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Posted Date: 16 July 2024

doi: [10.20944/preprints2024071211.v1](https://doi.org/10.20944/preprints2024071211.v1)

Keywords: AI; Education systems; learning experiences; ethical and effective



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## Article

# Leveraging Big Data and AI for Personalized Learning Opportunities, Challenges, and Ethical Considerations

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the increasing use of big data in education to create personalized learning experiences tailored to individual student needs. The trend, driven by vast amounts of educational data, requires the development of new techniques to optimize learning outcomes while addressing the ethical implications of data collection and utilization. The paper emphasizes the necessity for robust policy frameworks to ensure transparency and trust, based on clear guidelines and parental consent. It also discusses how educational institutions are updating curricula to prepare learners for a rapidly evolving workforce, incorporating contemporary AI technologies that impact education systems. The dual influence of AI presents both opportunities and challenges, necessitating a balanced and thoughtful approach. The paper advocates for a holistic strategy in integrating AI in education, emphasizing the importance of collaboration between the AI industry and other sectors to develop comprehensive policy frameworks for the ethical and effective use of AI in education.

**Keywords:** keyword 1; keyword 2; keyword 3

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## 1. Introduction

The digital age has bestowed upon us an unprecedented ability to store and analyze vast amounts of information about individuals, preserving our histories for generations to come. This wealth of data facilitates an in-depth understanding of human and societal behavior patterns over time. The process of uncovering connections between disparate pieces of information, known as datafication, significantly impacts various sectors, including education. While this practice introduces ethical concerns requiring thoughtful solutions, it also presents opportunities to personalize and improve educational governance (Mayer-Schönberger and Cukier, 2014).

This study aims to explore various educational methodologies within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which strive to enhance education and lifelong learning globally. By examining the dynamics introduced by Artificial Intelligence (AI) in educational contexts, the study seeks to equip educational policymakers with the insights needed to navigate future challenges.

The complexity of allocating AI resources in the developing world remains relatively unexplored, particularly given the significant underinvestment in technology in low-income countries. This paper will investigate the current applications of AI in educational systems worldwide and assess their efficacy in helping students achieve learning objectives. Although AI has existed for decades, its integration into education—particularly through AI tutors—has only recently gained momentum (Francesc, Miguel, Axel, & Paula, 2019).

Traditionally, tutoring required subject knowledge and teaching ability. However, as technology advances rapidly, tutoring now necessitates computer science skills to leverage AI tools for enhancing student education (Sharma & Harkishan, 2020). AI and Big Data are prominent buzzwords of our time, often used interchangeably in media. Precision in terminology is essential when discussing AI. Coined by computer scientist John McCarthy in 1956 at the Dartmouth Conference (Elaine, 2011), AI has transitioned from a conceptual framework to a tangible innovation permeating daily life (West & Allen, 2018).

This paper aims to clarify the distinctions and interrelations between AI and Big Data, providing a comprehensive understanding of AI in various contexts. The table below delineates the different aspects of AI, drawing on multiple sources:

**Table 1.** Different Aspects of AI.

| Acting Humanly   | Acting Rationally  |
|--|--|
| The effects of building technology devices that allow human function to be performed by machines (Kurzweil, 1990).     | AI is concerned with how intelligent features in artifacts act (Nils, 1998).   |
| How to make computers function much like humans, at which people excel, are currently studied (Elaine & Knight, 1991). | Computational intelligence is the study of the development of intelligent agents (David, Mackworth, & Goebel, 1998). |

## The Growing Influence of AI in Education

Students are increasingly aware of AI, leading to a rise in questions and concerns about its future impact on education. AI has permeated nearly every field, including medicine, economics, finance, law enforcement, business, and robotics. Additionally, the current shortage of skilled resources in some educational areas has prompted the integration of AI technologies to enhance teaching methods (Ilkka, 2018). The explored potential of AI highlights the urgent need for its incorporation into educational practices (Marr).

In their book, *Artificial Intelligence: A Modern Approach*, Russell and Peter Norvig provide a comprehensive guide to the field (Russell & Norvig, 2010). Research in artificial intelligence has primarily concentrated on key aspects such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, perception, and language usage. Data-driven AI has been instrumental in the recent successes of the field, particularly following significant advancements initiated by Arthur Samuel in 1959. While machine learning serves as a direct method for achieving AI, it's essential to note that AI can exist without machine learning, though it requires considerable time, effort, and coding [1–13].

## 2. Transforming Education Through Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been intertwined with education since its inception, yet global education systems face numerous challenges when integrating new technologies into traditional frameworks. With advancements in technology, AI presents a transformative opportunity for education, enabling personalized learning experiences and innovative solutions. This section explores how AI can enhance learning and promote equity in education.

### 2.1. Personalization Through AI

AI-driven personalized learning systems can tailor educational experiences to individual student needs, preferences, and learning styles. By leveraging data analytics, educators can create customized learning paths that engage students more effectively. This approach fosters greater student engagement and supports diverse learning needs, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes.

### 2.2. Management Information Systems

Effective management of educational data is crucial for maximizing the potential of AI in education. Utilizing advanced data analysis techniques, such as statistical analysis and machine learning algorithms, allows institutions to better understand learning patterns and identify areas for improvement. Visual tools help communicate these insights to stakeholders, ensuring data-driven decision-making and resource allocation.

### 2.3. Leveraging Big Data for Educational Insights

Navigating the complexities of big data in education is a challenging yet essential endeavor. By employing sophisticated data analytics software, educators can uncover learning trends, predict future needs, and recommend optimal strategies based on existing resources. This holistic approach to data management empowers educational institutions to foster a more equitable learning environment.

#### 2.4. Addressing Complex Challenges with AI Solutions

Developing effective AI solutions requires tackling complex problems. The use of powerful libraries in natural language processing, translation, and game theory enables the creation of innovative educational tools. For instance, virtual avatars can simulate the behavior of educators or learning assistants, providing students with interactive and engaging support.

#### 2.5. Envisioning a Future Enhanced by AI

Looking ahead, the potential for AI to reshape education is immense. By embracing these technologies, we can envision a future where AI-driven solutions address various challenges in learning and analytics, ultimately leading to a more equitable and effective educational landscape.

### 3. The Transformative Potential of AI in Education

#### 3.1. The Transformative Potential of AI in Education

Embracing AI for Educational Challenges The potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to reshape education is immense. By integrating these technologies, we can envision a future where AI-driven solutions effectively tackle various learning challenges and enhance educational analytics, leading to a more equitable and efficient educational landscape.

#### 3.2. AI's Role in Grading and Assessment

AI is currently being utilized to streamline grading processes for multiple-choice tests, essays, and other assignments. Beyond merely grading exams, AI tools assess individual assignments, making the evaluation process more efficient. As these innovations gain traction in developed countries, numerous businesses are exploring new applications to enhance educational outcomes.

#### 3.3. Learning Equality: Bridging Educational Gaps

Learning Equality, an initiative inspired by Khan Academy, leverages an open-source platform to deliver education globally. Their Kolibri educational toolkit aims to equip lower-resource communities with vital e-learning tools, fostering access to quality education.

#### 3.4. Encouraging Innovation through Challenges

Philanthropic efforts also play a crucial role in driving educational innovation. The \$15 million Global Learning XPRIZE challenges developers worldwide to create open-source solutions that empower children in developing countries to gain education, promoting creativity and progress in the field.

#### 3.5. Advances in AI Tutoring

Experts from Carnegie Mellon University have developed a machine learning program featuring robot tutors that employ voice recognition and data-driven algorithms. This initiative illustrates the cutting-edge advancements in AI aimed at enhancing personalized learning experiences.

#### 3.6. The Role of Private Enterprise and Societal Support

These pioneering "first-generation AI initiatives" in educational institutions across developing countries often stem from private enterprise collaborations. The support from societal authorities enhances these efforts, providing a well-rounded perspective on the future of education in a tech-driven world.

### 4. The Role of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS)

#### 4.1. Understanding EMIS

Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), commonly referred to as EMIS, serve the critical purpose of storing, processing, analyzing, and disseminating essential information for

educational planning and management. Primarily utilized by education directors, policymakers, and administrators, EMIS plays a vital role in generating national statistics and informing decision-making.

#### *4.2. Big Data-Driven Decision Making*

A central aspect of modern educational reforms is Big Data-Driven Decision Making (DDDM). This approach prioritizes decisions grounded in solid data rather than relying solely on intuition or observational insights. With the vast amounts of data generated by EMIS, AI platforms can conduct empirical evaluations to enhance the educational experience across schools and districts.

#### *4.3. Benefits of a Well-Designed EMIS*

An effectively designed EMIS equips educators at all levels with critical information for managing and administrating educational systems. It aids in developing customized, cost-effective policies, monitoring educational outcomes, and evaluating results (Wako, 2003). In contexts where data is comprehensive, up-to-date, and regularly aggregated, AI-enhanced EMIS can provide more accurate analyses and generate insightful data dashboards at both school and national levels.

#### *4.4. Advancements in Predictive Algorithms*

As the development of EMIS progresses, its potential for creating predictive algorithms will increase. Although this area is still emerging, many countries—both developed and developing—are transitioning from traditional school-based administrative systems to more integrated and dynamic learning management systems. These systems aim to support real-time decision-making in all facets of education management.

#### *4.5. Case Study: United Arab Emirates*

In the United Arab Emirates, the Ministry of Education has launched a robust analytics platform that serves over 1.2 million students. This system collects extensive quantitative data on various educational aspects, including curriculum, teacher development, learning resources, and performance metrics from internationally recognized assessments like PISA and TIMSS (UIS, 2018). Additionally, the Ministry's data analytics section is focused on developing machine learning algorithms to inform strategic studies on the national education system (Morgan, 2020).

#### *4.6. Innovations in Kenya*

Kenya is also exploring the use of AI to enhance funding sources in education. The iMlango initiative is a collaborative educational technology tool developed by private and public sector partners. It utilizes the sQuid attendance management system to track daily student attendance, facilitating real-time data reporting and insights into complex student data patterns. This system supports interactive learning by providing access to curricular content in various formats.

#### *4.7. UNICEF's Commitment to Education Innovation*

UNICEF is actively seeking innovations aimed at improving learning outcomes for marginalized children. The Innovations in Education initiative aims to scan, test, and share promising educational interventions worldwide. As part of this effort, UNICEF is investigating the potential of deep learning (DL) algorithms in collaboration with academic institutions and private companies, finding that these algorithms can identify schools through satellite imagery, thereby highlighting previously unmapped institutions (Bourne, 2014).

#### *4.8. Data for Development: The Chilean Case*

The Inter-American Development Bank financed a study titled "Big Data for Public Policy in Education: The Chilean Case" (OECD, 2016). This research employed algorithms to map schools, local access, student test scores, and dropout predictions, using 127 characteristics of student residences and

school locations. The findings contributed to developing a "geography of educational opportunities," shedding light on the intersection of geography and educational outcomes.

## 5. The Difficulties and Implications of AI for Policy in Education

This section outlines the primary obstacles to implementing AI in education, including achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4). These challenges include the emergence of new opportunities for AI to enhance learning and the expected attitudes of students and future workers toward implementing AI generally.

### The Challenges and Opportunities of AI in Education

#### 5.1. The Dual Nature of AI Potential

Artificial intelligence (AI) holds immense potential, as outlined in this paper, yet its implementation can present significant challenges—particularly when access to AI technologies is limited in disadvantaged communities. This creates a widening gap between traditional data usage and the emerging opportunities offered by Big Data, which can drive informed decision-making (Hilbert, 2015). Prioritizing Equity and Inclusion in AI Policy When designing policies for AI in education, equity and inclusion must be fundamental organizational values. Policymakers should consider several key questions to promote inclusion and equity:

- What urgent infrastructure improvements are necessary in developing countries to facilitate the use of AI in education?
- What lessons can we learn from past experiences to ensure sustainable and equitable digital rights related to internet access?
- How can AI be leveraged to enhance educational opportunities for disadvantaged groups and populations?
  - In what ways can we involve communities in shaping the AI-supported education they desire?
  - How might faster access to digital technologies in low-income countries help bridge the educational gap between affluent and impoverished students globally?
- What best practices can be implemented to utilize AI in ways that reduce gender disparities in education?

#### 5.2. Identifying Barriers to AI Adoption

Researchers have pinpointed several significant barriers to the adoption of AI-driven educational resources in various regions, including:

- Infrastructure limitations
- Energy management issues
- Global internet connectivity challenges
- Data analysis capabilities
- Economic conditions
- Students' foundational ICT skills
- Language barriers
- The need for culturally

appropriate content (Nye, 2015) A comprehensive review of Big Data implementation in rural areas highlights that inadequate infrastructure contributes to a digital divide, hindering access to data-driven insights necessary for informed decision-making (Hilbert, 2015).

#### 5.3. Strategies for Overcoming Challenges

To address these challenges, multiple strategies must be pursued. First and foremost, it is crucial to recognize the internet as a human right and foster international partnerships to build infrastructure in the most impoverished regions of the developing world (Mutoni, 2017). Initiatives like the work

undertaken by the United Nations Broadband Commission serve as exemplary policies aimed at promoting equitable internet access.

## 6. The Current State of AI in Education

Despite the continuous emergence of new technologies in the educational technology sector, AI applications for teaching, learning, and system management have not achieved widespread adoption. The primary reason for this low uptake is that many new products do not address the existing challenges teachers face. Additionally, these innovations often overlook the necessity for substantial studies to validate their effectiveness and relevance to mainstream teaching practices (Luckin, Holmes, Griffiths, & Forcier, 2016).

### 6.1. Support for Innovative Research and Development

Some countries have begun to take proactive measures to support the EdTech industry's efforts. These initiatives aim to enhance innovative research and development in collaboration with teachers and educational institutions. By intensifying their focus on meeting the needs of education professionals, these efforts seek to create a more conducive environment for the adoption of new technologies.

### 6.2. The Role of AI in Evidence-Based Policies

Moreover, there is an increasing exploration of how AI can contribute to the development of richer, evidence-based policies and programs in education. As the number of AI applications in academia continues to grow, it becomes evident that expert teachers play a crucial role in the effective incorporation of educational metrics.

### 6.3. Empowering Teachers Through Technology

To ensure that teachers can work effectively with these technologies, there is a pressing need to strengthen their competencies. This includes a thorough understanding of new technologies and their applications in the classroom (Luckin, Holmes, Griffiths, & Forcier, 2016). By equipping educators with the necessary skills, the integration of AI in education can be more successful and impactful.

## 7. The Importance of Data in Artificial Intelligence

Data serves as the foundation for the diverse functionalities of intelligent algorithms. Regardless of their sophistication, artificial intelligence (AI) systems rely heavily on the availability of quality data. Thus, a data-rich environment is essential for effective AI-driven computing systems. However, the presence of data alone is not sufficient.

### 7.1. The Significance of Data Quality

The effectiveness of any AI application is directly linked to the quality of its data sources. Inaccurate data will inevitably lead to flawed predictions from the machine learning algorithms powering these AI systems. Predictive algorithms can only generate accurate and comprehensive forecasts when they are fed with precise and complete data.

### 7.2. Challenges in Gathering Educational Data

Collecting educational data poses significant challenges, particularly in certain countries that have yet to address these issues. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), various barriers impede the collection and utilization of educational data (UIS, 2018). It is crucial that educational data is accessible and usable at the school level.

### 7.3. The Role of Educational Management Information Systems (EMIS)

An effective Educational Management Information System (EMIS) should produce detailed analyses that empower administrators and educators to address the core challenges of learning and

teaching in classrooms. Additionally, the system must be capable of aggregating and analyzing data to identify trends that can inform policy decisions. Despite advancements in data collection technologies, their costs may remain prohibitively high for poorer and developing countries.

#### 7.4. Evaluating Educational Data Quality and Costs

It is essential to assess the quality of educational data and weigh its costs against potential benefits. While many governments can generate substantial amounts of education data, numerous nations still struggle to do so. Various attempts to resolve this issue have failed, often focusing on enhancing data reporting capabilities instead of addressing the underlying dysfunctional processes that result in the unavailability, incompleteness, and inefficiency of raw data (Hilbert, 2015).

#### 7.5. The Need for Strong Institutional Structures

These challenges highlight the necessity of robust institutional and organizational frameworks as a prerequisite for the success of any data-dependent technology, including AI. Consequently, investing in the development of institutional capabilities is crucial, particularly for countries lacking a strong pre-existing data infrastructure.

### 8. Conclusions

In conclusion, the integration of big data and artificial intelligence in education presents both significant opportunities and ethical challenges. As countries strive to create personalized learning experiences tailored to individual student needs, it is crucial to establish robust policy frameworks that prioritize ethical considerations and ensure parental consent for data usage. Educational institutions must continually adapt their curricula to equip learners with essential skills for a dynamic job market, while also embracing the transformative potential of AI technologies. Moving forward, a collaborative effort between the AI industry and educational stakeholders is essential to develop comprehensive policies that foster innovation while safeguarding student privacy. By taking a proactive and holistic approach, we can harness the power of AI to enhance educational outcomes and create a more equitable learning environment for all students.

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