The teaching challenges of Al in Higher Education

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Resum

L'article analitza el paper transformador de la intel·ligència artificial (IA) en l'educació superior, posant èmfasi en les seves aplicacions, desafiaments i direccions futures. L'IA s'està integrant en múltiples àrees com l'aprenentatge adaptatiu, la tutoria personalitzada, l'avaluació intel·ligent i l'anàlisi predictiva, millorant l'eficiència i la personalització de l'ensenyament. No obstant això, l'adopció d'aquestes tecnologies també planteja reptes importants: manca de formació del professorat, preocupacions ètiques, problemes d'integritat acadèmica i dificultats d'infraestructura. L'article proposa solucions concretes per afrontar aquests reptes, com ara programes de capacitació docent, reformes curriculars i l'equilibri entre tecnologia i interacció humana. Conclou que el futur de l'educació superior requereix una integració equilibrada de la innovació tecnològica amb els valors fonamentals de la pedagogia.

Paraules clau

intel·ligència artificial, educació superior, IA generativa, integritat acadèmica, aprenentatge adaptatiu, docència universitària

Abstract

The article explores the transformative impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on higher education, focusing on its applications, challenges, and future directions. AI is being integrated into key areas such as adaptive learning, personalized tutoring, intelligent assessment, and predictive analytics, enhancing teaching efficiency and personalization. However, its implementation poses major challenges, including limited faculty training, ethical concerns, academic integrity issues, and infrastructure barriers. The article proposes targeted solutions to address these issues, such as faculty development programs, curriculum reform, and balancing technological tools with human interaction. It concludes that the future of higher education depends on a thoughtful integration of AI that aligns innovation with the core values of pedagogy.

Keywords

artificial intelligence, higher education, generative AI, academic integrity, adaptive learning, university teaching



1. Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative force in higher education, reshaping the landscape of teaching, learning, and administrative processes. This review synthesizes recent academic research on AI, highlighting its definitions, applications, challenges, and future directions. AI is defined as the capability of machines to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, including learning, reasoning, and problem-solving. Various definitions emphasize AI's ability to analyze and adapt autonomously to achieve specific goals.

The applications of AI in higher education are diverse and evolving. Adaptive learning platforms personalize educational content based on individual student needs, while intelligent tutoring systems enhance engagement through targeted feedback. AI-driven assessment tools streamline grading processes and improve academic integrity by detecting plagiarism. Predictive analytics enable early interventions for at-risk students, enhancing retention rates and academic success.

Despite these benefits, the implementation of AI in higher education faces several challenges. Faculty members often have a limited understanding of AI technologies, which can hinder their confidence in integrating these tools into their teaching practices. Additionally, there is a scarcity of research on effective AI teaching methodologies, raising ethical concerns regarding fairness and transparency. The rise of generative AI tools poses significant threats to academic integrity, necessitating a reevaluation of assessment practices.

In light of these challenges, this review proposes several solutions to ensure the successful integration of AI in higher education. Comprehensive AI literacy programs for faculty can enhance their understanding and confidence in utilizing these technologies. Institutions should also prioritize ethical considerations in curriculum reform and develop guidelines for responsible AI use. Furthermore, adapting assessment methods to accurately measure student understanding in an AI-enhanced environment is crucial.

In conclusion, while the integration of AI offers promising opportunities for enhancing educational experiences, it is essential for higher education institutions to address the associated challenges proactively. By investing in faculty training, ethical frameworks, and research on effective teaching methodologies, institutions can harness the transformative potential of AI while safeguarding academic integrity and ensuring equitable access to educational resources. The future of higher education lies in a balanced approach that combines technological innovation with the core values of critical thinking, human interaction, and ethical responsibility.

2. Artificial intelligence

Artificial Intelligence is a multifaceted concept generating various definitions across different disciplines with different emphasis. Here are some key definitions from the provided sources. Stanford professor John McCarthy, who coined the term "Artificial Intelligence" in 1955, defined it as "the science and engineering of making intelligent machines" (Stanford University, 2020). This is a broad definition focusing on the creation of machines capable of intelligent behavior.

More modern and more specific definition states that AI is "a technology that enables machines to imitate various complex human skills" (Siau & Wang, 2020), highlighting the human-like capabilities of AI systems. A more comprehensive scholarly definition in communication research describes AI as "the tangible real-world capability of non-human machines or artificial entities to perform, task solve, communicate, interact, and act logically as it occurs with biological humans" (Labajová, 2023). This definition emphasizes the real-world applications and human-like capabilities of AI systems.

These definitions collectively highlight AI's ability to analyze, learn, adapt, and perform tasks autonomously, often in ways that mimic or surpass human intelligence in specific domains.

The European Commission's High-Level Expert Group on Artificial

Intelligence provides a comprehensive definition: "Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to systems that display intelligent behavior by analyzing their environment and taking actions—with some degree of autonomy—to achieve specific goals" (High-Level Expert Group on AI, 2018). This definition encompasses several key aspects of AI:

- 1. Intelligent Behavior: AI systems are designed to mimic human-like intelligence in their operations and decision-making processes.
- 2. Environmental Analysis: These systems have the capability to perceive and interpret their surroundings, whether it's through data input, sensors, or other means.
- 3. Autonomous Action: AI can make decisions and take actions independently, without constant human intervention.
- 4. Goal-Oriented: AI systems are typically designed with specific objectives in mind, whether it's solving complex problems, optimizing processes, or providing insights.

The field of AI encompasses various subfields and technologies, including machine learning, natural language processing, computer vision, and robotics. Each of these areas contributes to the overall capability of AI systems to perform tasks that traditionally required human intelligence. As AI continues to advance, it raises important questions about ethics, privacy, and the future of work. The integration of AI into various aspects of society necessitates ongoing discussions about its responsible development and use. This definition and understanding of AI serve as a foundation for exploring its applications and implications in various domains, including higher education, where AI is transforming teaching, learning, and administrative processes.

3. Applications of AI in Higher Education

Artificial Intelligence technologies support multiple facets of higher education, including learning, teaching, assessment, and administration. The applications of AI in education are rapidly evolving, reshaping the overall teaching and learning landscape.

Applications of AI in Higher Education are diverse and rapidly evolving, transforming various aspects of teaching, learning, and administration. Different authors have analyzed these applications. Adaptive learning platforms leverage AI to personalize educational content and learning paths based on individual student needs and performance (Kavitha, Joshith, Rajeev, & Asha, 2024). Intelligent tutoring systems provide targeted feedback and support, enhancing student engagement and outcomes (Wang, Wang, Zhu, Wang, Tran, & Du, 2024). AI-powered assessment tools are being employed for automatic grading and plagiarism detection, improving efficiency and academic integrity (Ouyang, Zheng & Jiao, 2022). Predictive analytics utilize AI algorithms to identify at-risk students and provide early interventions (Chen, Chen & Lin, 2020). In research, AI tools are assisting in data analysis, experimental design, and knowledge management across various disciplines (Kavitha, Joshith, Rajeev, & Asha, 2024). Chatbots and virtual assistants are streamlining administrative processes and student support services (Bekkar, H & Chtouki, 2024). AI is also being used to enhance online discussion boards and facilitate more engaging remote learning experiences (Kavitha, Joshith, Rajeev, & Asha, 2024). These applications collectively demonstrate AI's potential to revolutionize higher education by improving personalization, efficiency, and accessibility.

4. Adaptive Learning and Personalized Tutoring

Adaptive Learning and Personalized Tutoring have emerged as transformative applications of AI in higher education. AI-powered platforms analyze student data in real-time to adjust content delivery, difficulty levels, and learning paths based on individual performance and preferences (Castillo, Flores & Gomez, 2024). These systems provide targeted feedback and support, enhancing student engagement and outcomes (Wang et al., 2024). For instance, Khanmigo, an AI-powered education tool, offers personalized tutoring to students who might not otherwise have access to such resources (Isiaku, Muhammad, Kefas, & Ukaegbu, 2024). Intelligent Tutoring Systems simulate one-on-one tutoring experiences, providing real-time feedback, customized exercises, and step-by-step assistance tailored to each learner's

needs (Pratama, Sampelolo, & Lura 2024). These AI tutors can identify knowledge gaps, offer additional materials, and adapt the pace of learning to suit individual students (Chinnasamy, Rani, Ayyasamy, Sujithra, Mounika, & Cherukuvada, 2025). By leveraging machine learning algorithms, adaptive learning platforms create dynamic, individualized learning paths that keep students engaged and motivated, preventing boredom or frustration (Milberg, 2024). This personalized approach has shown promising results in increasing engagement and improving learning outcomes in higher education settings (Olusegun, Flypaper, Oluwaseyi & Brightwood, 2024).

AI facilitates personalized learning experiences through adaptive task assignment, human-machine conversations, and timely feedback. Adaptive learning enabled by AI has been shown to improve student test results significantly, demonstrating its effectiveness in enhancing learning outcomes.

5. Intelligent Assessment and Management

Artificial Intelligence technologies are employed for automatic marking and predicting student performance. These systems can significantly improve the efficiency and accuracy of assessment processes in higher education settings

Intelligent Assessment and Management systems powered by AI are revolutionizing evaluation processes in higher education. These systems employ advanced algorithms for automatic grading, plagiarism detection, and performance prediction, significantly improving efficiency and accuracy (Ouyang et al., 2022). AI-driven tools can provide instant feedback to students, enabling them to identify areas for improvement quickly (Mbelede, 2024). The technology adapts to individual student skill levels, tailoring questions and assessments accordingly (Mbelede, 2024). These systems not only streamline the evaluation process but also enhance consistency in assessment practices across large student populations (Ryzheva, Nefodov, Romanyuk, Marynchenko, & Kudla, 2024). Furthermore, AI-powered transcript analysis tools can extract valuable insights from student records, identifying patterns of achievement and progression to support strategic planning efforts in higher education institutions (Robert, 2024).

6. Profiling and Prediction

Artificial Intelligence algorithms analyze student data to predict academic performance, allowing for early intervention and personalized support. This application helps identify at-risk students and tailor educational strategies to individual needs in university environments.

Profiling and Prediction in higher education leverage AI algorithms to analyze student data, enabling early intervention and personalized support. These systems use machine learning models to identify at-risk students by examining various factors such as academic performance, engagement patterns, and demographic information (Ekowo & Palmer, 2016). For instance, Florida International University implemented analytics software to predict which students were at risk of failing or dropping out, resulting in a 10% increase in four-year graduation rates (Lytras, Alkhaldi, Malik, Serban, & Aldosemani, 2024). Predictive analytics can also assist in financial aid decisions, analyzing historical data to determine the probability of student enrollment based on aid amounts offered (Lytras et al., 2024). However, the use of such systems raises ethical concerns, particularly regarding potential bias and privacy issues (Smithers, 2022). Despite these challenges, when implemented responsibly, predictive analytics can significantly enhance student success rates and institutional efficiency in higher education settings (Barnes, Hutson, & Perry, 2024).

7. Generative AI and Academic Integrity

Generative AI and Academic Integrity have become intertwined topics of concern in higher education. The rapid advancement of AI tools has introduced new challenges to traditional notions of academic honesty and originality. Generative AI can be used unethically to produce entire assignments, undermining the learning process and independent thinking (Kabitha et al., 2024). This has led to increased reports of AI-assisted cheating in Australian higher education and globally (Gallent, Zapata, & Ortego, 2023). The ease of creating original content with minimal human effort has made it more

difficult to detect academic misconduct, prompting institutions to reevaluate their integrity policies and detection methods. However, simply relying on AI detection technologies is not sufficient, as they may falsely accuse innocent students while missing sophisticated misuse (Gallent et al., 2024). To address these challenges, institutions are developing action plans and guidelines for the responsible use of AI in academic settings (Gallent et al., 2024). Some approaches include integrating AI literacy into curricula, redesigning assessments to be less vulnerable to AI-generated content and promoting transparency in AI use through methods such as color-coding AI-generated text in student work (Zhou & Schofield, 2024). Despite these concerns, many educators see the potential for AI to enhance critical thinking and analytical skills when used appropriately (Saddhono, Suhita, Rakhmawati, Rohmadi, & Sukmono, 2024).

The integration of generative AI tools poses challenges related to academic integrity, particularly concerning plagiarism and the authenticity of AI-generated content. Clear guidelines and policies are necessary to ensure academic standards are met and promote responsible use in university settings.

8. Challenges and Future Directions of Al

Consequently, and despite the potential benefits, the implementation of AI in higher education faces several challenges. Some of the challenges we have been able to identify are:

- Limited understanding of AI mechanisms among faculty, leading to decreased self-efficacy. Faculty members often struggle to grasp the intricacies of AI technologies, which can result in reduced confidence in their ability to effectively integrate these tools into their teaching practices. This knowledge gap may lead to resistance or hesitation in adopting AI-powered solutions, potentially hindering the overall progress of AI implementation in higher education.
- Insufficient attention to potential undesirable consequences of indiscriminate AI application. The rapid adoption of AI technologies without careful

consideration of their long-term effects can lead to unintended negative outcomes. These may include over-reliance on AI systems, reduced critical thinking skills among students, and potential biases in AI-driven decision-making processes. Additionally, there are concerns about data privacy and security, as AI systems often require access to large amounts of student and institutional data.

- 3. Scarcity of research on AI teaching methodologies in higher education. While AI applications in education are growing, there is a lack of comprehensive research on effective AI-enhanced teaching methodologies specific to higher education. This gap in knowledge makes it challenging for institutions to develop evidence-based strategies for integrating AI into their curricula and pedagogical approaches. More research is needed to understand how AI can best support teaching and learning in various disciplines and educational contexts.
- 4. Ethical considerations and the need for curriculum reform at the university level. The integration of AI in higher education raises numerous ethical concerns, including issues of fairness, transparency, and accountability. There is a pressing need for universities to address these ethical challenges through curriculum reform and the development of guidelines for responsible AI use. This includes educating students about AI ethics, addressing potential biases in AI systems, and ensuring that AI-enhanced education does not exacerbate existing inequalities.
- 5. Challenges in assessment and academic integrity. The rise of AI-powered tools, such as language models capable of generating human-like text, poses significant challenges to traditional assessment methods and raises concerns about academic integrity. Universities must adapt their evaluation practices to ensure that assessments accurately measure students' understanding and skills in an AI-enhanced learning environment.
- 6. Technological infrastructure and resource allocation. Implementing AI systems in higher education requires significant investments in technological infrastructure and resources. Many institutions, particularly in middle-income countries, face challenges in acquiring and maintaining the necessary hardware, software, and expertise to fully leverage AI capabilities.

- 7. Balancing AI integration with human interaction. While AI can enhance personalized learning experiences, there is a risk of over-reliance on technology at the expense of human interaction. Maintaining a balance between AI-driven instruction and traditional human-led teaching is crucial to ensure that students develop essential social and interpersonal skills.
- 8. Addressing faculty concerns and providing adequate training. The successful implementation of AI in higher education requires addressing faculty concerns about job security, changing roles, and the need for new skills. Institutions must invest in comprehensive training programs to help faculty members adapt to and effectively utilize AI technologies in their teaching practices.

By addressing these challenges thoughtfully and proactively, higher education institutions can harness the potential of AI to enhance teaching, learning, and administrative processes while mitigating potential risks and ethical concerns. In this work we suggest potential solutions for each of the challenges identified in implementing AI in higher education:

1. Limited understanding of AI mechanisms among faculty:

- Develop comprehensive AI literacy programs for faculty members to enhance their understanding of AI technologies.
- Offer workshops and training sessions focused on the practical applications of AI in education.
- Create mentorship programs that pair tech-savvy faculty with those who are less familiar with AI tools.

2. Insufficient attention to potential undesirable consequences:

- Establish interdisciplinary committees to assess the risks associated with AI implementation in educational settings.
- Conduct regular impact assessments to evaluate the effects of AI tools on teaching and learning.
- Develop and enforce ethical guidelines for the responsible use of AI in education.

3. Scarcity of research on AI teaching methodologies:

 Allocate funding specifically for research on effective AI-enhanced pedagogies.

- Encourage collaboration between education and computer science departments to foster innovative teaching methods.
- Create platforms for sharing best practices and research findings related to AI in education.

4. Ethical considerations and curriculum reform:

- Integrate courses on AI ethics into university curricula to educate students about responsible use.
- Develop frameworks that guide the ethical implementation of AI in educational contexts.
- Engage stakeholders, including faculty, students, and industry experts, in ongoing discussions about the ethical implications of AI.

5. Challenges in assessment and academic integrity:

- Design assessments that focus on higher-order thinking skills, making them less susceptible to AI-generated responses.
- Implement advanced plagiarism detection tools that utilize AI technology to maintain academic integrity.
- Establish clear policies outlining acceptable uses of AI in coursework to guide students.

6. Technological infrastructure and resource allocation:

- Seek partnerships with technology companies to provide resources and support for AI initiatives.
- Explore cloud-based AI solutions to reduce costs associated with maintaining infrastructure.
- Prioritize investments in AI technologies as part of the institution's strategic planning efforts.

7. Balancing AI integration with human interaction:

- Design blended learning approaches that combine the strengths of both AI tools and human instruction.
- Use AI to augment rather than replace traditional teaching methods, ensuring that human interaction remains a key component of education.
- Emphasize the development of soft skills alongside AI-enhanced learning experiences.

8. Addressing faculty concerns and providing training:

- Offer continuous professional development opportunities focused on integrating AI into teaching practices.
- Create support networks for faculty members adapting to new technologies, fostering collaboration and sharing of experiences.
- Recognize and reward faculty efforts in successfully integrating AI into their courses and curricula.

By implementing these solutions, higher education institutions can better navigate the challenges associated with integrating AI technologies while maximizing their benefits for teaching and learning.

9. Conclusions

Artificial Intelligence is revolutionizing higher education by transforming teaching, learning, assessment, and administrative processes. Its applications, ranging from adaptive learning and personalized tutoring to intelligent assessment and predictive analytics, have demonstrated the potential to enhance educational outcomes, improve efficiency, and provide tailored support for students and faculty alike. AI-powered tools such as intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive learning platforms, and generative AI technologies like ChatGPT are reshaping the educational landscape by offering personalized learning experiences, streamlining administrative tasks, and enhancing research capabilities.

This review has emphasized the profound potential of AI to enhance educational experiences through personalized learning, efficient assessment, and predictive analytics. However, the adoption of AI also brings forth significant challenges that institutions must address to fully realize its benefits. To navigate these challenges effectively, it is essential to implement targeted solutions:

- Enhancing Faculty Understanding of AI: Institutions should prioritize the
 development of comprehensive AI literacy programs tailored for faculty.
 These programs can include workshops, online courses, and collaborative
 initiatives that deepen educators' understanding of AI technologies and
 their applications in the classroom. By fostering a culture of continuous
 learning, faculty members will gain confidence in integrating AI tools into
 their teaching practices.
- 2. Addressing Ethical Concerns and Curriculum Reform: As AI technologies evolve, so too must the ethical frameworks guiding their use. Universities need to incorporate ethics into their curricula, educating students about the implications of AI on society. This includes discussing issues such as bias in algorithms, data privacy, and the ethical use of AI in academic settings. By embedding these discussions within existing courses and creating dedicated modules on AI ethics, institutions can prepare students to navigate the complexities of an AI-driven world responsibly.
- 3. Conducting Research on Effective AI Teaching Methodologies: There is a pressing need for more comprehensive research focused on effective AI-enhanced teaching methodologies specific to higher education. Institutions should invest in research initiatives that explore how AI can best support diverse learning environments and pedagogical approaches. Collaborations between educational researchers and technology developers can lead to evidence-based strategies that maximize the impact of AI in classrooms.
- 4. Adapting Assessment Practices: To counteract the challenges posed by AI tools on academic integrity, universities must innovate their assessment methods. This could involve redesigning assessments to focus on critical thinking and problem-solving skills rather than rote memorization, which can be easily compromised by generative AI. Incorporating oral examinations, project-based assessments, and collaborative assignments can help ensure that evaluations accurately reflect students' understanding and capabilities.

- 5. Investing in Technological Infrastructure: Implementing effective AI systems requires significant investment in technological infrastructure. Higher education institutions must allocate resources to acquire necessary hardware and software while also ensuring ongoing maintenance and support. Partnerships with technology providers can facilitate access to cutting-edge tools without overwhelming institutional budgets.
- 6. Balancing Technology with Human Interaction: While leveraging AI for personalized learning experiences is beneficial, maintaining a balance between technology and human interaction is crucial. Institutions should design learning environments that encourage collaboration between students and instructors, fostering essential social skills alongside technological proficiency.
- 7. Providing Comprehensive Training for Faculty: To alleviate concerns regarding job security and changing roles due to AI integration, institutions must offer robust training programs for faculty members. These programs should focus on how to effectively utilize AI tools while emphasizing the irreplaceable value of human educators in fostering critical thinking and creativity among students.

By proactively addressing these challenges with targeted solutions, higher education institutions can harness the transformative power of AI while mitigating associated risks. The future of education lies in a thoughtful integration of technology that enhances learning experiences without compromising ethical standards or the essential human elements of teaching. As we move forward into this new era, ongoing collaboration among educators, researchers, and technologists will be vital to ensure that AI serves as a catalyst for positive change in higher education. As we move forward, it is crucial for higher education institutions to address these challenges proactively.

The future of AI in higher education holds great promise, but its success will depend on striking a balance between technological innovation and the core values of academic integrity, critical thinking, and human interaction. As institutions continue to navigate this evolving landscape, ongoing research and collaboration will be essential to fully realize the potential of AI while mitigating its risks in the higher education sector.

These conclusions open areas for future research. Future research should assess the long-term impact of AI on learning outcomes, examining how AI-enhanced education affects student performance, retention, and skill development over extended periods. Also investigate into effective methods for integrating AI literacy into higher education curricula across disciplines, compare the efficacy of AI-driven personalized learning compared to traditional teaching methods, and on how AI in higher education affects graduates' readiness for AI-driven job markets.

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