth uptake. External factors such as government regulations, prevailing professional norms, socio-cultural attitudes, and patient expectations create either enabling environments or significant barriers for digital healthcare implementation. Libya's regulatory landscape for telehealth remains largely underdeveloped, characterized by ambiguous legal guidelines on critical issues such as data privacy, professional liability in virtual care settings, and standards of practice for telehealth delivery (Kashada et al., 2023). This regulatory uncertainty engenders apprehension among healthcare providers who may fear legal repercussions or non-compliance with ethical standards, thereby impeding their willingness to engage fully with telehealth platforms. In contrast, countries with robust and clear digital health legislation often observe higher adoption rates and improved patient trust in telehealth services, underscoring the importance of regulatory frameworks in shaping digital health ecosystems (WHO, 2021). In Libya, the absence of regulatory clarity combined with a volatile political environment further complicates policymaking and enforcement, creating an unpredictable setting for telehealth expansion. In addition to regulatory issues, cultural and social acceptance of remote care remains limited. Particularly in conservative communities, sensitive health services such as mental health care face additional stigmatization and confidentiality concerns that deter patients from seeking virtual consultations (Ruiz-Cosignani et al., 2022). Patients' preference for in-person interactions and mistrust of digital platforms further constrain telehealth's penetration into mainstream healthcare practices. Consequently, cultural and societal norms represent significant non-technical barriers that require strategic, culturally sensitive interventions to reshape perceptions and build acceptance of telehealth as a legitimate and trustworthy mode of care delivery (Kashada et al., 2023; Ruiz-Cosignani et al., 2022; Powell et al., 2017; Shao et al., 2022; Gonzalez et al., 2018; Tan et al., 2014).

At the individual level, the adoption of telehealth is significantly influenced by factors such as digital literacy, perceived usefulness, and intrinsic motivation among both healthcare providers and patients. Digital literacy, defined as the ability to effectively use digital tools, is a critical determinant of telehealth engagement, particularly in contexts where technology remains novel or underutilized. In Libya, many healthcare workers lack formal training in digital health applications, resulting in discomfort or unfamiliarity with telehealth platforms (Powell et al., 2017). This knowledge gap breeds resistance to adoption, as users may feel apprehensive about navigating unfamiliar systems, fearing that errors or inefficiencies could compromise patient care. Moreover, healthcare workers' concerns about diminished job autonomy or the perceived complexity of digital workflows exacerbate reluctance to embrace telehealth technologies (Shao et al., 2022). Patients, especially older adults or those with limited prior exposure to technology, may similarly resist remote consultations due to discomfort with digital interfaces or a strong cultural preference for face-to-face interactions with providers (Gonzalez et al., 2018). Addressing these individual barriers necessitates targeted interventions including tailored training programs

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that build confidence among healthcare workers, as well as public awareness campaigns aimed at educating patients about the benefits and safety of telehealth. Designing user-centered telehealth platforms that emphasize simplicity, accessibility, and responsiveness to diverse user needs is essential for reducing resistance and fostering broader acceptance (Tan et al., 2014). Thus, individual attitudes and competencies are foundational to shaping the demand side of telehealth adoption and must be addressed in tandem with technological and organizational strategies.

Amidst the technological, organizational, environmental, and individual determinants, trust in technology emerges as a particularly salient mediating factor in the adoption of telehealth within Libya. Trust in technology encompasses users' beliefs regarding the reliability, security, and ethical alignment of telehealth systems with professional and personal values (Parimbelli et al., 2018; Kuen et al., 2023). Empirical studies indicate that trust mediates the effects of perceived usefulness, system quality, and institutional support on technology acceptance and sustained use (Aji & Ramadani, 2024; Gallardo et al., 2024). In a low-trust environment such as Libya, where institutional governance is often questioned and system reliability is inconsistent, trust becomes a critical prerequisite for both healthcare professionals and patients to engage with telehealth platforms. Even technologically sophisticated systems may fail to achieve meaningful adoption if users doubt their security or suspect data misuse. Cybersecurity threats, concerns about patient confidentiality, and fears of data breaches are especially potent inhibitors in healthcare settings, where the sensitivity of personal health information is paramount (Hoang & Do Le, 2024). Trust functions not only as a cognitive filter through which users evaluate the legitimacy and safety of telehealth systems but also as a behavioral trigger influencing the decision to adopt or reject digital platforms (Distel, 2021; Bibri, 2015). In telehealth, where clinical decisions and patient outcomes hinge on system accuracy and confidentiality, trust assumes heightened importance. Therefore, cultivating trust through transparent communication, robust data protection measures, and consistent institutional support is indispensable for enhancing user engagement and ensuring the long-term viability of telehealth initiatives. Incorporating trust as a mediating variable into models of telehealth adoption yields a more realistic and actionable framework for understanding the complex interdependencies shaping user behavior, particularly in fragile environments with historically low institutional credibility (Osman et al., 2023; Anthony, 2023; Bokolo, 2023; Ahmed et al., 2023; El Saadani & Suleiman, 2017).

In summary, telehealth adoption in Libya is governed by a complex and interrelated set of technological, organizational, environmental, and individual factors. Addressing these factors requires a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that transcends mere technological innovation. Successful telehealth integration demands strategic efforts to enhance organizational readiness through leadership engagement, staff training, and resource allocation; the establishment of clear, supportive regulatory frameworks; and culturally informed strategies to shift societal attitudes and increase digital literacy. Crucially, trust in technology functions as a linchpin in this process, mediating how these diverse determinants interact and shaping stakeholders' willingness to adopt and sustain telehealth platforms. Recognizing and actively managing the role of trust alongside other contextual factors can enable policymakers, healthcare leaders, and implementers

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to navigate the formidable challenges associated with telehealth deployment in Libya and similar resource-constrained settings. By embracing such a holistic perspective, stakeholders can facilitate more equitable, effective, and sustainable digital health transformations that respond to both the technical realities and human dimensions of healthcare delivery (Gonzalo et al., 2017; Makhluf & Abdulshahed, 2020).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Telehealth has been extensively researched and increasingly adopted in high-income countries, where well-developed infrastructure, robust regulatory frameworks, and higher levels of digital literacy have facilitated its integration into healthcare systems. However, despite the growing global interest in digital health technologies, research focused on the implementation and adoption of telehealth in low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs), especially fragile states such as Libya, remains relatively limited. This lack of comprehensive investigation is particularly problematic because the unique socio-economic, political, and infrastructural challenges faced by LMICs often significantly influence the trajectory of telehealth adoption in ways that differ markedly from those observed in wealthier nations. Most existing studies predominantly focus on exploring the direct relationships between independent variables, such as technological readiness, organizational capacity, and individual attitudes, and the adoption of telehealth. Yet, these investigations tend to overlook the complex and often indirect effects that mediate these relationships. Trust, in particular, emerges as a crucial yet underexplored mediator in the adoption process of telehealth technologies, especially in contexts characterized by fragile institutional structures and pervasive skepticism toward digital solutions.

One of the most critical shortcomings of the current literature is the insufficient attention given to the indirect effects of various contextual, technological, organizational, and individual factors on telehealth adoption through the lens of trust. While telehealth adoption models in high-income countries frequently emphasize direct causal pathways, linking factors like system quality and institutional support straightforwardly to adoption intentions or behaviors, the role of trust as a mediator remains inadequately conceptualized and empirically tested. Trust in technology encompasses multiple dimensions, including confidence in system reliability, assurance of data privacy and security, and belief in the overall efficacy of the telehealth platform to meet healthcare needs. In LMICs like Libya, where historical and ongoing challenges have eroded public trust in government initiatives and digital infrastructures, this trust is not simply an auxiliary consideration but a foundational element determining whether telehealth initiatives succeed or fail. The pervasive skepticism toward government-led ICT projects and concerns about data misuse or cyber vulnerabilities reinforce the necessity to explore trust more rigorously within adoption frameworks. Despite this, empirical studies systematically investigating how trust interacts with other determinants, such as perceived usefulness, social influence, and organizational readiness, to shape telehealth adoption decisions remain scarce.

Most theoretical models and empirical studies related to telehealth adoption continue to emphasize direct, linear relationships between adoption determinants and behavioral outcomes. Frameworks

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such as the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990), the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory (Rogers, 2003), and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model (Venkatesh et al., 2003) have been widely employed to explain technology uptake in healthcare. These models offer valuable insights into factors influencing adoption, including technological compatibility, organizational readiness, environmental pressures, perceived ease of use, social influence, and facilitating conditions. However, they often treat these variables as acting independently or in simple cause-effect relationships without adequately capturing the complex interactions and mediations that characterize real-world adoption processes, particularly in contexts marked by low institutional trust and limited digital maturity. For example, while the TOE framework highlights the importance of organizational and environmental contexts, it lacks consideration of individual behavioral factors and does not explicitly include trust as a mediating construct. Similarly, the UTAUT model focuses heavily on social influence and performance expectancy but does not sufficiently incorporate broader contextual influences such as infrastructural deficits or regulatory ambiguity, which are particularly salient in developing countries like Libya. This oversight results in an overly simplistic depiction of telehealth adoption, failing to account for how trust mediates the relationships between technological readiness, organizational support, and individual acceptance.

The absence of integrated, holistic frameworks that combine behavioral, technological, and contextual dimensions, including the mediating role of trust, is a significant gap in telehealth adoption research, especially for LMICs. Research often remains fragmented, with studies examining isolated aspects of adoption without synthesizing these findings into comprehensive models that reflect the nuanced realities of healthcare delivery in fragile states. For instance, the TOE framework provides useful constructs relating to technological compatibility and organizational capacity but neglects individual behavioral and psychological factors such as trust and motivation. Conversely, models rooted in behavioral theories like UTAUT or DOI concentrate on user perceptions and social dynamics, often without incorporating the critical environmental and infrastructural constraints that shape technology implementation in LMICs. This fragmentation limits the applicability and explanatory power of existing frameworks for contexts like Libya, where infrastructural challenges, political instability, regulatory uncertainty, and cultural factors converge to shape telehealth adoption in complex ways. A more integrated approach that bridges these domains and incorporates trust as a central mediating variable is essential to developing a realistic understanding of telehealth uptake in such environments.

Libya exemplifies the multifaceted challenges faced by fragile states in adopting telehealth. The country's healthcare system suffers from underdeveloped infrastructure, including unreliable internet connectivity, frequent electricity outages, and shortages of modern medical equipment. These technological constraints directly hinder the deployment and sustainability of telehealth services. Additionally, Libya's ongoing political instability and fragmented governance structures exacerbate organizational challenges, impeding coherent strategic planning, resource allocation, and leadership commitment necessary for digital health initiatives. Healthcare institutions

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frequently lack formal policies supporting telehealth integration, and front-line healthcare workers often receive limited training in digital tools, further reducing readiness for adoption. The environmental context is also marked by regulatory gaps; Libya lacks clear legal frameworks governing data privacy, professional liability, and digital healthcare practice, which generates uncertainty and reluctance among providers to engage with telehealth systems. Cultural and social norms also present barriers, as patients in conservative communities may prefer in-person consultations and harbor concerns regarding confidentiality in remote healthcare settings. Collectively, these factors create a complex landscape in which telehealth adoption is contingent on overcoming intertwined technological, organizational, environmental, and social hurdles.

In addition to these well-documented challenges, the socio-political context of Libya introduces unique impediments to establishing trust in both technology and institutions. The country's history of political turmoil and governance failures has engendered widespread skepticism toward government-led programs, including digital health initiatives. In such an environment, trust becomes a significant factor in whether healthcare providers and patients choose to adopt telehealth platforms. Trust in telehealth systems involves confidence not only in the technology's technical capabilities but also in the safeguarding of sensitive patient data, the integrity of service delivery, and the alignment of digital health tools with professional values and ethical standards. Without this trust, even well-designed telehealth interventions with adequate infrastructural support may fail to achieve meaningful adoption or sustained use. Existing literature affirms that trust acts as both a psychological filter, shaping perceptions of technology, and a behavioral trigger, influencing the willingness to engage with digital health platforms (Distel, 2021; Bibri, 2015). Yet, empirical research explicitly focusing on the role of trust in telehealth adoption within Libya and similar fragile states remains limited, underscoring a critical gap in understanding and addressing the multifactorial dynamics of adoption.

The lack of empirical validation of telehealth adoption models within LMICs further complicates efforts to develop evidence-based strategies tailored to these contexts. Much of the extant research originates from high-income countries, where the technological and organizational environments differ substantially from those in developing regions. Variables such as broadband availability, healthcare infrastructure quality, digital literacy levels, and socio-cultural attitudes toward technology vary greatly, influencing adoption processes in ways that standard models do not fully capture. For example, while digital literacy among healthcare professionals and patients is generally higher in wealthier nations, in Libya many providers and users struggle with limited exposure to digital tools, which contributes to resistance and low engagement with telehealth. Similarly, socio-cultural factors, including preferences for traditional face-to-face interactions and concerns over privacy, vary across contexts and affect acceptance differently. Without rigorous empirical studies conducted within LMICs, the transferability of models developed in high-income settings remains questionable. There is an urgent need for research that adapts and validates these frameworks to the realities of LMICs and fragile states, accounting for the distinctive technological, organizational, and socio-political conditions that shape telehealth adoption.

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Moreover, the specific role of trust in the adoption of telehealth within LMICs, and fragile contexts like Libya, has not been adequately explored. While trust is broadly acknowledged as a significant factor in technology adoption generally, its nuanced influence in low-resource healthcare environments remains under-investigated. In Libya, where institutional trust is fragile and historical experiences have bred caution toward governmental and digital initiatives, trust in telehealth platforms is critical to user acceptance. Studies in well-resourced environments demonstrate that perceived trustworthiness strongly correlates with technology adoption, with individuals less likely to engage with systems they distrust (Arfi, 2021). This correlation is amplified in healthcare settings, where the stakes are particularly high, involving personal health outcomes and sensitive data. Despite this, few empirical studies examine how trust interacts with technological readiness, organizational support, and social influence to influence adoption decisions in fragile states. Understanding these interactions is essential for designing interventions that build trust and address concerns, ultimately facilitating broader telehealth acceptance.

In conclusion, the existing body of research on telehealth adoption is heavily weighted toward high-income countries, leaving substantial gaps in our understanding of how telehealth can be effectively adopted in LMICs and fragile states such as Libya. The literature predominantly focuses on direct, linear relationships between independent variables and adoption outcomes, neglecting the indirect, mediating effects that trust exerts on these dynamics. Furthermore, there is a notable absence of comprehensive, integrated frameworks that synthesize behavioral, technological, and contextual factors, including trust, as central to telehealth adoption models. This fragmentation, combined with a paucity of empirical validation studies in LMIC settings, limits the applicability of existing theories to the realities of resource-constrained environments. Addressing these gaps requires a concerted research effort to develop and empirically test integrated models that account for the complexity of telehealth adoption in fragile states. Such models must place trust at the core, recognizing its significant role in mediating the relationships between infrastructural readiness, organizational capacity, individual attitudes, and broader environmental factors. By advancing this more nuanced understanding, researchers, policymakers, and healthcare practitioners can better design, implement, and sustain telehealth initiatives that are responsive to the unique challenges and opportunities present in Libya and comparable contexts. This approach will be instrumental in unlocking the potential of telehealth to improve healthcare accessibility, quality, and equity in some of the world's most vulnerable health systems.

CONCLUSION

The adoption of telehealth has increasingly become a significant focus worldwide, particularly as it promises to revolutionize healthcare delivery in resource-constrained settings where access to quality medical services remains a significant challenge. In low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs), such as Libya, the potential benefits of telehealth are considerable, ranging from improved access in geographically remote areas to alleviating pressure on under-resourced healthcare facilities. However, the successful integration of telehealth in such settings is far from straightforward and is influenced by a complex interplay of technological, organizational,

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environmental, and individual factors. While existing theoretical frameworks such as the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) model (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990), the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory (Rogers, 2003), and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003) have been widely applied to study telehealth adoption, these models often fall short in capturing the multifaceted challenges and socio-cultural nuances faced by LMICs, especially fragile states like Libya. A critical and often overlooked element in the adoption process is trust in technology, which serves as a vital mediator influencing whether healthcare providers and patients are willing to engage with telehealth platforms. This article argues that trust must be explicitly integrated within an expanded adoption framework to provide a more comprehensive and contextually relevant understanding of telehealth adoption in Libya, emphasizing its role in bridging the gap between adoption factors and actual usage behavior.

The adoption of telehealth in Libya is constrained by a series of infrastructural, organizational, and socio-political challenges that go beyond the mere availability of technology. Technological infrastructure, for example, remains a significant hurdle. Libya faces widespread issues with broadband internet coverage, unreliable electricity supply, and outdated medical and communication equipment, all of which impede the effective deployment and use of telehealth systems (Makhluf & Abdulshahed, 2020). Compounding these issues is the absence of robust data protection mechanisms, which are essential for establishing user confidence in the security and privacy of digital health platforms (Osman et al., 2023). Without adequate safeguards for sensitive medical information, potential users, both healthcare providers and patients, may remain hesitant or outright resistant to adopting telehealth technologies. On the organizational front, the lack of cohesive leadership and strategic vision within healthcare institutions further hampers telehealth integration. Libya's fragmented governance structures and limited institutional capacity create an environment where resource allocation is inconsistent and strategic planning for digital health initiatives is sporadic and underdeveloped (Ahmed et al., 2023). Resistance to change within healthcare organizations, stemming from entrenched practices and limited exposure to digital innovations, also plays a crucial role in slowing down telehealth adoption. Environmental factors, including regulatory and societal barriers, additionally complicate the landscape. Libya's underdeveloped regulatory frameworks offer little clarity or guidance on digital health practices, patient data rights, and liability issues in telehealth consultations, thereby increasing uncertainty among users (Ruiz-Cosignani et al., 2022). Social resistance, particularly for culturally sensitive services such as mental health care, also undermines the acceptance of telehealth, with many communities preferring traditional face-to-face interactions due to trust and privacy concerns. At the individual level, factors such as digital literacy, perceived usefulness of telehealth platforms, and personal motivation significantly influence engagement with telehealth services. Crucially, this study finds that trust in the technology itself, encompassing perceptions of system reliability, data security, and institutional credibility, plays an indispensable role in converting these predispositions into actual use. Without sufficient trust, the best technological solutions and organizational strategies may fail to translate into widespread telehealth adoption.

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The mediating role of trust in technology adoption represents a key theoretical and practical contribution of this study. Trust in the telehealth context is multifaceted, involving system reliability, data privacy protections, ease of use, and the perceived credibility of both the technology and the institutions promoting it (Parimbelli et al., 2018; Kuen et al., 2023). This multidimensional trust construct is especially salient in fragile states such as Libya, where longstanding skepticism toward government initiatives and public institutions erodes confidence in new technologies. Research has demonstrated that even highly functional and sophisticated telehealth systems may fail to gain traction if users perceive them as unreliable or insecure (Arfi, 2021). Conversely, in contexts where infrastructural and technological limitations are pronounced, trust can serve as a compensatory factor, bolstering users' behavioral intentions to adopt telehealth solutions despite existing barriers (Shao et al., 2022). Thus, trust does not merely coexist with other determinants of adoption; it actively mediates the relationships between technological readiness, organizational support, social influence, and eventual technology use. By integrating trust as a mediating variable, this study presents a more nuanced and realistic model of telehealth adoption that better reflects the complexities of resource-constrained environments, where both technical and socio-cultural factors intertwine.

The proposed integrated framework draws from and expands upon the TOE, DOI, and UTAUT models by explicitly incorporating trust as a critical mediator, thereby offering a more holistic understanding of telehealth adoption in Libya. While the TOE framework provides valuable insights into technological, organizational, and environmental influences, it neglects the role of individual behavior and psychological factors such as trust. The DOI theory, focusing on the attributes of innovations and their diffusion through social systems, similarly overlooks the importance of trust in moderating adoption decisions, particularly in contexts where institutional credibility is weak. The UTAUT model emphasizes social influence, performance expectancy, and facilitating conditions but does not sufficiently address environmental and infrastructural constraints or the mediating effect of trust on user acceptance. By synthesizing these models and embedding trust centrally, the integrated framework acknowledges the complex interplay between technological infrastructure, organizational readiness, regulatory environment, social norms, and individual perceptions that collectively shape telehealth adoption. This comprehensive approach is especially relevant in Libya, where socio-political instability, fragmented institutions, and digital divides profoundly influence the feasibility and acceptance of telehealth solutions. Empirical testing of this multidimensional framework within the Libyan context yields valuable insights into how these factors interact and provides a solid foundation for tailored strategies to promote telehealth uptake.

From a managerial and policy perspective, the findings of this study hold significant implications for advancing telehealth adoption in Libya and comparable LMIC settings. Foremost among these is the critical necessity of building and sustaining trust in digital health technologies. Healthcare professionals and patients must perceive telehealth platforms as secure, reliable, and aligned with their needs and cultural values to overcome skepticism and resistance. To achieve this, robust data protection policies and transparent privacy practices should be implemented, assuring users that

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their sensitive health information is safeguarded against breaches. Pilot programs that demonstrate the effectiveness and safety of telehealth services can serve as trust-building exercises by providing tangible evidence of benefits. Furthermore, establishing clear regulatory frameworks governing telehealth can reduce legal and ethical ambiguities, thereby increasing confidence among all stakeholders (Kashada et al., 2023). Transparency in the design and implementation processes, particularly in fragile states where mistrust of government initiatives is pervasive, can further bolster public confidence in telehealth platforms. Concurrently, awareness campaigns and educational efforts are necessary to familiarize healthcare workers and patients with the advantages and security features of telehealth, helping to dispel misconceptions and reduce apprehension.

Second, organizational commitment and leadership emerge as crucial drivers for telehealth adoption. Libya's healthcare system is marked by fragmented governance and inconsistent strategic direction, factors that have impeded the coherent implementation of digital health solutions (El Saadani & Suleiman, 2017). Addressing these systemic weaknesses requires policymakers and healthcare leaders to prioritize the development of unified digital health strategies aligned with national health goals. Investment in technological infrastructure must be accompanied by efforts to foster an organizational culture conducive to innovation and change. Capacity-building initiatives, such as training programs to enhance digital literacy among healthcare professionals, are vital to increase competence and confidence in telehealth platforms. Additionally, healthcare institutions should cultivate environments that encourage experimentation with new technologies, offering incentives for early adopters to mitigate resistance and accelerate diffusion. By strengthening institutional readiness and leadership engagement, the healthcare system can create a fertile ground for sustainable telehealth integration.

Environmental challenges, particularly the absence of comprehensive digital health legislation, must also be addressed to facilitate telehealth adoption. Libya's regulatory vacuum generates uncertainties regarding data security, patient privacy, and legal responsibilities in telehealth interactions, which undermine trust and hinder participation (Kashada et al., 2023). Policymakers need to develop clear, enforceable standards and guidelines for telehealth practices that protect all parties and provide a stable legal framework for digital health service delivery. Beyond legal frameworks, social acceptance of telehealth, especially for culturally sensitive services such as mental health, remains limited. Public outreach campaigns tailored to Libya's diverse communities can help shift cultural perceptions by highlighting the benefits of remote care and addressing privacy concerns. Such efforts are particularly important in conservative settings where face-to-face medical consultations have long been the norm, and digital alternatives may initially be met with suspicion.

Lastly, individual-level interventions targeting the digital literacy gap are essential to increase telehealth uptake. Healthcare professionals must be equipped not only with the skills to operate telehealth platforms but also with an understanding of their clinical utility and limitations. Similarly, patients, particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly or those living in rural areas, require accessible training and ongoing support to navigate digital health services confidently.

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Designing user-friendly telehealth interfaces and providing personalized assistance can alleviate technological barriers and empower users. Importantly, as this study underscores, building and maintaining trust is a dynamic process that requires sustained engagement with end-users to demonstrate telehealth's reliability and benefits over time. Trust cannot be assumed but must be actively cultivated through transparent communication, responsive support, and consistent system performance.

In conclusion, telehealth adoption in Libya, and by extension similar LMICs, is shaped by a complex constellation of factors encompassing technological readiness, organizational capability, regulatory environment, and individual perceptions. However, trust in technology emerges as a central mediator that fundamentally influences whether these determinants translate into actual telehealth use. Incorporating trust within an integrated adoption framework enhances the explanatory power of existing models and reflects the unique socio-cultural and political realities of fragile states like Libya. For policymakers, healthcare leaders, and technology developers, prioritizing trust-building initiatives alongside investments in infrastructure, capacity building, and regulatory reform is essential to foster widespread telehealth acceptance. Through these concerted efforts, Libya can harness telehealth's transformative potential to improve healthcare access, equity, and quality, paving the way for a more inclusive and sustainable digital health ecosystem.

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