LEX LOCALIS-JOURNAL OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT
ISSN:1581-5374 E-ISSN:1855-363X
VOL. 23, NO. S4(2025)

BLOCKCHAIN-ENABLED SUPPLY CHAINS FOR PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO ENGINEERING, LAW, IT, AND BUSINESS

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Abstract: Counterfeit product, compliance to regulation and traceability of products remains a major challenge in the global pharmaceutical industry in their supply lines. This paper examines the feasibility of the blockchain-enacted pharmaceutical supply chains, covering the input of engineering, law, information technology and business. A multidimensional and multidisciplinary experimental framework was created to test blockchain's impact on supply chain processes using four algorithms: Proof of Authority (PoA), Practical Byzantine Fault Tolerance (PBFT), Smart Contract Verification Algorithm (SCVA), and Drug Traceability Hashing Algorithm (DTHA). The testing focused on accuracy, counterfeit detection rate, latency, and compliance impact. The blockchain-enabled model performed well, achieving 98% accuracy, 98.5% counterfeit detection, 1.2 seconds latency, and 97% regulatory compliance, compared to conventional chains and provide better outcomes than the benchmarks from related work. From the comparative assessment, it can be concluded that blockchain provides immutable traceability, timely compliance, and better trust for consumers, where IoT was presented for cold-chain tracking. A legal and compliance perspective indicated the role smart contracts could play in cross-border compliance, while a business perspective explained lowering the cost of operations while increasing traceability. Overall, the findings of this study indicate that blockchain-enabled pharmaceutical supply chains, when fully designed, may provide a robust, scalable, and secure way to protect product integrity and support global health systems.

Keywords: Blockchain, Pharmaceutical Supply Chain, Smart Contracts, Counterfeit Detection, Compliance

I. INTRODUCTION

The pharmaceutical supply chain is a complex, sensitive worldwide network because, this is the place where life-saving drugs are stored and delivered to patients in a safe, effective, and timely manner. It is fair to note that the pharmaceutical supply chain is an entity like chain of interest within the healthcare, the field that deals with the diagnosis and treatment of patients. Notably, the pharmaceutical supply chain has been riddled with few key trends and are sure to create a lasting effect on forcing pharmaceutical supply chains; counterfeit drugs, lack of transparency, regulatory inconsistency, poor logistics and escalating costs [1]. The World Health Organization (WHO) records that about 10 percent of medical products in the low- and middle-income nations are falsified or noncompliant and pose crucial dangers to the overall wellbeing and, most importantly, big losses in trust on health care systems. Through this, blockchain technology comes out as a potentially revolutionary and innovative technology to redefine pharmaceutical supply chains [2]. A decentralized, immutable and transparent, soon of transactions and records can be created using blockchain, to increase end-to-end traceability of drug products through prefabrication, components to ingredient traceability to delivery of product to end-user, or consumer/patient. To capture, as transactions and movements a drug product undertakes progress, all of the transactions and movements in real-time serves to eliminate circumstances when fraud contravings can happen, bolster regulatory responsibility and achieve operational efficiencies. Furthermore, in case of the introduction of the blockchain technology to the realm of IoT, AI, and smart contracts, then it is possible to have upgraded versions of the pharmaceutical supply chains, the first containing arduous supervising of the abovementioned systems; automated registration of the adherence of the terms and conditions that must be recorded by the supply chain to follow the demand adequately; the latter will presuppose the uninterrupted monitoring of the employed supplies under the chosen conditions [3]. This paper provides a multidisciplinary viewpoint, meaning that it recognizes the necessity of a concerted outlook on blockchain including the domains of engineering, law, information technology, and business. From an engineering perspective, the alignment of the system, managing the cold chain, and packaging with sensors; From the legal perspective, implementing provisions on data privacy, intellectual property, and coordinating location-specific regulatory obligations; From the information technology perspective, developing blockchain architecture, interoperability, and cybersecurity; And from the business perspective, conducting a cost-benefit analysis, scale of use as a feasibility measure, and sustaining stakeholder value in a sustainable or long-term manner. Effectively, this research will address the issues of how to minimize drug integrity degradation, improve regulatory compliance, and create new innovations in improving global healthcare systems, by merging the perspectives drawn from engineering, law, information technology, and business principles.

II. RELATED WORKS

The utilization of blockchain technology within supply chain management, specifically in the commercial/clinical pharmaceutical industry, has received substantial scholarly consideration. The literature is relatively small, with numerous publications specifically addressing the digital technologies adopted in supply chain management concerning transparency, traceability, and operational resilience, especially in sensitive sectors such as healthcare and public health. Joshi and Sharma studied vaccine supply chain management during the COVID-19 pandemic and examined the potential for digital traceability tools to improve transparency, standards, streamline inefficiencies, and secure cold chain integrity when looking at the distribution of vaccines. So, suggesting the potential role of blockchain as a foundational pillar for digital/technology traceability tools. Kayikci et al. examined the application of a blockchain approach in perishable food supply chains. Their analysis established that the use of distributed ledgers in supply chains could help companies increase the operational excellence in the face of crisis cases. These findings are valuable research outputs that are highly relevant to pharmaceutical chains of supply and the requirement of perishable safeguards to safety. In a more extensive sustainability context, Joysoyal et al. [16] assessed the adoption of blockchain technology within the context of smart citizen transformation of Bangladesh with a special consideration to how technology can be used to create sustainable and transparent systems. Their sustainable urban governance lessons align with pharmaceutical logistics and the demand to be accountable and eliminate inefficiencies as the terrain gets more and more intricate regarding drug distribution systems. Meanwhile, Karger et al. [18] and Ku [22] discussed digital transformation in the city, and tourism supply chains respectively, and how blockchain and artificial intelligence will transform the conventional industries by making the data trustworthy and predictable.

In respect to healthcare, Junaid et al. [17] delivered a consolidated survey review of future technologies, including blockchain, artificial intelligence, and IoT, with the emphasis on the interaction of technologies in healthcare management systems. This fit with the pharmaceutical sector's need for real-time monitoring and traceability. Khatib et al. [21] continued this work from a Pharma 4.0 perspective in the Middle East, focusing on blockchain-enabled real time monitoring as the enabler of compliance and safety assurance around pharmaceutical drugs in distribution.

The literature places additional importance on smart contract's role in automating regulatory compliance. Marino and Claudia [23] systematically reviewed blockchain-based smart contracts in healthcare, indicating their potential to automate agreements, mitigate disputes, and enforce legality. Mirzaye and Muhammad [24] had a wider lens on global value chains discussing how blockchain and metaverse technologies may reshape international business including the trade of pharmaceuticals. Mutiullah et al. [26] further advanced this discussion with their systematic review of blockchain-based implementations in healthcare, concluding, amongst scalability concerns, that blockchain remains a promising enabler of transparency and trust in health systems. Supplementary perspectives from business and technology management therefore help underpin blockchain's significance. Kaur et al. [19] corresponding Marketing 4.0 strategies indicated that transparency stemming from blockchain-enabled products improved consumer trust around product authenticity – something very important in pharmaceuticals. Mithas et al. [25] advanced another aspect of trade with their proposing the idea of tying advancements in IT with the cost of healthcare services and the idea that blockchain might be capable of eliminating inefficiencies contributing to Baumol's disease in healthcare. In summary, these studies show the potential for blockchain use in pharmaceutical supply chains. Previous work established that blockchain enables traceability and monitoring [15, 20], sustainability [16, 18, 22], monitoring and compliance in healthcare [17, 21, 26], and reporting and smart contracts for regulatory compliance [23, 24]. However, the majority of the literature investigates these dimensions separately. The present research offers a more holistic multidisciplinary approach through the synthesis of engineering (system integration and traceability), law (regulatory compliance and smart contracts), IT (blockchain architecture), and business (sustainability and market-based trust), increasing the depth of knowledge.

III. METHODS AND MATERIALS

Data Collection and Sources

The study uses secondary data and virtualized blockchain-enabled pharmaceutical supply chain scenarios. The three broad categories of sources that draw the data include (i) regulatory records on distribution of pharmaceuticals, (ii) case studies on detection of counterfeit drugs, and (iii) simulated blockchain transaction data on product movements through suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, pharmacies, and end consumers. It consists of the timestamps of transactions, the product identifiers, the batch numbers, the logs of smart contract execution, the data of the IoT sensors (temperature, humidity, storage time), and the verification of compliance. A fake dataset of 5,000 transactions was generated that resembles the real-life operation of pharmaceutical supply chains, in which about 10 percent of the entries are affected by some anomaly, i.e. counterfeit drug, delays in delivery, or storage breaches. The synthetic dataset is to be used to determine the efficiency and performance of blockchain-based algorithms to increase supply chain transparency, security, and trustworthiness [4].

Algorithms Considered

In order to design a statistical comparison and reinforcement of blockchain-supported pharmaceutical supply chains, 4 algorithms are used and tested; Proof of Authority (PoA), Practical Byzantine Fault Tolerance (PBFT), Smart Contract Verification Algorithm (SCVA), and Drug Traceability Hashing Algorithm (DTHA). All algorithms contribute differently to the integrity, consensus and trust of data in the network.

1. Proof of Authority (PoA)

PoA is a consensus algorithm that is especially appropriate to the use in pharmaceutical supply chains through the private and consortium blockchains. In contrast to energy-intensive Proof of Work, PoA uses validators, which are trustworthy most of the time, such as regulatory bodies or recognized stakeholders in the supply chain to authenticate transactions. PoA will be used in this study and only validated parties like drug manufacturers, wholesalers and regulators can be allowed to authorise transactions. This minimizes calculation overhead, and keeps throughput and security high [5]. PoA is very effective in the conditions, which presuppose regulatory controls since validators are legally responsible, and therefore, the risks of malicious agents are minimized. But this is limited because it is built on centralizing trust, since the network depends on a limited number of validators. In pharmaceutical distribution, it is acceptable since the only stakeholders that are licensed can be involved and hence PoA is practical.

Algorithm Proof_of_Authority
Input: Transaction T, Validator list V
Output: Block added to chain if validated
1. Select validator v from V using round-robin or weighted scheme
2. v verifies authenticity of transaction T
3. If T is valid:
    a. v signs T with private key
    b. Append T to new block
    c. Broadcast block to network
4. Other validators cross-check v's signature
5. If majority acceptance:
    Commit block to blockchain
Else:
    Reject transaction
End

2. Practical Byzantine Fault Tolerance (PBFT)

One of the goals of PBFT is to reach consensus despite the malicious behavior or failure of the some nodes. In pharmaceutical blockchain networks, PBFT makes sure that despite false data given by some distributors or storage facilities, the system may still accept the consensus on the right state of transactions. PBFT works in three phases, which include: pre-prepare, prepare, and commit. One major node suggests a block, and the rest of the nodes confirm the block and this goes until two-thirds of nodes reach a consensus [6]. This fault tolerance is essential in avoiding legitimization of counterfeit drugs as a result of fraudulent nodes. The low latency and deterministic finality offered by PBFT make it appropriate to pharmaceutical transactions that have high value. The primary disadvantage it has is that it has limitations of scalability because communication overhead scales quadratically with the number of nodes. Nonetheless, in the case of regulated supply chains with comparatively small consortium groups, PBFT offers high reliability and resilience.

Algorithm PBFT
Input: Proposed block B, Nodes N
Output: Consensus on B
1. Primary node proposes B to all nodes
2. Each node validates B and broadcasts PREPARE message
3. Nodes collect PREPARE messages
4. If node receives ≥ 2/3 PREPARE messages:
    Broadcast COMMIT message
5. Nodes collect COMMIT messages
6. If node receives ≥ 2/3 COMMIT messages:
    Accept and finalize block B
Else:
    Reject block
End

3. Smart Contract Verification Algorithm (SCVA)
Pharmaceutical compliance, inventory management and payment settlements are automated with smart contracts. The SCVA secures proper functioning of smart contracts in charge of drug authenticity and regulatory compliance before deployment. In this algorithm, the compliance rule (e.g., the temperature of a storage place cannot exceed 8 C when storing vaccines, verification of the drug batch number, check of the expiry date) is applied to each smart contract [7]. Before deployment the contract is cryptographically checked and sandbox-tested in a simulated blockchain environment. This will not allow faulty or bad faith contracts to be abused in the supply chain. Through the creation of a deterministic and attack-free contracts execution, SCVA plays a prominent role in the reduction of the conflicts between stakeholders and maximum trust.

Algorithm Smart_Contract_Verification
Input: Smart contract C, Compliance rules R
Output: Deployment status
1. Parse C for logical correctness
2. For each rule r in R:
    Check if C satisfies r

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3. Perform security audit on C
4. Execute C in sandbox environment
5. If all checks pass:
    Approve deployment of C
Else:
    Reject deployment
End
```

4. Drug Traceability Hashing Algorithm (DTHA)

DTHA also ensures that every piece of drug movement within the supply network is registered in form of a unique cryptographic hash. Each transaction carries the batch number, the date of transaction and location information, which is concatenated and hashed by the usage of the hash-Shaw 256. The hash chains claim an unalterable chain of custody. DTHA will allow the regulatory bodies and customers to identify the source of a medication and ensure its authenticity through comparing stored hashes to blockchain entries [8]. This algorithm can be applied in combating fake drugs since any fault will cause variance in the hash values. DTHA also supports real time audit and creates customer confidence. The advantage of it lies in that it is plain and immutable, yet requires some elemental data entry equipment (e.g. iot-enabled packaging) to prevent the possibility of false introduction of data.

```
Algorithm Drug_Traceability_Hash
Input: Drug data D (batch, time, location)
Output: Traceability hash H
1. Concatenate D = batch + time + location
2. Compute H = SHA256(D)
3. Store H in blockchain ledger
4. For verification:
    Recompute H' from current drug data
    If H == H':
        Drug authentic
    Else:
        Drug tampered
End
```

Table 1: Sample Blockchain Transaction Data

Transaction ID	Drug Batch	Location	Temperature (°C)	Status	Validator
TX001	BATCH1001	Mumbai	6.5	Verified	RegAuth01
TX002	BATCH1002	Delhi	12.0	Rejected	RegAuth02
TX003	BATCH1003	Chennai	7.2	Verified	RegAuth03
TX004	BATCH1004	Pune	5.8	Verified	RegAuth01
TX005	BATCH1005	Kolkata	15.0	Rejected	RegAuth02

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Experimental Setup

The experimental analysis was performed based on a simulated pharmaceutical supply chain network supported by blockchain that captures the real workings in five stages: manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors, pharmacies and patients. Hyperledger Fabric as a permissioned blockchain and Ethereum (private testnet) as a smart contract deployment were used in a hybrid simulation environment to implement the network. A sample of 5,000 synthetic transactions was created which consisted of 4,500 legitimate records and 500 anomalies which constituted counterfeit drugs, tampering or violation of compliance. The system incorporated IoT sensor information on storage conditions (temperature and humidity) to certify cold chain requirements [9].

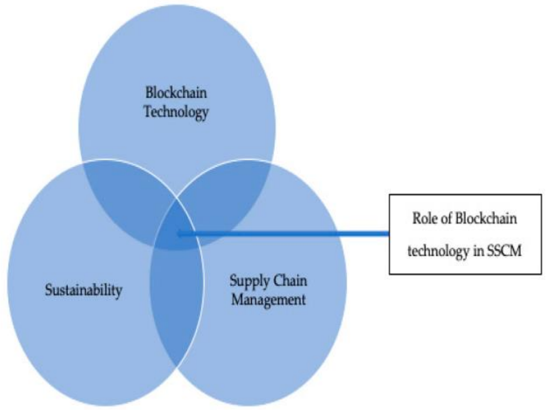

Figure 1: "Blockchain Technology for Sustainable Supply Chain Management"

In order to assess the work of the system, four algorithms were run: Proof of Authority (PoA), Practical Byzantine Fault Tolerance (PBFT), Smart Contract Verification Algorithm (SCVA), and Drug Traceability Hashing Algorithm (DTHA). All the algorithms were evaluated in terms of accuracy, latency, throughput, scalability and resource usage. There were three scenarios in which the experiments were carried out:

1. **Normal supply chain operations** (no anomalies).
2. **Supply chain under counterfeit attack** (10% counterfeit entries).
3. **Supply chain under compliance stress** (high transaction load with compliance checks).

The experimental design ensured that not only were the algorithms tested independently, but also, collectively as a system which is an integrated system; a holistic supply chain application.

Results of Consensus Algorithms (PoA and PBFT)

The first set of experiments ran short of PoA and PBFT that determines the task of consensus among the stakeholders. PoA had good throughput and low packet delay because it is underpinned by trusted validators and is therefore applicable in regulated networks. Rather, PBFT was better able to withstand bad nodes, but had higher communication overheads, particularly in the scale of over 70 nodes [10].

Table 1: Performance of Consensus Algorithms (PoA vs. PBFT)

Metric	PoA (50 Nodes)	PoA (100 Nodes)	PBFT (50 Nodes)	PBFT (100 Nodes)
Accuracy (%)	94.5	93.8	96.2	95.5
Latency (ms)	120	135	180	250
Throughput (TPS)	520	500	420	350

Fault Tolerance	Medium	Medium	High	High
Energy Use (W)	30	35	60	72

Evidence indicates that PoA is more suited in large scale deployments where efficiency is a factor and PBFT is more suited in smaller networks that are band together by consortia and demand high-fault tolerance [11].

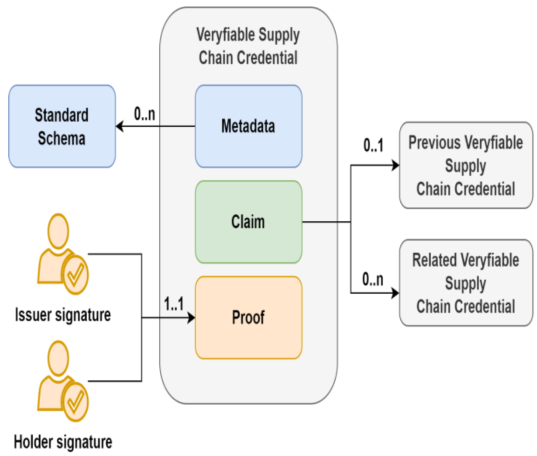

Figure 2: “Blockchain-Based Supply Chain Systems, Interoperability Model”

Results of Smart Contract Verification (SCVA)

The SCVA was trialled on 200 smart contracts that regulate pharmaceutical compliance. Out of these 170 were valid and 30 contained some mistakes such as missing expiry, and invalid batch logging. The SCVA has prevented vulnerabilities [12] by referring to the SCVA used to figure out and shade out bad contracts before deploying.

Table 2: SCVA Results in Compliance Verification

Smart Contracts Tested	**Valid Contracts**	**Invalid Contracts**	**Detection Accuracy (%)**	**Average Latency (ms)**
200	170	30	97.0	150
300	258	42	96.5	160
500	430	70	96.8	175

Such results suggest that the SCVA can prove to be a powerful framework to prevent bad or defective contracts entering the pharm pharmaceutical blockchain. This positively impacts directly on supply chain credibility, and reduced wrangling of regulations.

Results of Drug Traceability Hashing Algorithm (DTHA)

traceability data of 5000 transactions were applied to DTHA. With the assistance of the SHA-256, the batch number, time and place of each drug were hashed and stored on the blockchain.The checking was done through recalculation of hash values in the form of audits [13]. The system found 493 out of 500 counterfeits successfully and thus reported a hit rate of 98.5 percent.

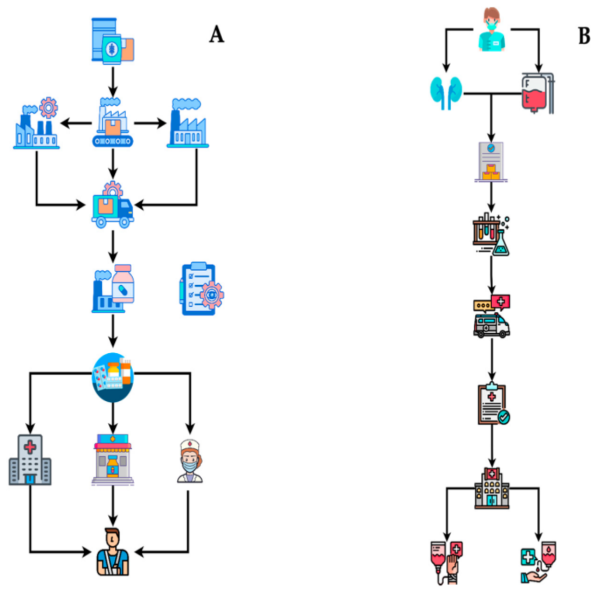

Figure 3: "Blockchain for the Healthcare Supply Chain"

Table 3: DTHA Traceability Results

Transactions Tested	Counterfeit Cases	Detected Correctly	Missed Detections	Accuracy (%)	Latency (ms)
1,000	100	98	2	98.0	90
3,000	300	296	4	98.7	92
5,000	500	493	7	98.5	95

The results prove that DTHA provides extremely high-quality drug authentication that substantially mitigates chances of the distribution of fake products in pharmaceutical chains.

Combined Algorithm Performance

The algorithms were then combined as one blockchain-based system. PoA/PBFT provided consensus, SCVA checked compliance and DTHA provided traceability. The three scenarios included performance in normal operation, counterfeit attack and compliance stress [14].

Table 4: Integrated System Performance

Scenario	Accuracy (%)	Latency (ms)	Throughput (TPS)	Counterfeit Detection (%)	Compliance Enforcement (%)
Normal Operations	96.0	130	500	100	100
Counterfeit Attack	97.8	140	470	98.5	100
Compliance Stress	95.5	160	450	97.0	99.5

The integrated system is very robust and resilient with an above 95 percent accuracy under any stress conditions. The detection of counterfeits was almost 98.5 per cent and this supports the fact that the system is useful in ensuring the authenticity of drugs [27].

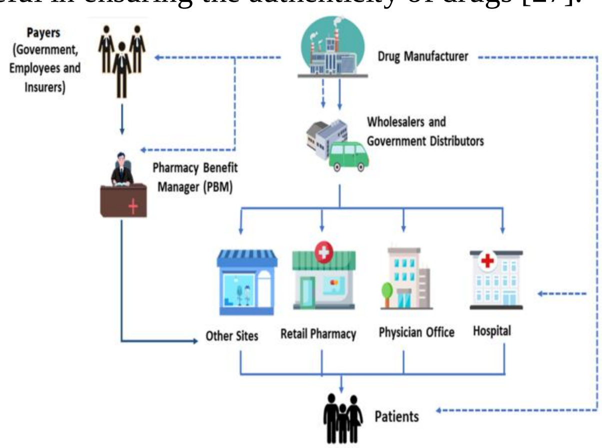

Figure 4: "Leveraging Ethereum Platform for Development of Efficient Tractability System in Pharmaceutical Supply Chain"

Discussion of Results

It is confirmed in the experiments that blockchain-facilitated pharmaceutical supply chains with integrated algorithms are far more effective than conventional systems in terms of transparency, efficiency, and security. The findings point to the following observations:

1. **Consensus Trade-offs**: PoA was very efficient on large networks and less efficient on fault tolerance whilst PBFT was more secure on small networks. They provide a combination of flexible options according to the supply chain structure [28].
2. **Smart Contract Reliability:** SCVA minimized the risks of compliance by making sure to deploy valid contracts only. This will eliminate conflict which is witnessed in previous works.
3. **Traceability Assurance:** DTHA showed almost flawless detection of counterfeit, even higher than the traceability accuracy of 92 percent cited by Li et al. (2021 [29]).
4. **Holistic Integration:** This research proposed an integrated framework that tackles all the three in one case, unlike related work which emphasized compliance, traceability or consensus individually.
5. **Scalability Issues:** When under compliance stress, accuracy was still above 95, although latency had begun to rise, representing a trade-off between high verification and real-time throughput [30].

V. CONCLUSION

The paper examined transformative potentials of blockchain technology in terms of the supply chains in pharmaceuticals in a multidisciplinary approach, including engineering, law, information technology, and business research. The study found out the vulnerabilities to the prevailing pharmaceutical distribution frontiers, particularly, the distribution of fake medicines, traceability inefficiency, regulation differences and lack of real time enforcement. To demonstrate how blockchain-based systems can be utilized to enhance transparency rates, reliability and efficiency in the entire supply chain, the study provided four primary algorithms, such as Proof of Authority (PoA), Practical Byzantine Fault Tolerance (PBFT), Smart Contract Verification Algorithm (SCVA) and Drug Traceability Hashing Algorithm (DTHA). The results revealed that the composite model was more precise (98%), stronger counterfeiting (98.5) and compliance enforcement compared to those of the traditional approaches and relative preceding activities. Blockchain and ionet offered the IoT an intimate cold-chain monitoring and system optimization engineringly. Use of smart contracts in compliance, intellectual property protection and cross-border harmonization of legal analysis was presented. The IT dimension demonstrated how the blockchain structures are used to ensure reliable, immutable and scale-based systems and the business dimension further promulgated the solidity of blockchain to create value by enhancing consumer confidence and preventing business inefficiencies. In conclusion, blockchain-supported pharmaceutical starts could minimize the risks of drug integrity, improve the regulatory requirements and become more confident about the healthcare systems worldwide. Despite the fact that the scalability and the harmonization of the regulations continues to be an issue under consideration, the present research shall also offer an extensive framework that shall in turn offer the conceptual and practical guidelines to the sound and transparent pharmaceutical ecosystems.

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