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Artificial Intelligence and the Nigerian Legal System: It's Implications for Educational System

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Abstract

The prospects of Artificial Intelligence to improve educational system are vast with concomitant benefits for the availability and accessibility of all kind of implementaion. This level of intelligence of machines is made possible by machine learning algorithms that provide intelligent analysis of massive data. Artificial intelligence (AI) has already begun to have a significant impact on the field of legal education system and it is likely to continue to do so in the future. Legal education systems are using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to analyse large amounts of data to help students academic performance. The gains of AI also support teachers with predictions on issues including sentence duration and academic scores. The extension of human intelligence through the use of computers in the time past physical power was extended through the use of machinery tools. In a restricted sense, the study of techniques to use computers more effectively by improves programming techniques. For academics, information technologies (IT) and artificial intelligence (AI) offer new opportunities, but they also entail major new challenges. The most important challenge is the way decisions are taken and by whom, is mainly determined by two factors: academic freedom and subject delivery. Teachers are geared toward academic freedom. In light of these observations, teachers should carefully evaluate AI tools for safety, privacy, and age-appropriateness before adopting them. Using AI thoughtfully as a complement to not a replacement for unbiased scouring. The unbiased law teachers must remain the heart of the system for sustainable development. In conclusion, the current level of over dependence on manual system and physical presentation are also a major challenge. Implementation of intelligent software and use of appropriate technology can improve teaching and learning, speed up the work and reduce the burden on the teaching staff.

Introduction

Designing intelligent systems has achieved a perfect result since engineers have started to realize that computers could be used for more than just calculating numbers. In our modern world, many computer systems are equipped with Artificial Intelligence and scientists have been trying to imitate human intelligence and behaviour with computer programmes. The prospects of Artificial Intelligence to improve the lives of law teachers, students are vast with concomitant benefits for the availability and accessibility of all kind of services. To support the above assertion, (Xu, 2022¹) states that artificial intelligence has significantly transformed the world of computing by enabling devices to learn, reason, and perceive things from data and their environment. This level of intelligence of machines is made possible by machine learning algorithms that provide intelligent analysis of massive data (Contini, 2020²). Artificial intelligence (AI) has already begun to have a significant impact on the field of legal education, and it is likely to continue to do so in the future (Journal & Sourdin, 2018)³. Law teachers and students are using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to analyse large amounts of legal data to help

lawyers identify their weak points. The gains of AI also support students with predictions on issues including sentence duration and academic scores.

Apart software systems, AI boots and robots are beginning to transform legal practice in the form student lawyers. A good instance is Robot Ross by Watson, IBM's cognitive computer. The robot demonstrated capacity to speak and interact with human language and to act as an intelligent and efficient consultant in bankruptcy cases. According (Lu & Hu, 2019)⁴, a robot called DoNotPay developed in UK, can help users in traffic related cases and to prepare necessary papers to defend their presentation. All law students must be alive to the potential risks. In addition, there is the need to be aware that the public versions of these tools are open in nature and therefore that no private or confidential information should be entered into them. As the use of AI technologies advances, judicial systems are being engaged in legal questions concerning the implications of AI for human rights, surveillance and liability, among others. In addition, law teachers and students are also using AI systems for decision-making processes that have raised concerns for fairness, accountability and transparency in decision making by automated or AI-enabled systems.

Artificial intelligence in the digitalised legal educational system: For what?

Artificial intelligence is a science and a set of computational technologies that are inspired by the way people use their nervous system, body, senses and how they learn, reason and take actions. However, there is an immense discussion about the precise definition of Artificial Intelligence. For example, The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English language (Encyclopedic Edition)⁵ offers four definitions of Artificial intelligence:

1. An area of study in the field of computer science. Artificial intelligence is concerned with the development of computers able to engage in human- like thought processes such as learning, reasoning and self-correction.
2. The concept that machines can be improved to assume some capabilities normally thought to be like human intelligence such as learning, adapting, self- correction etc.
3. The extension of human intelligence through the use of computers in the time past physical power was extended through the use of machinery tools.
4. In a restricted sense, the study of techniques to use computers more effectively by improves programming techniques.

Even though there is not a unique definition of Artificial Intelligence most of the definitions share these four features: i) system that think like humans, ii) system that act like human, iii) «system that think rationally, iv) system that acts rationally⁶.

However, Artificial Intelligence can be programmed in many ways, but the two main programme designs are: machine learning and deep learning. The former process consists on the capacity of a computer programme to adopt new data without human interferences. Specifically, machine learning is the process by which a computer is able to improve its own performances by continuously incorporating data into an existing statistical model⁷: precisely, the machine receives an amount of data and afterwards it modifies the algorithms by using the information it has received. The latter is an Artificial Intelligence function that imitates the workings of the human brain in processing data and creating patterns to use in decision-making. Accurately, deep learning, a subset of machine learning in AI that has networks capable of learning unsupervised from data that is unstructured or unlabeled and it is also known as “deep neural learning” or

“deep neural network”⁸. Moreover, the large set of technologies and techniques under the Artificial Intelligence umbrella» can be classified into two (buckets)⁹: the first, can be synthesized as knowledge-based systems, which is connected to the notion of generating behavior by means of deduction from a set of axioms and are good in taking optional decisions based on defined rule within a specific domain (but they are not able to learn or automatically leverage the information they have received over the time) . The second is a bucket of technologies that use statistical learning to continuously improve their decision-making performance. This new wave of technologies has been made possible by the exponential growth of computer processing power, the massive result decline in the cost of storage and the resulting acceleration of data collection efforts. Systems in this category include self-driving vehicles, facial recognition used in policing and natural language processing techniques that are used to automate translation and content moderation in schools¹⁰.

Nevertheless, newer technologies can be adopted to improve information and communication service in educational systems to help the implementation of curriculum on small claims procedures and to increase cross-border cooperation between school authorities. This can also be useful in terms of development of transparency and of contribution to consistency in discipline of students. Furthermore, as Thomas Julius Buocz claims “Artificial Intelligence can be used as a tool to analyze law and decisions, with the aim to assist the identification of precedents and related case and to provide a preliminary input to the supervisors on specific proposal, internal or external defense questions”¹¹. The use of AI poses a wide range of challenges to be addressed: from pattern recognition, to ethics, biased decisions taken by AI-based algorithms, transparency and accountability. Self-learning algorithms, for instance, may be trained by certain data sets (previous decisions, facial images or video databases) that may contain biased data that can be used by applications for examination malpractice or universities safety purposes, leading to biased decisions. Considering rapid developments in this field, the challenges and opportunities related to harnessing AI in the field of legal education and how AI-based systems can help in teaching and to handle cases involving AI that impacts students’ rights must form part of discussions among stakeholders from the educational system.

Adopting AI in to Nigeria Legal System: It’s Implications for Educational System

Silently and gradually, this technology has made its way into classrooms in the guise of personalized, adaptive, or intelligent learning systems. They have a large impact on students' and teachers' lives by collecting and evaluating enormous volumes of big data about kids (Holmes, et al., 2021)¹³. In particular, artificial intelligence in legal education is based on numerous technology advancements that offer learning analytics, suggestions, and diagnostic tools in a variety of formats and contexts (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2020)¹⁴. These applications are still in their infancy and are more often employed locally and experimentally than on a system-wide basis. Nonetheless, there are numerous indications that technology may change legal education in the next years, both within the classroom and throughout the system. For example, AI is incorporated into a number of educational technologies, including intelligent tutoring, chatbots (Clark, 2020)¹⁵, and automated grading systems (Heffernan & Heffernan, 2014)¹⁶. With the aim of ensuring that students pass tests, teachers at many educational institutions are tasked with providing teaching, feedback, and attention to a large number of students in a short amount of time. Since each student has a unique learning style, set of prior knowledge and cognitive abilities, emotional

disposition, and learning demands, it can be challenging to do this. Given that AI has the ability to address numerous issues, its influence on education is crucial (Woodie 2018)¹⁷. Thus, the difficulty of advanced individualized learning could be addressed by Artificial Intelligence in legal Education. Consequently, Chen et al. (2020)¹⁸ clarified that these systems provide several chances for all parties involved in the educational process. But, in spite of its benefits for teaching, artificial intelligence has drawbacks just like any other technology.

Critical Examination of AI Integration in Nigerian Legal Educational system

The adoption of artificial intelligence in Nigeria's legal education system presents a complex duality of transformative potential and substantial risks that requires critical thinking. At the core of this challenge lies the problematic reliability of current AI technologies when applied to legal contexts. Studies have shown that AI-powered legal research tools frequently generate inaccurate citations, with error rates approaching 20% for specialised legal topics¹⁹. More concerning is the system's tendency to produce convincing but entirely fabricated case references and legal authorities, a phenomenon particularly dangerous in an educational setting where students may lack the expertise to identify such falsehoods. Beyond accuracy concerns, the Nigerian context introduces unique structural challenges that complicate AI integration. A pronounced digital divide separates well-resourced urban institutions from their rural counterparts, creating unequal access to technological tools that could exacerbate existing educational disparities. Additionally, the Western-centric training of most commercial AI systems renders them particularly unsuitable for Nigeria's plural legal system, where customary law and local jurisprudence require careful contextual understanding that current algorithms cannot provide. Early research indicates that overreliance on these tools may be eroding fundamental legal skills, with students demonstrating significantly weaker performance in traditional legal research and analysis after prolonged AI use.

Nigeria as it stand lacks comprehensive frameworks to govern AI use in legal educational system, leaving critical gaps in areas such as algorithmic accountability, data protection, and academic integrity standards. This regulatory vacuum becomes particularly problematic given the rapid pace of AI adoption, with many law faculties implementing these tools without proper faculty training or institutional guidelines. The absence of localized AI solutions tailored to Nigeria's legal context further compounds these challenges, as imported technologies often fail to account for the nuances of Nigerian law and educational needs²⁰. Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires a coordinated approach that balances innovation with preservation of educational integrity. Priority should be given to developing Nigeria specific AI tools trained on local legal materials, establishing clear usage policies that safeguard core skill development, and implementing comprehensive faculty training programmes. Simultaneously, regulatory bodies need to move swiftly to create standards for educational AI applications, with particular attention to data privacy, algorithmic transparency, and equitable access (Adekunle, 2024)²². Without such interventions, the unguided adoption of AI risks producing a generation of legal professionals inadequately prepared for the complexities of legal practice, while potentially cementing existing inequalities in legal education. The window for shaping this technological integration in a manner that truly benefits Nigerian legal education is rapidly closing, making immediate action imperative.

From the above views, the writer maintains that AI and other technologies continue to permeate legal education system and have continue to be at the center of curriculum

implementation as a whole, educators must also be on alert for bias in data and algorithms that might have the potential to perpetuate inequalities and transparency so as to enable all stakeholders understand how the system was trained, how it works and what is the scope of its use for educational development in Nigeria.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current level of over dependence on manual system and physical presentation are also a major challenge. AI presents transformative opportunities for legal education but also risks eroding critical thinking skills if adopted recklessly. The solution lies in measured integration, harnessing AI's efficiencies while safeguarding core pedagogical values through clear usage policies, preserved skill development, and AI literacy programs. For Nigeria specifically, this balanced approach must address local challenges like educational inequality and algorithmic bias. Proactive measures, including adapted AI tools, faculty training, and regulatory frameworks, can maximise benefits while mitigating risks. The future quality of legal education hinges on implementing these safeguards now to ensure AI enhances rather than diminishes legal training. Implementation of intelligent software and use of appropriate technology can improve Nigerian educational system, speed up the work and reduce the burden on the teachers training. It will improve the quality of education and reduce unnecessary delay on paper presentation. AI gives legal educational system some fantastic new capabilities, but it cannot replace unbiasedness. Like any technology, it requires watchful eyes and wise use. Legal educational system should explore AI with cautious optimism, embracing the potential benefits while maintaining a sense of responsibility and carefulness. Together, teachers can shape AI applications to truly serve process and view AI as an empowerment tool to enhance the capabilities of subject matter experts for sustainable development while keeping human experts firmly in the loop.

Recommendations

1. Curriculum planners and educator should carefully evaluate AI tools for safety, privacy, and age-appropriateness before adopting them.
2. Faculty AI Training: Comprehensive programmes should train professors to evaluate AI outputs and teach AI literacy. Educators need skills to guide students in critically assessing AI-generated content. Nigerian Law schools must invest
3. Using AI thoughtfully as a complement to, not a replacement for, unbiased legal education system. The unbiased official must remain the heart of the system for sustainable development
4. There should be transparency into how AI applications work so teachers can develop informed views for sustainable development.
5. Nigerian law schools should explicitly require scholars and students to disclose the AI tools used in academic work and specify their purpose. This maintains integrity while acknowledging AI's role in modern legal education. AI-Free Core Assessments: Critical assignments like legal writing and moot court submissions should prohibit AI use. This ensures students develop essential analytical and reasoning skills independently. This balanced approach allows AI adoption while safeguarding critical thinking and legal reasoning development

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