

Library education and the rise of Artificial Intelligence and machine learning

Section 1: Contribution Details

Contribution	Detail
Authors Name(s)	Nthabiseng Mosala-Bryant
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Section 2: Abstract Text

The evolution of librarianship has historically hinged on the ability of librarians to acquire, organize, and provide access to library resources, enabling users to locate and utilize information tailored to their needs. However, the advent of the 21st century has ushered in significant technological advancements, particularly in artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, which have fundamentally transformed these traditional functions. This paper examines the implications of AI on library education, highlighting the anxiety among librarians regarding their roles as information providers in an increasingly automated landscape. Despite the perception that AI is a novel technology, it has been integrated into library information systems for years, prompting a review of librarians' responsibilities, including organization, bibliographic description, and information dissemination.

As machine learning continues to evolve, library professionals face the challenge of maintaining relevance in the academic sector, where the digital era has diminished traditional barriers to information access. This study poses critical questions for library educators: What aspects of library education remain untouched by AI? How can librarians uphold academic integrity in areas where AI may fall short?

The paper further explores the potential erosion of critical thinking skills among users due to inadequate education on AI and machine learning. It addresses the dual challenges and benefits of AI literacy within the academic community, emphasizing the necessity of addressing scholarly integrity and upholding academic values. Additionally, the paper will compare various definitions of AI, investigate the implications of algorithmic bias in information selection, and examine privacy concerns related to AI. A proposed model for integrating AI literacy into writing skills courses at a South African university will also be presented, aiming to equip future librarians with the necessary skills to navigate the complexities of AI in library education.

References

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