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Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a tool for Combating Unethical Practices in Social Work Education

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Abstract

The social work profession is built on the core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. However, the field of social work education has not been immune to unethical practices that undermine these principles. Allegations of discrimination, favoritism, abuse of power, and lack of transparency have surfaced in various social work programs, highlighting the need for effective measures to address these issues. This paper explores the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) as a tool for combating unethical practices in social work education. AI-powered systems can be leveraged to enhance transparency, fairness, and accountability throughout the educational process, from admissions to student evaluation and faculty oversight. It provides an overview of the ethical challenges facing social work education, including biases in admission decisions, unfair grading practices, and the abuse of power by faculty members. It then delves into the theoretical foundation for the use of AI in addressing these challenges, drawing from ethical AI frameworks,

	principles of procedural justice, and the potential of data-driven decision-making.

Introduction

Education is generally conceptualized not simply as the medium for cultural transmission and social transformation but the focal vehicle for accelerating individual, community and national development. It is a mechanism through which the society generates the knowledge, skills and competence required for its survival and sustenance. It enriches people's understanding of themselves and the world. It improves the quality of lives and leads to broad social benefits to individuals and society (Kazeem & Ige, 2010). According to **Akuma** (2004), when we look at the world in a pragmatic way, and we become aware of what the actual problems of learning are, our conception of education would also change drastically. The role of education in human development, emancipation, liberation and empowerment is inestimable and can never be over-emphasized. Education is obtained through schooling systems that are peculiar to nations. In Nigeria, educational levels include primary, secondary and tertiary levels. At the tertiary levels, university is the apex of learning. It is uncommon for criminologists to focus their attention on the malpractices that take place in the academic world, i.e, the university which is an unintentional oversight.

Since education in general, particularly deals with the moulding of character of humanity and itself must rest on a set of unyielding, tested and proven ethical framework that guarantees the very best atmosphere and trust in the learning process (TRCN, 2013). This means that for effective social work practices to be recognized professionals must maintain good working ethics and high moral standards. In most situations one finds extreme cases where ethics in the workplace are highly bridged and unethical practices flourish. As long as human beings interact and relate with one another, there is usually the presence of both ethical and unethical practices in establishments. This is because no two human beings are the same and ethics deals with values displayed by individuals and people's value also differs. One's value highly influences his/her actions and performance in any organization. The performance of every organization is tied to the performance of every member of staff which is influenced by ethics and ones code of conduct. Omisore (2015) observed that values are the basis upon which individual ethics and attitudes are built. These three mechanisms (attitude, ethics and values) shape an individual's character. A person's character is showcased in his/her words and actions (behaviour).The work ethics an individual displays come from his/her values. Our values are dependent on our environment, experiences and life-long influences. These influences include: our parents, teachers, friends, peers, relatives, colleagues, and competitors, etc, anyone or anything that has helped to shape or form our opinion of the world. Workers exhibiting good work ethics are considered eligible for higher positions and more responsibilities. They know that their actions have a direct impact on other people at work. This conscientiousness persuades them to cultivate a responsible outlook to every action they take. These people do not need prodding or constant supervision. They are self-motivated and valuable

to their organizations. These workers are highly reliable and are appreciated by their superiors for what they bring to the work place. They are honest, responsible and dependable assets to their organizations (Omisore & Oyende, 2015).

The concept of ethics

Ethics on the other hand can simply be referred to as a set of principles relating to morals, especially as they apply to human conduct. In specific terms, work ethics is about what is morally correct, honourable and acceptable to the larger majority of the people of an organization, society or group. It is also the rules of conduct that have become a set of norms of the society, group or organization (Omisore & Oyende, 2015). Ethics deals with the guidelines or rules of conduct by which we aim to live, work and socialize. It connotes what is good or not good, what is morally right or wrong. What is acceptable in a given environment or not, what is expected or not expected of a person (Kanu & Ursula, 2012). According Andong, Ubana, Edoho and Emmanuel, (2024), in the general administration of higher education, ethical behaviour and standards is expected of all – be it teaching staff, non-teaching staff, students and likewise their parents and guardians.

Ethical behaviour therefore occurs when one acts with equity, fairness and impartiality and respects the rights of others, or simply put, when one does what is morally right. According to Manuel, Claire, Thomas and Michael (2012), ethics refers to well-founded standards of right and wrong that prescribe what humans ought to do, usually in terms of rights, obligations, benefits to society, fairness, or specific virtues. An entire society can become ethically corrupt. Nazi Germany is a good example of a morally corrupt society (Manuel, et al .2012). Ethics, for example, refers to those standards that impose the reasonable obligations to refrain from rape, stealing, murder, assault, slander, examination malpractice and fraud. Ethical standards also include those that enjoin virtues of honesty, compassion, and loyalty. Ethical standards include standards relating to rights, such as the right to life, the right to freedom from injury, and the right to privacy. Such standards are adequate standards of ethics because they are supported by consistent and well-founded reasons (Manuel, et al.2012). Nevertheless, unethical behaviours occur when decisions enable an individual or organization to gain at the expense of the larger society (Ogunleye, 2000). Ethical issues relate to issues concerning kidnapping, rape, indiscipline, dishonesty, gangterism, staff criticism, gossip, sexual harassment and molestation related to abuse of office, plagiarism, drug abuse, cultism, intimidation, bribery and corruption, embezzlement of funds, greed, stealing, murder, assault, slander, fraud, examination malpractices and any kind of malpractice of sort, kidnapping, among others (Manuel, et al. 2012; Ogunleye, 2000; TRCN, 2013).

In view of this worrisome trend and situation, the social work profession is put in jeopardy. There are however, several causes and factors responsible for these unethical practices in the social work education. Ogundele (1999) reported several acts of indiscipline, which had their roots in socio-cultural patterns in the political process, economic system, psychological orientation, family background, leadership behaviour, value system, legal/ judicial system, modernization process,

majorly due to management slacks, lack of motivation and lack of commitment to religious tenets. These had made the attainment of national development goal difficult and equally resulted in low performance of organizations in Nigeria and which also include education (Joseph, Chukwuemeka, Ubana, & Ogechi, 2023).

Ethical problems have forced various governments in Nigeria since the 1976 administration to introduce one form of legislation or the other to curb this monster. Since, 1997 and up till the present, Nigeria had consistently been listed as one of the corrupt countries in the world by Transparency International. Other factors as highlighted by Anzene (2014), Eziali cited in Educational group (2012) and Ogundele, Hassan, et al. (2010) include: lack of facilities, gender, age, marital status with its responsibility, inability to cope with stress, employment status, nature of employment, income level, lack of morals and education status distribution, work experience and commitment to organization. These unethical practices have great consequences or influence in the social work practices. Ogundele, et al. identified the consequences and influence of unethical practices to the Nigerian society to include unpredictable behaviour in our economic, political and other interactions with foreign organizations. This could lead to lack of attractiveness of investment opportunities from foreign investor especially in education. On the other hand, the cost of attracting foreign investment could become higher in Nigeria vis-à-vis other parts of the world. Notwithstanding, solutions to unethical behaviour must focus on changing people by employing the following approaches as identified by Lawal (2002); Ogundele, Hassan, Idris, Adebakin and Iyiegbuniwe (2010): values related, economics, legal/judicial sanctions, religious, managerial, leadership, family, socio-cultural, educational, training and development, police/armed forces reforms, motivation, modernization, development and multi-dimensional approaches. These are some of the ways of solving several problems created by corruption and bribery in African businesses (Lawal, 2002; Ogundele, et al. Hassan, Idris, Adebakin & Iyiegbuniwe, 2010).

In addition, ethical issues in any organization deals with a problem or situation that requires a person or organization to choose between alternatives that must be evaluated as right (ethical) or wrong (unethical) (Business Dictionary, 2015). This requires every individual within an organization to work towards achieving the goals set by an organization which falls within an established set of moral guidelines or fair business practices. It also requires that individuals should relate with one another in the organization in an equitable, fair and just manner. This is why in most public organization and professions in Nigeria there is a code of conduct which are ethical principles that guide people's actions, behaviour and relationships with other people and their jobs. Failure to maintain good work ethics in the tertiary institutions have great consequences and influences on the management of tertiary education for future national development and environmental sustainability (Ogundele, et al. 2010).

Ethical core values in social work education

Ethics, which is a vital part of social work education, replicates and determines the effectiveness of social work practice and the interplay between social workers and clients. Social work ethics education has become an outstanding topical issue all over the world considering as both license qualification of the profession and changing individuals' lives and societies' structures. Social work education has a genuine replica shaped with both theoretical background and practice. While this replica has a complexity of dilemma with theory and practice, course contents should be framed as to standards and evaluated measurable outcomes (Alptekin, 2016). Social work ethics is one of these courses, which has a crucial place in balance between social work education and practice. Ethical codes and values in social work occupy a unique course in social work educational process and these issues are also taught in other course contents. In both contents, social work instructor follows universal standards of ethical values and has an effort to adapt universal values and perspectives into local values by considering on ethical dilemmas. This framework presents a triangle of social work ethics education as ethical standards, supervision that forges a professional link between instructor and student and developing skills about finding solutions for ethical dilemmas (Edoho, Olabisi and Ojong 2023).

A demanding challenge for social workers may occur as referring to obtain ethical outcomes and measure the ethical issues and solution in social work practice. In the point of all this, social welfare and individual well- being can be a reference for measurement and evaluation of social work practice in terms of ethical standards. Reid and Billups (1986, p. 6) study on ethical perspective of the outcomes of social work intervention shaping with the rearrangement of the balance between needs of individuals, families and communities and resources such as money, services, power and status. In this relational process and intervention, social work as a profession has core standards and models to prevent or copy with problems generated by different perspectives or characteristics. Social work education has a theoretical background about ethical principles and responsibilities in profession. However, the difference between understanding and practice is confronted as a depth discussion (Biggerstaff, 2005, p. 246).Ethical standards and anti-oppressive approach light the ways of professional training, practices and policies (Mulé, 2006, p. 608).Besides, the core of ethics and standards have a critical role to designate boundaries in the professional relationship and provide leastwise an origin to obtain outcomes of social work intervention.

Although ethical values have not reflected a new discussion topic in science, these have enhanced within years through the changing perspectives of people in the context of variable patterns of needs and thoughts. Reamer (1998) expresses the evolution in social work ethics education as the morality period, the values period, the ethical theory and decision-making period and the ethical standards and risk management period. Accordingly, ethical standards and responsibilities have transformed from preoccupation as client's morality and values to ethical guidelines for social work practices over years (Reamer, 1998, p. 488). Bryan (2006, p. 3) emphasizes actual central point of social work ethics education within two main aims as "exposure to the professionally

specific principles important to the field of study, which indicate what one ought to do in this role" and "cultivation of ethical decision-making capabilities in the face of ethical problems, which requires that, at the least, one consider what one ought not do". Many skills of social worker such as problem-solving skills based on ethical dilemmas, effective communication, analytic thinking have handled in dual relationship through social work practice.

While obtaining information about individual values and needs, ethical standards of social work are required as well as individual understanding and meaning about the problem and need. "Core values" of the profession, which are highlighted by National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics (1999), lead social workers to manage ethical decision- making process and transform individual value and moral acts to professional case management. Besides, these "core values" of social work has a role as a guide (Bryan, 2006, p. 2) to identify the states of social worker and client in the context with the affected and affecting relations of social environment of client such as family, friends, groups, society. Six main codes of ethics in the framework with social work practice are aligned as responsibilities to clients, colleagues, in practice settings, as professionals, to the social work profession and society (Congress, 2002, p. 153). Although these core values are reflected to social work education with course of ethics, professional life and practices may present various aspects for disjuncture occurred discrepancy between belief and behavior.

In recent years, core ethical values of social work incline to cover all situations, problems, needs, perspectives and beliefs. Equality and respect for all differences can be admitted as the building blocks within the social work practice and ethical decision making process. Reamer (2013, p. 24) underlines core social work values of NASW Standards for the Classification of Social Work Practice as formulating the triangle of social work practice, education and developing skills in social work intervention. According to this classification, basic values of profession include; (a) awareness of otherness of the individual in society (b) respecting the confidentiality of relationships with clients, (c) Intending to create social change by meeting needs, (d) being able to separate personal feelings and needs from professional intervention, (e) awareness of differences (f) supporting clients' skills to help themselves by developing their resilience and coping strategies, (g) strengthening clients despite their frustrations, (h) tracing social justice and making effort to nourish the economic, physical and mental well -being of all members of society, (a) awareness of high standards of personal and professional conduct. The core principles of social work education refer to social justice, human value and relationships, advocacy and integrity, fidelity and competence as constructing social work model. The concept of social justice can be questioned within supporting client access to resources, opportunities, social goods and participation in life effectively. Human value and relationships can be evaluated in terms of strengthening and improving interdependent autonomy, functionality and promoting self-determination. While helping people in need as to social rights, prevention harm to others and individuals and unethical practices by others emphasizes advocacy and integrity, fidelity and competence refer to practices of social worker by keeping promises, having supervision in the light

of laws, legal regulations and ethical standards (Pugh, 2017, p. 319). All these concepts and standards constitute the main template of social work ethics education

Social work education plays a crucial role in shaping the next generation of social workers, who will be responsible for addressing complex social issues and promoting the well-being of vulnerable populations. However, the field of social work education is not immune to unethical practices, which can undermine the integrity of the profession and the quality of services provided to clients. Ethical behaviour occurs when one acts with equality, fairness and impartiality and respects the rights of others, or simply put, when one does what is morally right. Unethical behaviours occur when decision enables an individual or organization to gain at the expense of the larger society (Ogunleye, 2000).

Devices of unethical practices in education

One of the critical challenges in social work education is the issue of academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Students may engage in various forms of academic misconduct, such as copying from peers, fabricating data, or submitting assignments written by others. This not only undermines the integrity of the educational process but also raises concerns about the ethical conduct and professional competence of future social workers. It is worth noting that there is variation according to institutions within Nigeria. In other words, the unethical conducts appear to be more endemic in Nigeria compared to other countries. In general terms, unethical conducts appear to be more associated with social and management science courses even though no discipline has complete immunity. This paper examines unethical practices by serially analyzing the process obtainable in the education system, which according to Undiyaundeye & Odey (2022) includes:

- ***Unethical practice during admission process:*** There is evidence suggesting that some university officials take undue advantage of the admission season to get money, other material favours and sexual gratification from unsuspecting applicants. In fact, there are some administrators that used to purchase and hoard admission forms in order to profiteer in times of scarcity. There are others who personally collect admission letters of successful applicants to deliver same to the applicants' parents or to the applicants themselves to create the notion that were it not for their efforts, things would have been different. This kind of needless gesture opens a lifeline for the material and sexual appetite of the opportunistic lecturers.
- ***Unethical practice at the level of coordination:*** It can be said that level coordinators wield enormous powers emanating from the near-absolute and exclusive knowledge they have about the problems of their students. It is practically impossible (or extremely difficult) to track down every bit of dealing that level coordinators undertake regarding students. Although level coordinators may not use their positions to expressly harm a student, they can take advantage of students with problems that are willing to play the dirty game with them. Here level coordinators can criminally alter students' record in exchange for money, materials, sexual intercourse or owing to certain parochial considerations. Often times, unit coordinators extort money from students which are not accounted for in the university. This comes in form of

payment before matriculation numbers are released, payment for mobilization form and many other forms.

Drives for unethical practices

In general terms, it can be concluded and asserted that, these malpractices (and many more unreported ones) are motivated by three major reasons: search for sexual intercourse by male academics in exchange for favours; search for monetary/economic gains in exchange for favours; and influence of primordial/parochial variables in conducting official business as highlighted by Undiyaundeye & Odey (2022):

Search for sexual intercourse by male academics in exchange for favours

This is where male academics exclusively dominate. Available evidence indicates that some lecturers solicit sexual favours from female students to gain diverse favours. The favours include (though not limited to) high grades, high CGPA, better class of degree, leaking questions prior to examinations, employing the services of better students to write examinations for female students, making arrangements for the female students to write the examinations at convenient times and places, allocating marks to female students even without writing examinations, etc. These kinds of girls and lecturers can be considered willing parties and partners in 'progress.'

However, there is a sad dimension to the sexualization of examination and other academic undertakings. This is where an intelligent and hardworking female student gets hooked by the lustful appetite of a lecturer. Even though she can read and pass a particular course, the lecturer in question frustrates and fails her in his course (s) until she offers herself for sex. This, without doubt, is the most cruel, callous, criminal and immoral component of all the malpractices known to the academic world. Classically speaking, it is this kind of attitude towards the female students that constitutes sexual harassment with all its ugliness.

Search for monetary/economic gains in exchange for favours

Findings show that some lecturers have formed the habit of commercializing exam grades and project supervision. In this regard, a student simply pays money and gets a grade for a course and project without working for it. Related to this are lecturers that collect items of value in exchange for academic favours. The items of value include (though not limited to) textile materials (both males and females), food items (perishable and nonperishable), exotic gifts such as wristwatches, perfumes, leather bags, gold and other jewelry, food stuff such as eggs, palm oil, groundnut oil, rice, yams, etc. Some Muslim academic staff collect return air-tickets to travel for the Muslim Holy Pilgrimage (*Hajj)* or the Lesser Holy Pilgrimage (*Umrah*!!) In tune with the spirit of reciprocity, students who give these items (just like female students who give part of their bodies) expect something in return; and the expectations border on getting undue advantage in relation to the course (s) in question.

The influence of primordial/parochial variables in conducting official business

It is unfortunate that some lecturers have succumbed to primordial/parochial sentiments in dealing with some of the students. The primordial/parochial sentiments take the form of giving some students undue advantage because of blood/kinship ties, ties based on tribal, religious and regional considerations and ties emanating from sharing the same state of origin or coming from the same community; another reason is the classmate syndrome. There is ample evidence to show that some lecturers engage in one malpractice or the other owing, largely, to one or a combination of these primordial/parochial sentiments. Like in all other cases, the malpractice here involves giving one student unfair (and sometimes criminal) advantage over others.

Artificial intelligence tools for academic efficiency and effectiveness

In the rapidly evolving landscape of higher education, institutions are constantly seeking ways to enhance their academic efficiency and effectiveness. Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative technology with the potential to revolutionize various aspects of academia, from student support and administrative processes to research and teaching. This paper explores the diverse range of AI tools and applications that can be leveraged to foster academic efficiency and effectiveness, while addressing the practical considerations and potential challenges associated with their implementation.

1. Personalized learning and student support

AI-powered adaptive learning platforms can provide personalized educational experiences tailored to the needs and learning styles of individual students. By analyzing student performance data, these systems can dynamically adjust the content, pace, and delivery of instruction, enabling learners to progress at their own optimal rate (Ahn & McEachin, 2017). Additionally, AI-driven chatbots and virtual assistants can offer 24/7 support, answering student queries, providing guidance on academic tasks, and connecting them with relevant resources (Hobert & Huber, 2019).

2. Intelligent tutoring and adaptive assessment

AI-based intelligent tutoring systems can provide personalized, real-time feedback and guidance to students, addressing their specific learning gaps and misconceptions (VanLehn, 2011). These systems can analyze student responses, identify areas for improvement, and tailor the instructional content and strategies accordingly. Furthermore, AI-powered adaptive assessment tools can dynamically adjust the difficulty of test questions based on a student's performance, ensuring accurate and efficient evaluation of their knowledge and skills (Almond et al., 2015).

3. Automated grading and feedback

Repetitive and time-consuming tasks, such as grading assignments and exams, can be significantly streamlined through the use of AI-driven automated grading systems. These tools can analyze student work, provide detailed feedback, and assign accurate grades with consistency and objectivity, freeing up instructor time for more meaningful engagement with students (Straumsheim, 2016). Additionally, AI-generated feedback can offer personalized guidance and

suggestions for improvement, enhancing the learning process.

4. Administrative automation and process optimization

AI can be leveraged to automate various administrative tasks and streamline institutional processes, leading to increased efficiency and productivity. For example, AI-powered systems can assist with student admissions, course scheduling, resource allocation, and data analysis, enabling administrators to make more informed decisions and allocate resources more effectively (Papamitsiou & Economides, 2014).

Artificial Intelligence AI as a tool or remedy for combating unethical practices in social work education

As the social work profession continues to evolve and address complex societal challenges, the integration of artificial intelligence AI into social work education becomes increasingly crucial. By harnessing the power of these transformative technologies, social work programs cultivates a new generation of ethical, competent, and socially conscious professionals equipped to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the individuals, families, and communities they serve. In recent years, the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) have opened up new possibilities for addressing these challenges. AI-powered tools and technologies can be leveraged to enhance transparency, objectivity, and accountability in social work education, ultimately fostering a more ethical and equitable learning environment. This article explores the potential of AI as a tool for combating unethical practices in social work education such as academic dishonesty, biased admissions processes, inadequate field placements, and a lack of diversity and inclusion.

Academic dishonesty

AI-powered tools can play a significant role in addressing academic dishonesty and plagiarism in social work education. Automated plagiarism detection systems, such as Turnitin and iThenticate, can be integrated into the curriculum to identify instances of copied or unoriginal content. These tools can analyze student submissions, compare them against a vast database of online sources, and generate comprehensive reports that highlight any potential plagiarism or unauthorized collaboration. Moreover, AI-driven writing assistants, such as GPT-3 and Transformer models, can be employed to detect anomalies in student writing styles and sentence structures, which may indicate the use of ghostwriting or other forms of academic dishonesty (Azeez et al., 2022**;** Bao et al., 2022**).** By continuously securing student educational work, these AI systems can help social work educators identify potential ethical breaches and address them in a timely manner (Asor, Ubana, & Abuokwen, 2022).

In addition to plagiarism detection, AI-powered tools can also be used to promote academic integrity and honesty. For example, AI-generated practice exams or assignments can be used to supplement traditional assessments, reducing the risk of students obtaining and memorizing answers in advance (Jiang et al**.,** 2020**).** Furthermore, AI-based proctoring systems, such as those that use facial recognition and eye-tracking technology, can be employed to ensure the integrity of

online exams and assessments, deterring students from engaging in unauthorized behavior (Karim et al., 2021**).**

Biased Admissions Processes

Another significant challenge in social work education is the potential for bias and unfairness in the admissions process. Admissions committees may be susceptible to conscious or unconscious biases, leading to the exclusion of qualified applicants from underrepresented or marginalized groups. This can perpetuate the lack of diversity in the social work profession and undermine the goal of promoting social justice and equity. AI-powered tools can be leveraged to enhance the objectivity and fairness of the admissions process in social work education. Machine learning algorithms can be trained to analyze application materials, such as personal statements, transcripts, and recommendations, and to identify patterns and indicators of potential success in the program (Marbouti et al., 2016; Raji & Buolamwini, 2019). By automating the initial screening and evaluation of applications, AI systems can help reduce the influence of human biases and ensure that all applicants are assessed based on their merits and qualifications.

Moreover, AI-powered chatbots can be used to provide personalized guidance and support to prospective students throughout the admissions process, addressing their questions, offering advice, and connecting them with relevant resources (Cukurova et al., 2019). This can help to level the playing field and ensure that all applicants, regardless of their background or socioeconomic status, have equal access to the information and assistance they need to submit a strong application. In addition, AI-driven data analytics can be used to monitor and analyze the demographic and academic profiles of admitted students, identifying any patterns of bias or underrepresentation. Social work programs can then use this data to inform their recruitment and outreach efforts, targeting underrepresented groups and implementing more inclusive admissions policies (Shukla et al., 2019**).**

Field Placements and Experiential Learning

Field placements and experiential learning are crucial components of social work education, providing students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world settings. However, the selection and management of field placements can be fraught with challenges, such as a lack of quality control, inadequate supervision, and limited opportunities for certain student populations. AI-powered tools can be utilized to enhance the field placement process and ensure a more equitable and enriching learning experience for social work students. AI-driven algorithms can analyze data on previous student placements, field instructor feedback, and placement site performance to identify high-quality and well-suited field placement opportunities (Hwang et al., 2020**).** This can help social work programs to match students with placements that align with their learning objectives, interests, and professional goals, while also ensuring that all students have access to meaningful experiential learning opportunities.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

Promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is a critical priority in social work education, as the social work profession is responsible for serving and advocating for marginalized and underrepresented populations. However, social work programs may sometimes struggle to create truly inclusive learning environments, with issues such as lack of faculty and student diversity, biased curricular content, and inadequate support for students from diverse backgrounds.

AI-powered tools can play a significant role in addressing these challenges and fostering more inclusive and equitable social work education. Machine learning algorithms can be used to analyze the demographic composition of social work programs, identify areas of underrepresentation, and inform targeted recruitment and retention strategies (Pendergrass et al., 2020). This can help to increase the diversity of both faculty and students, ensuring that the social work profession better reflects the communities it serves. Moreover, AI-driven natural language processing (NLP) can be employed to review and enhance the inclusivity of course materials, syllabi, and other educational resources. These AI systems can identify biased language, stereotypical representations, and the absence of diverse perspectives, and provide recommendations for more inclusive and culturally responsive content (Garg et al., 2018; Speer, 2017). By integrating these AI-powered tools into the curriculum development process, social work programs can create learning environments that are more reflective of the diverse experiences and perspectives of their students.

Grade Inflation

Grade inflation, the phenomenon where academic grades are systematically inflated over time, is a widespread issue in education (Rojstaczer & Healy, 2012). This practice undermines the credibility of academic performance and can lead to the devaluation of degrees and qualifications. AI-powered grading systems can address this problem by introducing more objective and standardized assessment methods (Straumsheim, 2016). Machine learning algorithms can be trained to analyze student work and provide accurate, consistent, and unbiased grades, reducing the influence of subjective factors and personal biases.

Improving Access to Educational Resources

Unequal access to educational resources, such as textbooks, learning materials, and technology, is a significant barrier to achieving educational equity (Darling-Hammond, 2015). AI-powered personalized learning platforms can adapt content and delivery methods to individual student needs, ensuring that each learner receives the support and resources they require to succeed (Ahn & McEachin, 2017). This can help address the disparities in educational outcomes across different socioeconomic and demographic groups.

Enhancing Transparency and Accountability

AI-driven data analytics and reporting systems can provide educational institutions with real-time insights into various aspects of their operations, including student performance, resource allocation, and faculty effectiveness (Papamitsiou & Economides, 2014). This increased

transparency can help identify and address unethical practices, while also promoting accountability and responsible decision-making among administrators, educators, and policymakers.

Recommendations

1 Government including education stakeholders such as the regulatory agency and administrative heads in the institutions should ensure that the prevalent unethical practices like extortion, forceful sale of textbooks, fraud, greed, cultism, sexual harassment, plagiarism, drug abuse, indecent dressing from the female folks, examination malpractices, staff kidnapping, irregular attendance to classes by lecturers, among others, are curtailed to the barest minimum in the institutions. Laws, regulations and sanctions should strictly be adhered to in pursuant of this course.

2 Government including the private sector should support institutions through adequate budgets, funds and financial assistance for infrastructural development, facilities provision and staff continuous motivation as means of fighting and curtailing the causes of the prevalent unethical practices in the institutions. Constant and continuous training, orientation, seminars and workshops on ethics should be organized regularly for all staff and students (both old and new) in order to prevent causes of the prevalent unethical practices like insecurity matters, home background and socio-economic status, parental upbringing, among others, in the institutions.

3 Moral instruction and education should be highly promoted and if possible form part of core subjects in the minimum standard. Likewise, other strategies such as inculcating the right value system through education and teaching, use of effective sanctions on offenders, building a good organizational culture, leadership effectiveness in the management of staff and students, infrastructural development, combating examination malpractice, among others, can be adopted as means of controlling the prevalent unethical practices in the institutions.

4 Government and non-governmental organizations should develop ethical AI guidelines that will establish clear and comprehensive ethical guidelines for the use of AI in social work education. These guidelines should address issues such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, transparency, and accountability. Provide training on ethical AI Use. This will offer training programs for social work educators on the ethical use of AI technologies. Educators should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to ensure that AI is used in a responsible and ethical manner. Foster interdisciplinary collaboration. This will encourage collaboration between social work educators, AI researchers, ethicists, and other relevant stakeholders to develop AI solutions that are aligned with ethical principles and values in social work education and implement bias detection tools.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence offers a wealth of opportunities to enhance academic efficiency and effectiveness across various domains, from personalized learning and intelligent tutoring to administrative automation and research productivity. By leveraging the power of AI, educational institutions can streamline operations, optimize resource allocation, and provide more personalized

and engaging learning experiences for students. However, the successful implementation of AI in academia requires a thoughtful and comprehensive approach that addresses the practical considerations and ethical implications associated with these technologies. By embracing the transformative potential of AI while prioritizing responsible and sustainable practices, higher education can unlock new levels of academic excellence and better serve the evolving needs of students, faculty, and society as a whole.

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