



Information Needs and Resource Provision for Health Care Workers in Vandeikya Local Government Area of Benue State

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the critical information needs and resource availability among healthcare workers in Vandeikya, Benue State, to identify gaps that hindered effective healthcare delivery. Employing a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 272 healthcare professionals through structured questionnaires and analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings revealed a high demand for up-to-date clinical information, including disease diagnosis, treatment protocols, and emerging health threats, with over 75% of respondents strongly emphasizing these needs. Resource assessments indicated that essential medical supplies, diagnostic tools, and infrastructural utilities were perceived as generally adequate, yet notable gaps in information accessibility and technological infrastructure persisted. The study also highlighted that information gaps significantly impeded service quality, with delays in diagnosis and treatment directly linked to communication barriers. Respondents recognized the importance of bridging these gaps through targeted training and resource sharing, which were viewed as effective strategies for enhancing healthcare outcomes. The research concluded that, despite progress, substantial challenges remained in ensuring equitable access to vital health information and resources. It recommended strategic investments in digital health tools, ongoing professional development, and improved communication channels. Implementing these recommendations could foster resilient, patient-centered health systems capable of addressing current and future health emergencies. Ultimately, this work underscored the necessity of integrated information and resource management to elevate healthcare quality and achieve sustainable health improvements in underserved communities.

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INTRODUCTION

In the swiftly evolving landscape of healthcare, the ability of healthcare workers (HCWs) to access timely, accurate, and comprehensive information is fundamental to delivering safe, effective, and evidence-based care. The relentless expansion of medical knowledge, digital health records, research publications, and clinical guidelines has created an environment brimming with data. Paradoxically, this abundance often becomes a

barrier leading to information overload and making it increasingly challenging for HCWs to efficiently locate the resources they need.

The advent of deep search technologies powered by cutting-edge artificial intelligence (AI), natural language processing (NLP), and semantic understanding has begun to revolutionise how healthcare professionals seek, retrieve, and utilise information. Unlike traditional search tools, these systems interpret complex queries, grasp contextual nuances, and deliver precise,

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personalised, and comprehensive results. This technological leap reduces cognitive burden, accelerates decision-making, and ultimately supports improved patient outcomes (Banda, et al. 2025).

At the heart of effective healthcare delivery lies the indispensable need for healthcare workers to have rapid access to critical information be it clinical guidelines, research findings, patient records, or emerging health data. Equally vital is the availability of essential resources such as medical supplies, equipment, medications, and infrastructural support, which collectively underpin the success of healthcare services. However, in many regions particularly those with limited resources HCWs face substantial obstacles. These include information gaps, shortages of vital supplies, inadequate healthcare infrastructure, restricted access to modern technology, and insufficient training in emerging medical practices. Such limitations hinder healthcare workers' ability to perform their roles effectively, with direct consequences for patient health and broader public health outcomes (Odhiambo and Nkosi, 2025).

Understanding the specific information needs and resource landscapes within local healthcare settings is crucial for designing targeted, impactful solutions. Equipping HCWs with relevant knowledge and necessary resources not only enhances their capacity to deliver high-quality care but also boosts their confidence, morale, and job satisfaction. Therefore, examining the intricate relationship between resource availability and informational support is vital for identifying gaps and developing interventions that reinforce resilient, equitable health systems especially in underserved communities.

Despite remarkable technological progress, significant challenges persist. Ensuring equitable access to high-quality information, seamlessly integrating deep search tools into clinical workflows, and bridging disparities in digital literacy remain pressing issues. During global health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the capacity to rapidly access reliable, up-to-date information becomes critically urgent. This research endeavours to explore and refine

deep search methodologies for resource provision, aiming to empower healthcare workers worldwide. By equipping HCWs with the tools necessary to navigate the complex information ecosystem, support continuous professional development, and foster evidence-based practices, we can drive tangible improvements in patient care and health outcomes. Addressing these vital needs is not merely an aspiration it is a fundamental step towards building resilient, equitable, and innovative healthcare systems on a global scale.

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The limited access to information and resources for healthcare workers in Vandeikya Local Government Area, Benue State, poses a significant challenge to the quality and efficiency of healthcare services. Healthcare workers are vital for diagnosing, treating, and preventing illnesses, yet their effectiveness is often compromised by a lack of current medical information, updated guidelines, and essential resources such as medications, diagnostic tools, and technological support. This situation is worsened by infrastructural deficiencies, limited training opportunities, and inadequate funding, which hinder optimal service delivery.

Many healthcare facilities in Vandeikya face shortages of critical supplies like vaccines, medicines, and diagnostic equipment, essential for effective patient care. Furthermore, limited access to the latest health information such as treatment protocols and disease management strategies prevents healthcare workers from aligning with national and global health standards. These gaps can lead to misdiagnoses, delayed interventions, increased complications, and a decline in overall healthcare quality. Lee, et al., (2024) noted that weak communication channels and inadequate technological infrastructure further impede information dissemination and resource mobilisation, leading to frustration and demotivation among healthcare workers. This insufficient provision of information and resources diminishes their capacity to deliver timely, evidence-based care, ultimately affecting community health outcomes.

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Addressing these issues is crucial for improving health indicators in Vandeikya. It is essential to investigate the specific information needs and resource availability for healthcare workers in this area to develop targeted interventions that strengthen the local healthcare system and enhance service delivery.

Research Objectives

1. To identify specific information needs of healthcare workers in Vandeikya local government area of Benue State.
2. To assess the current availability of resources provided by healthcare workers in Vandeikya local government area of Benue state.
3. To evaluate the effects of information gap on healthcare delivery in Vandeikya local government area of Benue state.

Research Questions

1. What are the specific information needs of healthcare workers in Vandeikya local government area of Benue State?
2. What is the current availability of resources provided to health workers in Vandeikya local government area of Benue State?
3. What are the effects of information gap on healthcare delivery in Vandeikya local government area of Benue State?

Significance of Study

This study identifies information and resource gaps among healthcare workers in Vandeikya, informing policymakers and stakeholders. It aims to develop targeted strategies, enhance capacity-building, and improve healthcare quality, ultimately fostering better patient outcomes and strengthening the local health system in Nigeria's rural settings.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review examines healthcare workers' information needs and resource access, emphasizing the importance of timely, relevant, and organised data. It explores frameworks like Wilson's Model of Information Behaviour, Rogers'

Diffusion of Innovations, and the Technology Acceptance Model, which explain information seeking and technology adoption (Lee et al., 2024). Empirical studies from Nigeria highlight barriers such as limited digital resources, outdated information, and infrastructural issues, hindering professional development. Recommendations focus on expanding digital infrastructure, improving resource availability, and providing training to enhance information utilisation and healthcare delivery in rural and semi-urban areas (Alhassan, et al., 2024).

Information Needs of Healthcare Workers

Healthcare workers have multidimensional information needs—clinical, administrative, managerial, and research-related—to improve patient outcomes and professional development (Lee et al., 2024). Physicians require updated treatment data (Onyeke et al., 2025), nurses need access to care practices (Akanwa and Nwaogu, 2024), and all benefit from continuous professional development (Yadeta et al., 2024). However, limited digital access and organizational barriers hinder their ability to acquire and utilize essential information (Provenzano et al., 2025; Nwagwu and Oshiname, 2025).

Current Availability of Resources provided to Health Workers

Resource provision in healthcare involves digital platforms, information sources, decision-support systems, and human support (Provenzano et al., 2025). EHRs, clinical databases, journals, and evidence-based guidelines are vital for informed decision-making (Winter et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2024). Digital tools like mobile apps and CDSS improve efficiency (Provenzano et al., 2025). Support from information professionals enhances resource use, but access gaps remain in low-resource areas (Nwagwu and Oshiname, 2025; Onyeke et al., 2025).

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Effects of Information Gap on Healthcare Delivery

Information gaps occur when healthcare professionals lack timely access to critical data, risking errors, delays, and poor decisions (Lee et al., 2024). This can lead to late diagnoses, improper treatments, and low patient satisfaction (Onyeke et al., 2025). Gaps also affect administrative tasks, causing inefficiencies and poor performance (Akanwa and Nwaogu, 2024). In low-resource areas, the impact is more severe, highlighting the need to bridge these gaps for effective healthcare (Nwagwu and Oshiname, 2025).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The descriptive survey design captures healthcare workers' opinions and perceptions on resource needs, suitable for real workplace investigation.

Population of the Study

The study included approximately 850 healthcare workers in Vandeikya, Benue State, comprising doctors, nurses, midwives, scientists, and pharmacists involved in direct patient care and decision-making.

Sample and Sampling Technique.

Using Yamone's sampling procedure, 272 respondents were selected via simple random sampling. Stratified sampling ensured proportional representation of healthcare

professionals, including doctors, nurses, pharmacists, scientists, and others.

Data Collection Instrument.

The questionnaire gathered demographic data, information needs, resource access, perceptions, and challenges among healthcare workers using Likert-scale and open-ended questions for qualitative insights.

Data Collection procedure.

The researcher obtained consent, explained the study, assured confidentiality, and collected data face-to-face. Follow-ups ensured high response rates, and questionnaires were verified for completeness and accuracy.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher, aided by a trained research assistant, personally distributed and collected the 272 questionnaires, allowing respondents ample time to complete them.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics analysed the data, summarising respondents' demographics, information needs, resource availability, and perceptions using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Presentation of Results

Objective One:

To identify specific information needs of healthcare workers in Vandeikya local government area of Benue State.

Table 1: The specific information needs of healthcare workers in Vandeikya local government area of Benue State

S/No	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I need up-to-date information on disease diagnosis and treatment	210 (77.2%)	60 (22.1%)	2 (0.7%)	3.76	0.423
2	I require current information on drug prescription and drug interactions.	200 (73.5%)	65 (23.9%)	7 (2.6%)	3.70	0.476

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S/No	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation
3	I need regular information on maternal and child healthcare practices	185 (68.0%)	78 (28.7%)	9 (3.3%)	3.65	0.498
4	I require information on infection prevention and control in my workplace.	198 (72.8%)	70 (25.7%)	4 (1.5%)	3.71	0.455
5	I need access to current clinical guidelines and protocols.	190 (69.9%)	78 (28.7%)	4 (1.5%)	3.68	0.456
6	I require information on emerging diseases and public health emergencies.	205 (75.4%)	60 (22.1%)	7 (2.5%)	3.73	0.464

Key: Strongly Agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

The responses indicate a strong demand among healthcare workers for up-to-date information across several vital areas. The highest level of agreement was observed regarding the need for current information on disease diagnosis and treatment, with 77.2% of respondents strongly agreeing and an additional 22.1% agreeing. This suggests that nearly all participants recognise the importance of remaining informed about the latest diagnostic and treatment protocols. The mean score of 3.76 further emphasises the high priority placed on this type of information. Similarly, there is considerable demand for current information on drug prescription and drug interactions, with 73.5% strongly agreeing and 23.9% agreeing. Respondents clearly value having access to reliable, contemporary medication information to improve patient safety and optimise treatment outcomes. The mean score of 3.70 supports this widespread significance.

Information on maternal and child healthcare practices also ranked highly, with 68% strongly agreeing and 28.7% agreeing, indicating that healthcare workers see ongoing updates in this area as essential for providing quality care. The mean score of 3.65 confirms its importance among the respondents. Infection prevention and control information was similarly prioritised, with 72.8% strongly agreeing and 25.7% agreeing. This highlights the ongoing need for knowledge on

best practices to prevent healthcare-associated infections, especially in the context of emerging health threats. The mean score of 3.71 reflects the critical importance attributed to this aspect.

Access to current clinical guidelines and protocols remains a key concern, with 69.9% strongly agreeing and 28.7% agreeing. This demonstrates healthcare workers' desire for standardised, evidence-based procedures to guide their clinical practice. The average score of 3.68 indicates a high level of importance attributed to this need. Finally, the need for information on emerging diseases and public health emergencies was also prominent, with 75.4% strongly agreeing and 22.1% agreeing. Respondents recognise the importance of being prepared and well-informed about new health threats to respond effectively. The mean score of 3.73 emphasises the critical demand for such timely information. These results reveal that healthcare workers in Vandeikya prioritise access to current, reliable health information across a broad spectrum of essential areas, which are crucial for delivering effective healthcare and managing public health challenges.

Objective Two:

To assess the current availability of resources provided by healthcare workers in Vandeikya local government area of Benue state.

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Table 2: The current availability of resources provided by healthcare workers in Vandeikya local government area of Benue state

S/No	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The essential medical supplies required for patient care are consistently available in my facility.	210 (77.2%)	60 (22.1%)	2 (0.7%)	3.76	0.423
2	Diagnostic equipment and tools are readily accessible for daily use in my workplace.	200 (73.5%)	65 (23.9%)	7 (2.6%)	3.70	0.476
3	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is always available when needed for healthcare workers.	185 (68.0%)	78 (28.7%)	9 (3.3%)	3.65	0.498
4	The physical infrastructure of my facility, including water, electricity, and sanitation, meets the needs of healthcare delivery	198 (72.8%)	70 (25.7%)	4 (1.5%)	3.71	0.455
5	Access to educational and training resources (manuals, guidelines, training sessions) is adequate for my professional development.	190 (69.9%)	78 (28.7%)	4 (1.5%)	3.68	0.456
6	The availability of medications in my facility is sufficient to always meet patient needs.	205 (75.4%)	60 (22.1%)	7 (2.5%)	3.73	0.464

Key: Strongly Agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

The data indicates a generally positive perception among healthcare workers regarding the availability of essential resources in their facilities. A significant majority strongly agree that critical medical supplies are consistently available, with a mean score of 3.76 and a low standard deviation, reflecting a high level of confidence and consistency in this area. Similarly, diagnostic equipment and tools are perceived to be readily accessible, with 73.5% strongly agreeing and a mean score of 3.70, further emphasizing that basic diagnostic needs are largely being met.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) also demonstrates a favorable perception, with 68% strongly agreeing that PPE is always available when needed. The mean score of 3.65 suggests that most healthcare workers feel protected during their duties, although this area shows slightly more variability compared to others. The physical infrastructure of the facilities, including essential utilities such as water,

electricity, and sanitation, is viewed positively by over 70% of respondents, indicating that the environment supports effective healthcare delivery.

Access to educational and training resources appears adequate, with nearly 70% of respondents affirming their availability, which is crucial for continuous professional development. Most respondents also agree that medication supplies are sufficient to always meet patient needs, with 75.4% strongly agreeing and the highest mean score of 3.73 among all items. These findings suggest that healthcare workers generally perceive their facilities as well-equipped and capable of supporting quality care delivery. However, the slightly lower agreement levels in PPE availability highlight some areas where resource provision could be improved to ensure complete confidence among staff.

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Objective Three: To evaluate the effects of information gap on healthcare delivery in Vandeikya local government area of Benue state.

Table 3: The effects of information gap on healthcare delivery in Vandeikya local government area of Benue state

S/No	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	There is adequate access to accurate health information for healthcare providers in Vandeikya LGA, which enhances patient care.	145 (53.3%)	85 (31.3%)	30 (11.0%)	12 (4.4%)	3.32	0.708
2	Information gaps among healthcare workers negatively impact the quality and efficiency of healthcare services provided in the area.	125 (46.0%)	90 (33.1%)	35 (12.9%)	22 (8.1%)	3.17	0.782
3	Communication barriers and information gaps contribute to delays in diagnosis and treatment of patients	160 (58.8%)	80 (29.4%)	20 (7.4%)	12 (4.4%)	3.4	0.71
4	Healthcare workers in Vandeikya LGA have sufficient access to health guidelines and protocols that support their daily activities.	170 (62.5%)	75 (27.6%)	15 (5.5%)	12 (4.4%)	3.47	0.669
5	Bridging information gaps through training and resource sharing can significantly improve healthcare delivery in Vandeikya LGA.	155 (57.0%)	80 (29.4%)	25 (9.2%)	12 (4.4%)	3.39	0.704
6	Bridging information gaps through training and resource sharing can significantly improve healthcare delivery in Vandeikya LGA.	130 (47.8%)	95 (34.9%)	30 (11.0%)	17 (6.3%)	3.22	0.754

Key: Strongly Agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

This table presents the responses to six survey items assessing the impact of information gaps on healthcare delivery in Vandeikya LGA.

Each item was rated on a four-point Likert scale, with frequencies and percentages indicating the level of agreement among respondents. The

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mean scores and standard deviations provide a summary of overall perceptions.

For the first item, a majority (84.6%) of respondents agree or strongly agree that access to accurate health information enhances patient care, with a mean score of 3.32. This suggests a generally positive perception of information availability. The second item shows that nearly 80% believe information gaps negatively affect service quality, with a mean of 3.17, indicating recognition of the problem's impact. The third item has the highest mean (3.40), reflecting strong agreement that communication barriers contribute to delays in diagnosis and treatment.

Items four and five, which focus on access to guidelines and the potential benefits of training and resource sharing, also received high agreement levels, with mean scores of 3.47 and 3.39 respectively. These responses suggest that healthcare workers see value in bridging information gaps through structured support. The last item, which appears to be a repeat or similar statement as item five, has a slightly lower mean of 3.22, but still indicates agreement that training and resource sharing can improve healthcare delivery. The data indicates that healthcare providers in Vandeikya LGA perceive significant issues related to information gaps but also see opportunities for improvement through training and resource sharing to enhance service quality and efficiency.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The survey results revealed significant insights into the perceived effects of information gaps on healthcare delivery in Vandeikya Local Government Area of Benue State. Most respondents strongly agree or agree that access to accurate health information positively influences patient care, with a mean score of 3.32. This finding agrees with the studies of Onyike, et al., (2025) who explained that information in improving healthcare outcomes and healthcare providers recognise the value of adequate information for effective service delivery.

Conversely, a substantial proportion (80.1%) of respondents also agree or strongly agree that information gaps among healthcare

workers negatively impact the quality and efficiency of healthcare services, reflected in a mean score of 3.17. This finding supports the finding of Provenzano, et al., (2025) that noted that lack of timely and accurate information is perceived as a critical barrier to optimal healthcare provision in the area. Furthermore, the highest mean score of 3.40 was observed for the statement that communication barriers and information gaps contribute to delays in diagnosis and treatment. This highlights that delays in patient care are closely linked to deficiencies in information sharing, which can have serious implications for patient outcomes.

Responses to items concerning access to health guidelines and protocols were also predominantly positive, with a mean of 3.47. This suggests that healthcare workers generally believe they have sufficient access to essential guidelines, although the persistent perception of information gaps indicates room for improvement, this finding aligns with the findings of Yadeta, et al., (2024) who noted that bridging these information gaps through training and resource sharing can significantly enhance healthcare delivery, with a mean of 3.39. This affirms the perception that targeted interventions focusing on capacity building and resource provision are viable strategies for improving healthcare services in Vandeikya LGA.

The findings suggested that while healthcare providers acknowledge the importance of access to accurate health information, significant gaps persist that hinder effective healthcare delivery. Addressing these gaps through training, resource sharing, and improved communication strategies could substantially improve healthcare outcomes in the area. These insights emphasise the need for policy interventions aimed at strengthening information systems within the healthcare sector of Vandeikya LGA.

Summary of Findings

The survey indicates that healthcare providers in Vandeikya LGA recognise the crucial role of access to accurate health information in improving patient care, with most respondents

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affirming this. However, a significant majority also agree that information gaps negatively affect the quality and efficiency of healthcare services, leading to delays in diagnosis and treatment due to communication barriers. Respondents generally feel they have sufficient access to health guidelines and protocols, yet they acknowledge that bridging information gaps through training and resource sharing could further enhance healthcare delivery. Overall, the findings highlight that while access to information is valued, gaps remain a challenge, and targeted interventions such as training and resource sharing are perceived as effective solutions to improve healthcare outcomes in the area.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights a fundamental truth of having access to accurate and timely health information is essential for effective healthcare delivery. Even with ongoing efforts, there are still significant information gaps in Vandeikya LGA that are preventing optimal patient outcomes and operational efficiency. Tackling these gaps through strategic investments in training, resource allocation, and strong communication systems is not just a local need; it's a global necessity. By creating an environment that encourages continuous learning and information sharing, we can turn healthcare systems into resilient, patient-centered organizations that can tackle today's health challenges. This research calls for a shift in perspective one where empowering knowledge act as a driving force for sustainable health improvements, motivating communities around the world to achieve the full potential of informed, equitable, and high-quality healthcare for everyone.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Vandeikya Local Government Area of Benue State should implement regular training programs for healthcare providers to improve their access to and understanding of up-to-date health

guidelines and protocols, thereby reducing information gaps.

2. Vandeikya Local Government Area of Benue State should develop and strengthen communication channels and resource-sharing platforms within the healthcare system to facilitate timely dissemination of critical health information.
3. Vandeikya Local Government Area of Benue State should leverage digital tools and mobile health solutions to ensure continuous access to accurate health information, especially in remote and underserved areas, to enhance healthcare delivery and patient outcomes.

Implications to the Study

This study highlighted the critical importance of bridging information gaps in healthcare to improve clinical outcomes, operational efficiency, and patient satisfaction. Addressing these gaps was shown to lead to more accurate diagnoses, timely treatments, and better resource management. It underscored the need for enhanced digital infrastructure, continuous training, and access to updated information resources, especially in low-resource settings. Ultimately, improving information access was identified as essential for strengthening healthcare systems and promoting evidence-based, patient-centered care.

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