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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AS A LEARNING ASSISTANT: HELP OR HARM?

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Abstract: This paper researches the role of artificial intelligence as a learning assistant in modern education, highlighting whether it serves as a benefit or a potential harm to students. Artificial intelligence offers significant benefits, including personalized learning, exact feedback, and increased access to educational resources. However, its growing usage also raises concerns about students' overdependence, minimize critical thinking skills, and academic dignity. By analyzing both the positive and negative influences of artificial intelligence in classrooms, this paper discusses that AI can be an effective learning assistant when used responsibly and under proper guidance. The study concludes that a balanced and ethical approach is crucial to ensure that artificial intelligence supports learning without replacing independent thinking.

Key words: Artificial intelligence, learning assistant, personalized learning, educational technology, student independence, critical thinking, academic integrity, ethical use, digital education, responsible integration.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence has become an integral part of digital education, influencing how learners learn and how teachers deliver instruction. From intelligent teaching systems and chatbots to automated assessment tools, AI is reforming the educational landscape. While many teachers view AI as a powerful learning assistant, others raise concerns about its long-term effects on learners'cognitive development and ethical behavior. This article studies the question: Is artificial intelligence in education a help or a harm? This field used and continues to use intelligence techniques from artificial and cognitive science to attempt understand the nature of learning and teaching and build to SO systems to assist learners to master new skills or to understand new concepts, in ways that mimic the insightful and adaptive tutoring of a skilled human tutor w orking one--to--one with the learner.¹

Main part

One of the most significant benefits of artificial intelligence in education is personalized learning. AI tools can analyze students' learning styles, strengths, and weaknesses, allowing content to be adapted to individual needs. This personalized

¹ Du Boulay B. Artificial intelligence as an effective classroom assistant //IEEE Intelligent Systems. – 2016. – T. 31. – №. 6. – C. 76-81.



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approach assists learners progress at their own pace, increasing motivation and engagement. AI also improves educational technology by providing instant feedback. In terms of assessment and evaluation, various systems have been developed over the years using AI. For example, since 2014 Open Essayist was developed and extended to provide automated, interactive feedback system and an acceptable level of support for students as they write essays for summative assessment. Automated quizzes, grammar checkers, and adaptive learning platforms help students to identify mistakes immediately, promoting self-correction and permanent improvement. For language learners, AI-powered systems offer pronunciation practice, vocabulary support, and real-time corrections, making learning more interactive and effective. Furthermore, AI provides student independence. Students can access educational materials anytime and anywhere, reducing dependence on teachers and traditional classroom settings. This flexibility is particularly effective for distance learning and lifelong education.

Despite its advantages, artificial intelligence also presents several difficultiess. One major concern is the decrease of critical thinking skills. When learners depend excessively on AI-generated answers, they may become passive learners who accept information without analysis or reflection. This overreliance can decline problem-solving abilities and intellectual curiosity. Another serious problem is academic integrity. AI tools can be misused for plagiarism, cheating, or generating assignments without genuine comprehending. This undermines the educational process and devalues academic purposes. Gratch says that the possibility of AI agents can facilitate unethical behavior among software *consumers*, by nature of how these consumers "tell" (i.e., personalize) their agents to act on their behalf. Whereas many AI algorithms follow a fixed logic created by the software developer, developers are increasingly providing end-users with the ability to personalize the behavior of their assistants.³ Without exact guidelines, students may prioritize convenience over learning. Ethical concerns also arise regarding data privacy and ethical use. AI systems often offer large amounts of personal data, raising questions about confidentiality and security. Additionally, biased algorithms may produce unfair or inaccurate results, affecting learners' educational aims.

To ensure that artificial intelligence serves as a assisstance rather than a harm, responsible integration is essential. Educators must guide students on how to utilise AI ethically and effectively. AI should be used as a supportive tool, not a replacement of human thinking or teacher position. According to Parab, "the human teacher is more reliable and comfortable for students. Human teachers easily understand students' doubts related to the subject. Students having proper communication and understanding with a

³ Gratch J., Fast N. J. The power to harm: All assistants pave the way to unethical behavior //Current Opinion in Psychology. – 2022. – T. 47. – C. 101382.



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² Rienties B. et al. I would love this to be like an assistant, not the teacher: A voice of the customer perspective of what distance learning students want from an artificial intelligence digital assistant //arXiv preprint arXiv:2403.15396. – 2024.

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human teacher which is sometimes not possible by robots". Teachers play a crucial role in designing tasks that enhance critical thinking, creativity, and originality. Assessment methods should emphasize analysis, reflection, and problem-solving rather than simple information reproduction. Clear policies on academic integrity must be established to avoid misuse. Moreover, digital literacy training should be incorporated into curricular of lessons to help students understand the limitations, risks, and ethical implications of AI technologies. When used responsibly, AI can improve learning while preserving educational values.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence as a learning assistant is neither entirely helpful nor entirely harmful; its influence depends on how it is used. AI contributes remarkable opportunities for personalized learning, student independence, and educational innovation. However, unchecked reliance on AI may threaten critical thinking, academic integrity, and ethical standards. By promoting responsible integration and ethical use, tutors can motivate that artificial intelligence becomes a powerful means in digital education rather than a source of harm.

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⁴ Parab A. K. Artificial intelligence in education: teacher and teacher assistant improve learning process //International Journal for Research in Applied Science and Engineering Technology. − 2020. − T. 8. − №. 11. − C. 608-612.



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