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THE IMPACT OF AI ON RESEARCH PUBLISHING AND ACADEMIC JOURNALS

Helen Talatu Ninyio
University Library, Kaduna State University (KASU), Kaduna.
helen.ninyio@kasu.edu.ng

Jibrin Adamu Ishaka
Kogi State College of Education, Ankpa.
ishakademu@gmail.com

Diana Sayi
University Library, Kaduna State University (KASU), Kaduna.
sarauniyadiana@gmail.com

Abstract

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing research publishing and academic journals. The study explores the transformative impact of AI across various stages of the publication process, including manuscript selection, content categorization and audience targeting. By automating and enhancing peer review processes, AI tools help improve the efficiency and objectivity of article selection, identifying potential biases and methodological flaws. Additionally, AI-powered categorization systems enable more precise indexing and tagging, making academic content more accessible and relevant to researchers and readers. The study examines AI's role in audience engagement, as predictive algorithms and publishers in tailoring content distribution to specific academic and research communities. While AI offers numerous benefits, it also presents challenges related to ethical considerations, transparency, and the potential displacement of human roles in the publishing process. This paper provides a comprehensive analysis of AI's impact on academic publishing, discussing both the opportunities and challenges of integrating AI into scholarly communication.

***Keywords*:** Artificial Intelligence, Research Publishing, Academic Journals, Manuscript Selection, Content Categorization, Audience Targeting.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) has ushered in a transformative era across various sectors, and research publishing is no exception. As the academic landscape becomes increasingly complex driven by an exponential growth in data generation and an ever-expanding body of knowledge, integrating AI tools

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has become necessary and has begun to reshape how research is conducted, evaluated, published and disseminated. This brings both opportunities and challenges for academic journals. It enhances editorial decision-making by efficiently assessing submission quality and relevance, tagging articles based on intricate themes or emerging trends identified within the text corpora, matching manuscripts with appropriate reviewers based on their expertise while streamlining communication throughout the review cycle and also ensuring that valuable research reaches its intended audience promptly (Smith & Brown, 2023).

According to (Vinay, 2023) Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to the development of computer systems that can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and natural language processing. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a field of technology that focuses on creating machines, especially computers, that can mimic human-like thinking and behaviour. The machine gathers information and understands how to use it, similar to how humans learn new things. After learning, AI systems can apply what they've learned to make decisions, draw conclusions, or solve problems and also improve their performance over time by recognizing and fixing their mistakes. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has a growing role and the potential to transform many industries such as the transportation industry, health care, finance, education, customer care, and research publishing among others, to increase efficiency, and accuracy, and enable new capabilities that were previously impossible. It emerged as a predominant tool with the potential to redesign the scenery of academic communication.

Research Publishing is a key aspect of research and education that is commonly used by researchers and educators in scholarly works to present data-driven arguments and logical reasoning. Sofoluwe, (2014), research publishing is the systematic documentation and dissemination of scholarly findings through recognized platforms to contribute to knowledge, innovation, and societal development. It is the process of disseminating scholarly work through academic journals, books, or conference proceedings, ensuring the communication of new knowledge and findings to a wider audience. Research publishing aims to share new knowledge with others, provide a platform for debate and discussion, and contribute to the body of knowledge in various fields of study which is very vital so researchers can balance being informative with keeping the readers engaged.

Research work can be found in journals, conference proceedings, and books. Each of these platforms serves a unique purpose in academic publishing. Conference proceedings contain papers presented at academic conferences that have not yet undergone full peer review but contribute significantly to ongoing scholarly discussions, books and book chapters contain research findings often compiled into books or edited volumes, these works provide in-depth analysis and comprehensive discussions on specific topics. Meanwhile, journals contain original research articles, reviews, and case studies. These

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publications are typically indexed in databases like Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. Journals ensure rigorous peer review and maintain high academic standards (Smith & Brown, 2023).

Publications in academic journals are purposely for visibility, academic recognition, impact factor, and knowledge archiving among others. An academic journal is a type of publication that is released regularly and features research articles written by experts in a particular area of study. The articles that appear in these journals go through a careful assessment by other experts to make sure that the research is original, important, and applicable to the academic community. AI-powered tools can enhance the efficiency, accuracy and overall quality of this process by filtering out low-quality or plagiarized submissions, and also categorize and tag articles to facilitate discoveries and accessibility (liu et al., 2019). It also ensures that manuscripts adhere to journal-specific formatting guidelines, streamlining the submission process.

The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Research Publication

The integration of AI technologies into academic journals is becoming increasingly important and relevant, reshaping various aspects of the research landscape. Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly being used in publishing to streamline processes, improve efficiency, and enhance the overall reader experience. The technology is capable of performing tasks that were once solely the domain of humans, for example, automated content generation tools can produce articles at scale (Garcia-Sancho & Villegas-Perez, 2020). Its integration has marked a significant evolution within academic publishing improving efficiency while ensuring that rigorous standards are upheld throughout all stages leading up towards publication readiness.

Manuscript Submission and Peer Review

One of the most significant impacts of AI has been observed at the pre-publishing stage. This is a period before a research paper is officially published. The manuscript selection and peer review process form the backbone of academic publishing, ensuring the quality and integrity of published research. Traditionally these processes can be time-consuming, prone to human biases and subjective. However, AI tools are now being employed to automate the initial assessment, identify potential biases in reviews, highlight methodological flaws in submission, and match manuscripts with appropriate reviewers based on expertise (Hodgson et al., 2020). AI-powered technologies have demonstrated significant potential in automating and improving these processes in manuscript preparation, peer review matching and language editing. Refining language, tone, and style to improve the overall readability and impact of the manuscript.

AI-powered tools, such as Grammarly, Turnitin, and Zotero, can detect incorrect in-text citations, bibliography errors, and improper formatting. It can check manuscripts for adherence to style guides

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like APA, MLA, or Chicago by using natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning to analyze citations, formatting, and structure. To support this assertion, Keskar et al, 2017, stated that AI-powered language editing tools can detect grammatical errors, improve sentence structure, and enhance clarity. Similarly, Akinyemi, (2023) is of the view that AI-driven citation managers and writing assistants help Nigerian researchers ensure compliance with style guides by automatically formatting references, checking citation accuracy, and detecting inconsistencies. Essentially, these tools make it easier for publishers and researchers to check if a manuscript is unique and meets certain quality standards before it is considered for publication.

Content Categorization

Content Categorization has to do with organizing and classifying research articles and related contents into specific categories or topics like papers, or datasets into specific groups. This can be done using AI techniques, particularly machine learning and natural language processing (NLP), to automatically classify and organize digital content into predefined categories or certain criteria, which include the topic of the research, the methods used to conduct it, or other relevant factors. Uche et al. (2024), stated that AI's role in automating content tagging in Nigerian institutional repositories is very important to ensure that research outputs are properly classified based on subject relevance. This not only enhances discoverability but also supports search engine optimization (SEO) efforts for journals (Muller et al., 2021). This can help to improve the accessibility of research findings, as well as assist researchers and publishers in better managing and disseminating their work.

Effective content categorization enables journals to organize and index articles systematically, improving accessibility for researchers to locate relevant studies within their fields, making it easier to find and understand the information without much stress and within the shortest period.

Audience Targeting

Audience Targeting is the process of identifying and engaging a specific group of readers or stakeholders such as academics, policymakers, or practitioners who are most likely to be interested in or benefit from a particular study, article, or publication. This is crucial for ensuring that the research reaches the intended audience effectively, maximizing its impact and relevance after a paper is published. AI-powered systems can analyze researchers' interests, publication history and citation patterns to provide personalized recommendations for further reading (Yan et al., 2019). Artificial intelligence (AI) can aid in promoting research, analyzing its impact, monitoring citations, and engaging with readers through recommendations based on their interests.

Engaging target audiences is a critical challenge for academic publishers but artificial intelligence (AI) offers innovative solutions for tailoring content distribution. According to (Liu & Zhang, 2022),

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Algorithms analyze user behaviour patterns to recommend articles that align with particular interests within academic communities. Similarly, (Williams et al., 2020) are of the view that AI-powered analytics track user behaviour and preferences, enabling publishers to recommend relevant articles and optimize dissemination strategies. This can help to predict interests and recommend relevant articles to researchers and institutions. AI can recommend suitable journals for authors and suggest relevant research topics to institutions, enhancing knowledge dissemination (Obi & Hassan, 2023). As AI is increasingly embedded in all stages of the research publication process, from facilitating initial research efforts to optimizing dissemination and evaluation of research impact, it is expected that it should expand, and create new opportunities for enhancing academic productivity and rigor which should all geared towards improving the academic journals.

Improving Academic Journals with Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technologies

Academic journals play a crucial role in disseminating scholarly knowledge, but ensuring their quality and impact requires continuous improvements, to that effect artificial intelligence (AI) has a major role to play in improving academic journals. A multifaceted approach by AI can enhance editorial quality, strengthen peer review processes, uphold publication ethics, boost impact factors, consider author reputation, utilize predictive modelling, and provide valuable recommendations to researchers and institutions.

The composition and expertise of a journal's editorial board are strong indicators of its quality. AI systems can analyze the Board Composition by extracting information from journal websites or databases like Scopus and Web of Science to evaluate the academic credentials and affiliations of the editorial board members, assess their citations, publications in reputable journals, and their involvement in relevant research areas and also identify the geographical, institutional, and disciplinary diversity of the editorial board, which can be an indicator of a journal's inclusiveness and international reach. Ensuring high editorial standards through AI-assisted proofreading, plagiarism detection, and adherence to formatting guidelines improves journal credibility and readability (Owolabi & Akinyemi, 2023). The reputation of authors is another strong indicator of the quality of research published in a journal. AI tools assess an author's research impact by analyzing citations, h-index, and collaboration networks, helping journals select credible contributors (Ajayi & Bello, 2023). Authors with high h-indices are often considered more reputable, and their work tends to be published in higher-quality journals. AI can analyze co-authorship networks to assess the reputational standing of authors based on their collaborations with other high-profile researchers. A strong co-authorship network with renowned scholars often indicates the high quality of research. Also, the institutions and funding sources linked to an author is an indicator associated with the quality of a journal.

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Artificial intelligence (AI) also assesses a journal's commitment to publication ethics by analyzing its adherence to ethical guidelines and policies through Ethical Guidelines and Codes of Conduct, a journal website can be scanned to check if they comply with established ethical frameworks such as those outlined by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) or similar organizations. AI tools can monitor retraction notices (using databases like Retraction Watch) and analyze patterns to identify journals that frequently retract articles, indicating potential issues with publication ethics. Also, through predictive modelling, AI can forecast the future impact of journals based on historical citation patterns and other metrics to predict how likely a journal is to increase in impact, which is useful for long-term decision-making (e.g., for funding or hiring decisions) This helps researchers and institutions make decisions based on the journal's expected future influence.

Benefits of AI in Publishing

The pressure to publish in academia, known as the "publish or perish" ethos, adds stress and can lead to burnout, however, the advent and adoption of AI technologies in publishing and academic journals has significantly transformed the process of publishing and brought a great relieved to researchers and also enhanced their operations, provide better content and services to their audiences:

Benefits of Artificial intelligence (AI) in publishing

Enhanced Content Creation: Traditionally, the process of crafting articles or reports involved a significant investment of time and effort by human authors. Hours, days, or even weeks could pass before a piece of content reaches completion (Saikaly, 2023). This posed challenges in the fast-paced world of publishing, where timely delivery of information is crucial. AI-powered NLP algorithms have turned the tables, generating thousands of words of content in a matter of seconds. According to (Khalifa & Albadawy, 2024), This acceleration in content generation has revolutionized publishing by enabling publishers to deliver information to their audiences with unprecedented speed and efficiency.

Enhanced Accessibility: In today's digital age, technology has the power to break down barriers and make content accessible to everyone, including individuals with disabilities. AI technologies, in particular, are at the forefront of this accessibility revolution, playing a pivotal role in creating inclusive and compliant content that caters to a diverse audience. AI is being used to improve access to academic resources and enhance their usability for a broader audience (wright et al., 2024). This technology not only enhances accessibility but also promotes independent reading and learning.

Efficiency and Time Savings: Artificial intelligence (AI) evaluates technical details and suggests reviewers, reducing the time from submission to publication. This greatly improves efficiency and saves time in the publishing. It provides automated tools that can quickly generate written content like articles and reports, which helps cut down the time needed to create first drafts (Dale, 2021) Additionally, there

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are AI-based editing programs that help with proofreading and formatting, which speeds up the revision process (Sullivan, 2020).

Automated Screening: AI algorithms can effectively perform the initial screening of submitted manuscripts to identify those that meet specific editorial criteria. This includes checking adherence to journal guidelines, formatting standards, and basic scientific rigour (Sullivan et al.,2021). An automated system can filter out submissions that do not align with the journal's scope or quality expectations.

Plagiarism Detection: Advanced plagiarism detection software uses AI techniques to compare manuscripts against vast databases of published content. Tools such as Turnitin or iThenticate utilize machine learning to identify similarities in text and help editors make informed decisions about potential ethical violations before sending documents out for peer review (Bohannon, 2013).

Review Marching: AI can enhance the reviewer selection process by analyzing reviewer profiles based on past publications and areas of expertise using natural language processing (NLP). This allows journals to match manuscripts with the most suitable reviewers efficiently, reducing conflict of interest while improving the likelihood of receiving high-quality reviews (Kumar et al., 2021).

Bias Detection: while applying AI technologies is beneficial for improving efficiency in manuscript selection processes; it also raises concerns regarding bias inherent within algorithms used for screening and matching tasks if not properly managed. Developing transparent systems helps mitigate biases related both directly/ indirectly affecting marginalized groups within the academia (Gonzalez, 2021). By analyzing reviewer comments and decisions, the AI system identifies patterns of bias, ensuring a fairer evaluation of manuscripts.

Language editing: AI-assisted tools can help improve grammar, syntax, and clarity, enhancing the overall quality of submissions. AI systems can detect grammatical mistakes, propose enhancements, and optimize the writing process, reducing time consumption for educators and students (Akgun & Greenhow, 2022)

Enhanced collaboration: AI tools facilitate collaboration among publishing professionals by streamlining workflows (Baker et al., 2018). Cloud-based platforms allow writers to collaborate in real time with editors from anywhere in the world. These collaborative environments empower individuals by providing access to diverse perspectives while fostering creativity.

These roles among others demonstrate how AI is transforming the research publishing process, enhancing the efficiency, accuracy and overall quality of published research. As the technology continues to evolve, we can expect to see even more innovative applications of AI in research publishing in the years to come. However, while AI technologies have ushered in remarkable efficiencies and innovations in the area of publishing, they have also raised ethical, quality and privacy concerns.

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Challenges of AI in Publishing

While AI brings numerous advantages to academic publishing, its integration presents numerous challenges that can impact the integrity, accessibility, and overall quality of scholarly communication. As technology continues to advance stakeholders in the academic community must navigate these complexities to maintain the standards of research dissemination.

Ethical Implications

The use of AI in publishing presents several ethical implications that merit consideration some of these key issues include:

Authorship and Attribution: With AI-generated content becoming increasingly sophisticated, questions arise regarding authorship. If AI generate text, who holds the copyright? This ambiguity complicates traditional notions of intellectual property and can lead to disputes over attribution (Bainbridge, 2020). While AI can perform some tasks well, it often does not grasp nuances such as context, emotions, and cultural references in the same way that human writers do.

Displacement of Human Roles

There is this concern about job displacement for writers and editors who may find themselves competing with algorithms that can be faster and cheaper. The automation capabilities of advanced artificial intelligence raise concerns regarding workforce displacement as machines assume roles traditionally held by humans (Bessen et al., 2020). This brings worries about people losing their jobs. Additionally, as AI changes the way work is done, the skills needed for different jobs may also change. This could have significant effects on the economy and society as a whole, as workers may need to adapt to new roles or industries. (World Economy Forum, 2020).

Over Dependence on Technology

Over-dependence on technology in AI-assisted publishing can lead to diminished editorial quality and the proliferation of substandard content. A notable example is the startup Spines, which plans to publish up to 8,000 books annually using AI for editing, proofreading, formatting, design, and distribution. Critics argue that this approach prioritizes quantity over quality, potentially compromising the integrity of the publishing process which may reduce human oversight, risking the loss of nuanced judgment and contextual understanding. This could limit the diversity of voices in publishing, as the unique insights and creativity of human authors and creators must be preserved to ensure a rich and varied landscape, (Zhai, Wibowo & Li, 2024).

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Transparency

Transparency is a significant challenge in using AI in publishing, as it can be difficult to understand how AI algorithms make decisions and recommendations. This lack of transparency can lead to concerns about bias, accountability, and the potential for AI to perpetuate existing inequalities (Bostrom & Yudkowsky, 2014). Konvanis et al., 2017, are also of the view that lack of transparency in these systems can make it difficult to understand how they arrived at their recommendations, which can lead to concerns about bias and fairness.

Cost

The cost of using AI for publishing is a significant challenge. AI tools for editing, formatting, plagiarism detection, and content generation often require expensive subscriptions, advanced computing infrastructure, and continuous updates Okonkwo & Adeyemi (2024). Additionally, training staff to effectively use AI-driven publishing platforms adds to operational expenses. These high costs limit access to AI technology, especially for small publishing firms and independent authors in Nigeria.

Quality Control and Peer Review

One challenge is ensuring the quality and credibility of published work in an environment where AI tools are increasingly used for content generation. Automated systems can produce text that mimics scholarly writing but lacks rigorous validation (Koch & Hennig, 2021). This raises concerns about maintaining a robust peer review process when reviewers might be overwhelmed by an influx of AI-generated submissions. The use of AI content can impact the quality and reliability of published materials.

Impact factor

The impact factor has been criticized for not adequately capturing the quality of research, as it is based on journal-level citations and does not account for the significance of individual articles or the quality of the research process. MacRoberts & MacRoberts, 2010, are of the view that Citation networks can sometimes be biased or manipulated (e.g., citation cartels or self-citation practices), which may skew AI assessments if not properly accounted for. Citation rates can vary widely between disciplines, so AI tools must be careful to assess journals relative to other journals within the same field.

Conclusion

The way knowledge is created, verified, and shared has changed significantly with the introduction of AI into academic journals and research publishing starting from the early stages of research to improving the dissemination of research findings, and evaluating the impact of the research. While artificial intelligence (AI) has many advantages, such as increased efficiency, improved quality, and

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enhanced accessibility, it also has drawbacks, such as bias, ethical issues, and economic disparities among others. These issues call for careful governance and ethical consideration to guarantee moral and just result. Finding a balance between innovation and integrity will be crucial going forward to make sure AI enhances academic scholarship's reputation and calibre rather than detracts from it. The secret to successfully tackling these issues will be striking a balance between automation and human supervision and by addressing these obstacles, publishing industry participants can fully utilize AI while maintaining the caliber and integrity of academic writing.

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