

HUMAN VALUES AND DIGNITY IN AN AI-ENHANCED EDUCATION

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Abstract

The 21st century is the age of rapid scientific and technological breakthrough. This rapid breakthrough (digitalism) manifests in every sector especially in education. Artificial intelligence (AI) enhanced education has to do with the use of AI to support and improve the standard of teaching and learning, without replacing the teachers. The integration of AI into the educational system is transforming teaching, learning, and decision-making. In other words, it has transformed the way knowledge is produced, distributed, and consumed. While AI-enhanced education offers opportunities for personalization, effectiveness, and efficiency, yet it also raises profound ethical concerns as regards human values and dignity. The interest of this paper is to examine how human values can be protected within the AI-mediated educational environments. It argues that education not only illuminates the mind, but also makes a deeply human endeavor grounded in relational, cultural, and moral dimensions. Drawing on ethical theory, and educational philosophy, the paper explains that While AI provides unprecedented access to information; it also raises concerns about knowledge fragmentation, misinformation, bias, the erosion of academic freedom and the risks of dehumanization, when AI systems are deployed without ethical oversight. The paper concludes by proposing the need for human-centered AI facility that prioritizes respect for human values and dignity, critical thinking, responsibility, transparency, and accountability involving educators and students.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, human values, ethics, dignity, education.

Introduction

The contemporary period is characterized by rapid scientific and technological breakthrough. This rapid breakthrough (digitalism) manifests in every sector especially in education. Hence, science and technology becomes the bedrock and backbone of national development. In his book, *Philosophy and African Experience, the Contributions of Kwasi Wiredu*, Olusegun Oladipo (1996:35) explains that science and technology are crucial factors in the realization of the goal of development in Africa. Artificial intelligence (AI) has to do with building machines that think and act like humans, while an AI-enhanced education entails the use of AI to support and improve the standard of teaching and learning, without replacing the roles of teachers. Besides, transmission of information, education has been a human activity, grounded in care, relationships, moral formation, empathy, and the recognition of each learner's inherent worth.

Education is a fundamental pillar of society, shaping the future of individuals and nations alike. In recent years, the landscape of education has been significantly transformed by the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and educational technology. This transformation, often referred to as AI-enhanced education, represents a promising avenue for improving the effectiveness and accessibility of learning experiences across diverse educational settings. When AI enters the educational space, it ought to operate in ways that respect and uphold the human value and dignity. At the same time, these technologies carry significant ethical risks that can weaken critical thinking and diminish the relational aspects of teaching. If left unexamined, AI systems may prioritize efficiency over empathy, optimization over understanding, and prediction over possibility.

This paper combines rigorous conceptual-philosophical analysis to produce ethically grounded and practically relevant guidance for preserving human values and dignity in AI-enhanced education.

This article argues that the integration of AI into education must be guided by a firm commitment to human values—respect for autonomy, fairness, transparency, accountability, and care. Rather than asking how far AI can go in replacing human functions, there must be a balance, so as to preserve the moral and relational foundations of learning. The future of education should not be a choice between technology and humanity, but a deliberate design in which technological innovation serves, rather than supplants, human dignity.

Ontology: Conceptualizing Human Values and Dignity

Any meaningful discussion of AI-enhanced education must begin with analysis and clarity about what is meant by *human values* and *human dignity*. These concepts are anthropocentric and foundational principles that shape how education and educational systems are designed, governed, understood and experienced. The concept dignity refers to the state of being worthy of honor or respect while human dignity refers to the intrinsic and inalienable worth of every person. It is not earned through performance, productivity, intelligence, or social status. Dignity in education requires that learners are treated with respect, fairly and seen as ends in themselves rather than as means to an end. When AI systems are introduced into classrooms, this principle becomes especially critical. Technologies ought to be evaluated not only by their efficiency or accuracy but also by how they affect students' sense of autonomy, privacy, self-worth, and belonging.

However, both dignity and value revolve around human, which is ontological. The core human values in education include: respect for autonomy (recognizing students' capacity to think, choose, and participate in decisions affecting their learning), equity and justice (ensuring that educational opportunities are fair and inclusive, particularly for historically marginalized groups), care and empathy (affirming the relational nature of learning and the

importance of emotional as well as intellectual development), Integrity and honesty (fostering truthfulness, transparency, and accountability in both teaching and technological systems), responsibility and agency (empowering learners to act ethically and critically within a technologically mediated world). These values underscore that education is not solely about knowledge acquisition but about the formation of character, judgment, and citizenship.

Literature Review

In his work, “Research Paper on Artificial Intelligence and Its Applications” Neha Saini (2023:356) explains that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the branch of computer science which deals with intelligence of machines where an intelligent agent is a system that takes actions which maximize its chances of success. It is the study of ideas which enable computers to do the things that make people seem intelligent. The central principles of AI include such as reasoning, knowledge, planning, learning, communication, perception and the ability to move and manipulate objects. Artificial Intelligence has various applications in today's society. AI is making our daily life more comfortable and fast. The ultimate goal of institutions and scientists working on AI is to solve majority of the problems or to achieve the tasks which we humans directly cannot accomplish. It is for sure that development in this field of computer science will change the complete scenario of the world.

In a paper, titled, “Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technologies in Nigeria and Ethical Considerations: Why it matters” Keyi, Adachukwu.P., et al (2025:6) explain that the main principle of AI is in allowing computers to learn, reason, make decisions and mimic human cognitive abilities. From voice assistants, self-driving cars, legal processes medical diagnostics, image recognition to recommendation algorithms, the AI technologies are integrated into daily lives and activities.

The AI also raises serious concerns, including but not limited to job displacement, data privacy, and potential for misuse. The responsible development and deployment of AI is important, and requires careful consideration of the impact on individuals and the society at large. Thus, the use of AI technologies requires robust ethical guidelines, and regulations.

Similarly, in a paper titled, “Ethical Considerations and Applications of AI-Generated Content in Communication and Media Studies in Nigeria” Anthony Ogbonna Uche et al (2025:48) explain that Artificial intelligence (AI) and automated technologies have made great inroads into tertiary education across the globe including Nigeria. Communication and Media Studies is one of the areas where the impact is already being felt as students rely on automated technologies to generate content for their class assignments and projects. With the unbundling of Mass Communication into several departments across university and polytechnic systems in Nigeria, raising ethically minded individuals and professionals

across the different dimensions of communication and media studies has been placed in the front burner. Therefore, there should be a paradigm shift in media literacy to include developing technical skills and technologically innovative tools for the detection of AI-generated content.

Principle of Intelligibility and Artificial Intelligence

In philosophy, the laws of thought are fundamental principles in metaphysics and logic that govern rational thinking and the nature of being. They are traditionally associated with Aristotle, who articulated them as the basic rules any coherent reality and reasoning must obey. Hence, they are also called the first principles of being. The principle of intelligibility is one of the laws of thought that states that, insofar as something exists, it is intelligible (grasp by the intellect). Reality/being is therefore knowable, meaningful, and capable of being understood by the human mind/intellect. Hence, whatever is, has a structure, order, or reason.

The human being, besides being a rational being (*Homo sapiens*), is also seen as a creative being (*Homo Artifex*). The human person is a rational being, with intellect and with thinking, they create. U.P Uwaezuoke (2012:204-7) explains this creative nature of humans, in line with the creation story of Genesis:

Man is a rational being, who possess intellect...Man is a rational animal, with the ability to examine, reflect, reason and form mental abstraction. Like the biblical account, where God called the trinity together to make man in his own image... come let us make machines in our own image and after our likeness. Let us give it power (intellect) to complement and replenish us.

Humans therefore have the ability to think creatively. According to J.P Guilford (1963:557): everyone is creative to some degree; we have only to realize that all genuine problem-solving involves creative events at some points and that problem solving is an activity shared by all. M. Aslan (2007:35) adds that:

There are three dimensions of creative thinking; synthesizing, articulation and imagination. Synthesizing includes various activities such as getting benefit from analogous thinking, deducing original result from small parts, presenting novel and authentic suggestions to the solution of the problem. Articulation involves forming the old and new knowledge or expanding the current knowledge with the help of the new one, constructing unusual relationship to produce authentic solutions and making thoughts concrete with the help of imagination and use of the materials. Imagination consists of constructing relationship between valid and reliable thoughts, presenting flexible ways of thought with the help of imagination, to

come up with different insights during idea producing process.

Science which is a human activity and technology is an attempt to control the world to aid human happiness and environment. In this digital age, humans intelligently created computers for easy cognitive tasks, as such Artificial intelligence becomes the product of human intelligence. According to S.A. Ekanem (2012: 173):

It is an established fact that every product of technology and technology itself is a product of human cognitive prowess and creativity. Technology is a product of human cognitive and creative talent. There would never have been technology and even science without human cognitive ability to create through the process thinking...this is the seed and origin of all human development effort.

U.P Uwaezuoke (2012:204) adds more:

Man makes the computer and gives it power (intelligence) to do most tasks that men are capable (and also incapable of). Artificial intelligence is the case where man has made the computer machine to act like him in some respect...

Similarly, artificial intelligence is seen as a sort of intelligence that emanates from computers, that are capable of performing intelligent actions, like that of human beings. According to M. Ghosh and A. Thirugnanam (2021:34):

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the branch of computer science, which makes the computers to mimic the human behavior and to assist humans for better performance in the field of science and technology. Replicating human intelligence, solving knowledge-intensive tasks, building machines, which can perform tasks, that require human intelligence, creating some system which can learn by itself are the few specific goals of AI.

Machines are given skills to behave or act like intelligent human beings. John Nwanegbu-Ben (2010: 160) explains the implication of the above assertion:

By the understanding of these descriptions, it is an attempt by man to duplicate himself, outside the confines of natural or biological procreation... to assist in solving existential problems.

Human beings therefore made these devices to aid/facilitate human activities. In the words of Chukwuokolo, J.C (2010:168), science and technology have tremendously emancipated man and assuaged his most pressing material needs and desires.

The Idea of Artificial Intelligence-enhanced Education

AI-enhanced education refers to the deliberate integration of artificial intelligent technologies into the educational system. These include teaching, learning, and educational administration in ways that support and enrich human development. It therefore involves embedding intelligent systems into educational processes to personalize learning, as well as informing decision-making, and expands access, while maintaining human guidance. However, AI-enhanced education seeks to augment as well as assist humans, which implies that it does not, in any way replace, the roles of teachers and learners. Artificial intelligence systems can do data analysis, recognize patterns, and generate adaptive responses at a scale beyond human capacity.

One of the defining features of AI-enhanced education is personalization. Traditional classroom models, most times, struggle to accommodate new techniques and diverse learning speeds, styles, and needs. AI-enhanced systems tailor instructional pathways to individual students, identifying the students' strengths, weaknesses, diagnosing gaps, and recommending targeted resources. For learners with disabilities or language barriers, AI-powered assistive technologies such as speech recognition, text-to-speech, and translation tools can significantly improve accessibility and participation. However, understanding AI-enhanced education also requires acknowledging its complexity. AI systems operate through algorithms trained on data bases/sets, which may reflect societal biases. Their outputs are shaped by design choices, institutional priorities, and commercial interests.

Importantly, AI-enhanced education should be distinguished from fully automated or technology-dominated learning environments. The enhancement model presupposes the continued centrality of human educators. Teachers remain interpreters of context, facilitators of dialogue, mentors of character, and moral guides—roles that AI cannot replicate. The most effective AI-enhanced systems are those that function as collaborative tools within a human-centered educational framework. Understanding AI-enhanced education means seeing it as a socio-technical ecosystem: a dynamic interaction between technology, pedagogy, policy, culture, and human values. When thoughtfully implemented, AI can expand opportunities, increase efficiency, and support diverse learners.

Ethical Challenges of AI-enhanced Education to Human Value and Dignity

It is a truism that AI-enhanced education offers significant opportunities for efficiency, innovation and inclusion. Even with its significance, it also possesses some ethical challenges. In others words, it is like a two-edged sword, that both help and harm human dignity and value. When AI- enhanced education is poorly governed, it can deepen inequities and erode essential human elements of education. The challenge, therefore, is not whether AI will shape education, but how it will be shaped by educational ideals and ethical responsibility. When it comes to technological efficiency, the question of the preservation of human dignity arises; the inherent worth, autonomy, and moral agency of every learner. If uncritically adopted, AI systems risk reshaping education in ways that diminish rather than elevate the human person. The following ethical risks deserve careful attention.

Human dignity requires that students be treated as humans, more than data points. AI-Systems deal with data and data collection, as such, use of predictive labels, especially those identifying “at-risk” students, can inadvertently stigmatize individuals and limit expectations about their future.

Plagiarism is another ethical issue. AI models can produce content that closely resembles existing work, leading to both intentional and unintentional plagiarism and false citations as regards authorship. According to J. Zhang et al (2025:5):

Students might use AI to generate entire essays or assist with outlining and editing, then submit the work as their own. Traditional plagiarism detectors, which match text against existing sources, often fail to identify AI-generated content. Authorship poses a complex challenge. Determining whether the work belongs to the student, the AI developers, or the creators of the training data is difficult, especially when AI generated content is heavily edited by the user.

AI systems are trained on data sets that can reflect as well as enable existing bias and social inequalities. If these biases are embedded within algorithms, they may reproduce or even amplify disparities based on race, gender, socio-economic status, language, or disability and otherwise, hence resulting in unjust and discriminatory outcomes. **According to** Kartikkumar Pandya (2025:3) AI systems can perpetuate existing biases present in their training data, potentially reinforcing stereotypes and discrimination in educational contexts. J.Zhang et al (2025:6) adds:

Another concern is equity. Since these systems are trained on large datasets, they can inherit and amplify the biases present in the data. Although developers can attempt to reduce bias by curating training data and modifying outputs, such measures are never completely effective. In educational settings, this risk means that students might unknowingly receive biased information, reinforcing existing prejudices.

These biased systems therefore influence grading, decisions, disciplinary actions, or access to advanced learning opportunities. Hence, such outcomes threaten the principle of equality and fairness that undergirds human dignity. When algorithmic decisions systematically disadvantage certain groups, technology becomes a mechanism of exclusion rather than empowerment.

Dignity involves the right to privacy and the freedom to learn without intrusive observation. Many AI-powered educational platforms collect extensive personal data, including behavioral patterns, biometric information, and online activity. Learning analytics systems may monitor students' time spent on tasks, keystrokes, facial expressions, or engagement levels. Constant surveillance can undermine students' sense of autonomy, independence and trust. The awareness of being continuously monitored may create anxiety and self-censorship, restricting intellectual exploration.

Additionally, education as a social activity is fundamentally relational. The teacher–student relationship fosters mentorship, empathy, moral formation, and social development. When AI tools replace rather than assist educators, through automated tutoring, grading, or feedback, there is a risk of weakening these human connections and relationships.

Generative AI systems that produce essays, solve problems, or generate ideas can be powerful learning aids. However, so much reliance on these systems can enhance laziness, reduce students engagement in deep thinking, creativity, and intellectual struggle, which are essential factors to genuine learning. In the words of K.Pandya (2025:3); the ease of generating human-like text with AI tools may facilitate cheating and plagiarism among students, undermining academic integrity

Efficacy is also critical. Due to their unsupervised training, generative AI systems sometimes produce inaccurate or “hallucinated” information. While creative fiction can tolerate such inaccuracies, factual errors pose a significant problem when the AI is used for research or academic assistance. Developers struggle to eliminate these errors without restricting the system's flexibility. Detection tools, such as watermarking or specialized software, have been developed to identify AI-generated content.

Many AI educational technologies are developed and operated by private corporations. This raises concerns about profit motives influencing educational priorities. Student data may be commodified, and institutional decisions may be shaped by market interests rather than pedagogical values. When economic incentives overshadow ethical considerations, students risk being treated as customers or data assets instead of persons with inherent worth. AI systems often operate as “black boxes,” making decisions through complex algorithms that are difficult to interpret. When students or educators cannot understand how outcomes are generated, accountability becomes blurred. Human dignity demands transparency and the right to contest decisions that affect one's educational opportunities.

Justification: Why AI-Enhanced Education Matters

Integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into the system educational remains a transformation in the pedagogical practices, in that it plays a vital role in improving how educational

resources are created, managed and used. Hence, the importance of AI-enhanced education cannot be neglected in the digital/contemporary age. AI-enhanced education promotes efficiency, effectiveness and innovation. The traditional approach to education, a times, fails to address the different students' needs, learning styles, and students. AI-powered systems have the potential to adapt to each student's unique abilities, preferences, and progress, thereby improving the outcome of learning. According to K. Pandya (2025:2):

AI-enhanced education boosts accessibility and efficiency in academic writing. Students could find these tools helpful for sparking creativity and generally being more productive when tackling tasks like drafting, brainstorming, or even sifting through literature. Technology might also help level the playing field for non-native English speakers, giving them a bit of extra support.

AI systems can offer timely and personalized feedback to students. Educational activities are relational and Student engagement is a critical factor in effective learning. AI technologies therefore provide interactive, immersive, and personalized experiences that capture students' attention, sustain their interest, and foster intrinsic motivation to learn. When this is done, it promotes continuous improvement and learning. However, AI-driven educational tools offer accessible and more accommodating features, for all students, including those with special needs, thereby making education more inclusive. K. Pandya (2025:2) agrees: AI can provide support for students with disabilities, offering alternative formats and adaptive learning resources.

AI-enhanced education can also be time saving, in the sense that the AI tools can assist educators in developing course materials and assessments more efficiently. In other words, AI can assist educators in identifying and addressing learning gaps early, reducing disparities in educational achievement and development, saving time and resources. In terms of efficiency and scalability, assessment, grading, and feedback processes can significantly reduce the administrative burden on educators, allowing them to focus more on teaching and mentoring. In his book, *Artificial Intelligence and Humanism*, O.M Obie (2002:23) explains:

Artificial Intelligence is one of the major human breakthroughs in the twenty first century. This art has come to stay and not only for scientists but also for educators. It has made education and administration less burdensome, but easy and more interesting for workers in various institutions.

AI therefore enables the scalability of educational resources, making quality education more accessible to a global audience. AI-enhanced education helps in preparing for the future. As the world increasingly relies on science, technology and automation, equipping students with digital literacy and adaptability is crucial. AI-enhanced education therefore helps students develop the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving digital landscape for the future.

Evaluation

The integration of Artificial Intelligence into education and educational system present both opportunities and ethical concerns regarding human values and dignity. No doubt, AI-enhanced education transforms learning through personalized instruction, automated assessment, intelligent tutoring systems, and improved accessibility. One of the major strengths of AI in education lies in its capacity to support individualized learning. By analyzing the students' learning patterns, AI systems tailor educational content to suit individual abilities, thereby improving comprehension and academic performance. In contexts where teacher shortages and limited educational resources exist, particularly in developing societies, AI technologies help to bridge educational inequalities and promote broader access to knowledge.

However, the ethical challenges of AI-enhanced education do not imply that AI should be wholly rejected. Rather, there is the need for regulation, thoughtful governance, human oversight, and value-centered design. Excessive dependence on AI risks reducing education to a mechanistic process that prioritizes data, performance metrics, and efficiency over the holistic development of the human person. Artificial intelligence was invented by humans, to aid humans and not to destroy human dignity/value. To preserve human and human dignity in AI-enhanced education, technological innovation must remain subordinate to ethical regulation and responsibility. Education is fundamentally a moral and social institution aimed at transmitting information/knowledge and cultivating empathy, critical reasoning, creativity, responsibility, and communal values. When AI systems dominate instructional processes without sufficient human oversight, the relational dimension of teaching and learning may be weakened.

Another critical concern relates to human dignity. Students are not simply data points or algorithmic profiles; they are persons with emotional, cultural, intellectual, and moral worth. AI systems that collect extensive personal data may threaten privacy, autonomy, and freedom if improperly regulated. Algorithmic bias may also reinforce discrimination, inequality, or exclusion, particularly against marginalized/vulnerable groups. Ethically, the proper use of AI in education should be guided by human-centered values such as justice, responsibility, compassion, transparency, inclusivity, and respect for persons. AI should function as a supportive tool rather than a replacement for human educators. Teachers remain indispensable because they embody moral guidance, emotional understanding, mentorship, and interpersonal connection that machines cannot fully replicate.

Education therefore, must continue to affirm students not as programmable entities, but as moral agents, creative thinkers, and persons deserving of respect, privacy, fairness, and meaningful human connection.

Conclusion

Human values and dignity must remain central in the ongoing transformation of education through Artificial Intelligence. While AI offers enormous potential to improve education/learning outcomes, accessibility, and educational innovation, its application must be guided by ethical reflection and human-centered principles. Technology should serve humanity rather than diminish the worth, autonomy, and relational nature of human beings. An ethically responsible AI-enhanced educational system ought to create a balanced technological efficiency with compassion, justice, inclusivity, and respect for human value and dignity.

Policymakers, government, educators, administrators, and institutions therefore share the responsibility of developing frameworks that protect learners' rights, prevent exploitation, bullying and ensure equitable access to educational opportunities. The future of education should not be defined solely by intelligent machines but by the preservation and promotion of the human value and dignity. AI can enrich education, but it does not mean that it should replace the moral wisdom, empathy, and human interaction that form the foundation of authentic learning and human development.

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