

Artificial Intelligence and Education Integrity in Higher Education Sector: Disruption, Innovation, and Lessons for Educators

R Ncwadi

Professor, Nelson Mandela University, South Campus, Summerstrand, Gqeberha, South Africa

Abstract:

Higher education globally is undergoing a significant transformation, largely propelled by rapid advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI). This necessitates a fundamental re-evaluation of teaching, learning, and research, impacting educational goals, content delivery, and academic integrity. For South African institutions, integrating AI offers immense potential but requires careful management to mitigate ethical risks.

The increasing prevalence of AI tools is disrupting traditional pedagogies, assessment models, and educator roles, often outpacing educators' adaptability. This paper investigates AI and educational technology use in South African higher education, assessing its implications for academic integrity and proposing innovative strategies for teaching, learning, and research. Applying Schumpeter's theory of creative destruction, the study argues that these disruptions can catalyse institutional renewal, fostering more agile, inclusive, and student-cantered education systems.

Employing a qualitative methodology with secondary sources and comparative analysis, including lessons from BRICS countries, this paper identifies practical strategies for South Africa to leverage AI while upholding academic ethics. Key areas include enhancing digital literacy, addressing infrastructural limitations, bridging the digital divide, and equipping educators with AI competencies. The study offers proactive recommendations for policymakers, institutions, and educators to navigate this evolving landscape with integrity, innovation, and equity.

Keywords:

Artificial Intelligence, Higher Education, Academic Integrity, Creative Destruction, Technological Disruption, South Africa, Innovation in Teaching.