

AI, ART, AND CREATIVITY: EXPLORING THE EVOLUTION OF ART AND ARTISTIC SKILLS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming artistic expression and redefining the creative process in Nigeria. This paper explores the evolving relationship between AI, creativity, and artistic skills, examining how AI-powered tools are influencing artistic techniques, production, and distribution. While AI offers new possibilities for Nigerian artists, enhancing efficiency, expanding creative boundaries, and democratizing access to artistic tools, it also raises concerns about originality, cultural preservation, and

the role of human intuition in art. This study traces the historical evolution of artistic skills in Nigeria, assessing the impact of AI on both traditional and contemporary art forms. It also considers the ethical and economic implications of AI-generated art, particularly in a rapidly digitalising world. The paper argues that rather than replacing human creativity, AI serves as a tool that can augment artistic skills, fostering innovation while maintaining the unique cultural identity of Nigerian art. Ultimately, this exploration provides insights into how Nigerian artists can navigate the intersection of technology and creativity, leveraging AI while preserving artistic authenticity. Findings from the paper show that AI-generated art raises questions about the authenticity and originality of creative works, particularly in a culturally rich nation like Nigeria, where artistic expression is deeply personal and connected to identity. The paper recommends that Develop guidelines and ethical standards that address issues surrounding AI-generated art, such as authorship, originality, and cultural sensitivity. It is important that AI tools are used in a way that enhances human creativity without overshadowing it. Also, government agencies, NGOs, and private entities should create and support platforms for Nigerian artists to showcase and sell their AI-hu artworks, as well as collaborate on global digital art exhibitions, ensuring that Nigerian art gains wider recognition.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, Creativity, Art, Artistic Skills

Introduction

Creativity is as old as man. Man has existed as a creative being since inception by using surrounding items to express his natural creative tendencies. Traditionally, humans view creativity as their exclusive domain, which results from combining imagination with emotional intelligence as well as cultural impacts (Boden, 2018). The emergence of artificial intelligence during the technological evolution transformed creative practices in deep ways while changing the limits of how creative expressions can be achieved. AI technology now produces art such as paintings and musical compositions, and digital designs to show that creativity now happens through both human operators and machine operation (McCormack et al., 2019). The ability of AI to produce art such as paintings and music, as well as literature and other creative forms, led to significant examinations about artistic genesis and skill and originality concepts (Manovich 2020). Several people see AI as a creative partner that enhances artistic human potential, yet others express concern about its effects on artistic work performed by people, along with its impact on creative industry jobs. This paper examines the use of artificial intelligence in artwork

evolution throughout Africa and the world by analyzing both its benefits and challenges.

The Evolution of Creative Art

Historically, artistic skills and creativity have been rooted deeply in manual skill, cultural narrative, and personal expression. From prehistoric cave painting to Renaissance masterpieces, the development of creative artistic skill has followed an evolutionary trend marked by technical refinement and cultural adaptation (Gombrich, 1996). In Africa, for instance, indigenous artistic traditions such as the Igbo-Ukwu pot, Ife bronze, Benin bead, and Adire textile-making embody a legacy of craftsmanship and innovation (Egonwa, 2012).

AI and the Evolution of Artistic Creation

The advent of AI in the creative arts and the world at large has led to the emergence of computational creativity, where algorithms analyse artistic patterns, generate novel compositions, and facilitate hybridised artistic forms (Elgammal et al., 2017). Tools such as Generative Adversarial Networks (GANS), neural networks, and deep learning models enable artists to expand the creative horizons beyond traditional methodologies (McCormack et al., 2019). For instance, Nigeria and many other African countries, notable for traditional art practice, digital artists and designers are increasingly leveraging AI

technologies to reinterpret cultural motifs and create Afro-futuristic visual narratives.

AI-Driven Creativity: Opportunities and Challenges **Opportunities:**

1. Enhances Artistic Innovation: The evolution of art and new artistic originality has resulted in unquestionable advancements that can be widely observed today. Artistic creativity experiences revolutionary changes because AI enables artists to access completely new avenues for innovation, along with experimental approaches. GANs and Neural Networks operating under AI technology enable artists to discover new aesthetic styles and transform digital media, besides developing distinct creative techniques (Elgammal et al., 2017). Large datasets enable AI to generate creative patterns and design elements in addition to color compositions, which would be outside standard human artistic considerations. The creative characteristics of surreal and abstract imagery from AI programs Deep Dream and DAL-E redefine human notions of artistic creativity (McCormack et al., 2019). Artists and designers can use artificial intelligence technologies to develop fresh perspectives on indigenous designs through the integration of futurist components with cultural foundations. Creatives can use this capability to combine traditional African art forms with contemporary digital aesthetics, which creates pieces that link traditions to future perspectives. AI-driven

creative solutions enable people in the arts community to work jointly with machine intelligence. The interactive software Runway ML gives artists the ability to submit their concepts into a system that extends or transforms them through AI development while creating unique joint artistic creations. Artists can now advance their methods by collaborating with computational creativity because breakthroughs in this field lead them to adopt new tools.

2. Democratization of Art: Through AI technology, the creation of art became available to casual art consumers who lack formal artistic education. The practice of traditional arts demands multiple years for learning complex technical abilities. Art creation simplifies through AI-based tools, including Google's Auto Draw and Adobe's Sensei, since these platforms present easy-to-use interfaces and smart suggestion features that assist beginners in making visually beautiful works without hard work (Hertzmann, 2018). Art democratization serves Nigeria well because formal art education and resources are scarce, particularly in rural locations. The AI-driven artistic software allows new artists, as well as students and enthusiasts, to create art independently from expensive resources or technical requirements. The mobile apps Prisma and DeepArt apply AI technology to convert photos into artwork styles of renowned artists, which lets users practice art without paying any fees. The art world receives challenges from AI-generated art since artificial intelligence

creates opportunities for multiple artistic voices to share their work. Many talented artists in the past found it challenging to receive recognition because their work lacked proper exposure. Machine learning platforms on the internet collect user behavior data, which leads to displaying undiscovered artists to worldwide audiences. Online exposure creates new pathways for Nigerian artists to contact international markets while overcoming established boundaries that previously restricted artistic prospects.

3. Cultural Preservation and Reinvention: AI offers the world of creativity a fantastic new opportunity through its capabilities.

AI technology serves as a potent instrument to both save and revitalize African cultural heritage items. Traditional African art faces danger from multiple causes, including environmental changes, urban growth, and cultural knowledge transmission breakdown (Buolamwini & Gebru, 2018). Computer-based documentation, along with automated restoration techniques, will protect Nigerian art heritage so that generations ahead can access it. The technology of artificial intelligence restores deteriorating artworks and sculptures by using data from history to complete missing information. Global museums have proved that AI restoration procedures can accomplish precise restoration of ancient artworks. The nation of Nigeria can use AI technology to digitally restore outdated Adire textile

patterns alongside damaged Nok terracotta pieces. Through AI technology, Moreoso achieves cultural transformation by giving new interpretations to traditional artwork that appear in modern digital platforms. Artificial Intelligence produces animations as well as augmented reality programs that recreate old Nigerian cultural artifacts so audiences may engage with heritage in three-dimensional immersive spaces. The implementation of AI-driven virtual museums enables people worldwide to access 3D digital presentations of Nigerian artworks. The language as well as storytelling preservation becomes possible through AI technologies. The Uli painting of the Igbo and Yoruba Ifá divination symbols remain central to Nigerian artistic traditions because they originate from indigenous knowledge and oral traditions. NLP tools under AI management record stories, which translate them into different languages while analyzing them to make them available to generations in the future. In a nutshell, the integration of AI in the creative sector offers Nigerian artists and cultural institutions significant opportunities for innovation, accessibility, and preservation. The implementation of Artificial Intelligence changes how Nigerian art is envisioned and accessed while it protects cultural artifacts, leading to a transformation of art production and distribution, and reception modes. The opportunities AI offers to creative fields include ethical dilemmas, and bias issues, and authenticity questions. AI-driven creativity needs to be properly addressed to benefit

all stakeholders and preserve Nigerian artistic heritage.

Challenges

Despite its potential, AI-generated art faces several challenges that complicate its acceptance and ethical use.

1. **Authenticity and Artistic Ownership:** The major question of authorship in AI-generated art remains unresolved. Who holds the creative rights: the artist, the algorithm, or the developer?
2. **Bias in AI Algorithms:** Many AI models are trained on Western-centric datasets, leading to a lack of representation of African artistic styles.
3. **Ethical Considerations:** AI models are trained on existing datasets, which may contain biases related to race, gender, and cultural representation. This can result in AI-generated art that unintentionally perpetuates stereotypes or excludes certain artistic traditions (Buolamwini & Gebru, 2018). If AI training datasets predominantly feature Western art, for example, the resulting AI-generated works may fail to accurately reflect diverse cultural aesthetics.

Reconciling AI and Human Creativity

The chasm between AI and conventional artistic work needs a careful method that promotes teamwork between humans and AI. Artists should treat AI as an amplifying instrument that expands their skilled capabilities instead of fearing such technology. The application of Artificial Intelligence should extend human creative abilities by helping with artistic work

rather than taking over creative processes. Creativity flourishes in artistic workflows when artists incorporate artificial intelligence since it enables access to innovative possibilities without affecting their individual artistic identities (McCormack et al., 2019).

1. AI as a Creative Partner, Not a Replacement: AI functions as an artistic companion, not to replace human creative talent in the realms of arts and other disciplines. Several limitations in AI make it unable to match the emotional intensity and cultural understanding along with human life experiences, which drive human creative expression (Manovich, 2020). AI functions best as an artistic instrument that matches capabilities to support artists in their idea development and experimental and execution processes. AAI technology creates initial drawings and presents artistic combination options together with color selection possibilities that human artists could modify into finished workable art pieces. Runway ML, together with Dee-part, demonstrates that AI serves to enhance human creative decision-making instead of substituting artistic work. The process of AI suggests different variations to artists who then retain full decision-making control over their masterpiece by curating and rewriting their work using both artificial intelligence and personal intuition and intent (Elgammal et al., 2017).

2. **Augments Artistic Exploration:** AI lets artists reshape their creative process through innovative ways to handle artistic components. Artistic databases large enough to process enable machine learning analytics, which generate knowledge about artistic trends as they develop, their historical roots, and the creation of new art combinations. Computational creativity through AI enables artists to overcome conventional limitations by discovering innovative ways of expression that science has so far restricted their imagination (Boden, 2018). GANs with AI capabilities produce new artworks that merge digital designs with traditional African design elements. The combination of native Adire textile patterns together with Uli symbols and futuristic digital art results when Nigerian artists use AI-generated art as a creative approach. Artistic diversity increases through this type of artistic exploration by developing fresh cultural communication methods.

3. **Integrating AI Education in Art Institutions:** Complete exploitation of Artificial Intelligence in artistic production depends on implementing AI educational programs within Nigerian as well as African art institutions. Art institutions in Nigeria must integrate new technological platforms into their Traditional educational arts curriculum. Art education institutions should integrate AI training into their programs so they can teach artists effective AI practices (Colton et al., 2019). Students should

participate in practical learning activities that combine machine learning tool usage along with digital art tools and techniques for computational creative practice. Educational courses must include comprehensive discussions about the ethical issues that AI introduces to artistic creations, specifically regarding authorship disputes, as well as originality and cultural sensitivity matters. Identifying and supplying training to artists about AI resources enhances their ability to utilize technology constructively instead of perceiving AI as an interruption to their craft.

Recommendations

1. To address issues of authorship, there should be a clear legal framework and policy guidelines that define intellectual property rights in AI-generated art. Stakeholders, including artists, developers, and legal experts, should collaborate to establish shared ownership models or licensing agreements that ensure fair attribution and compensation.
2. Developers and researchers should prioritize the inclusion of diverse, multicultural datasets during the training of AI art models. There is a need to actively incorporate African and other underrepresented art forms to foster inclusive and representative AI creativity. Additionally, local institutions and artists should be involved in curating culturally rich datasets.
3. Ethical oversight bodies should be established to monitor and evaluate the datasets used for training

AI models. Transparency should be enforced regarding the sources of training data, and there should be mechanisms for artists and content creators to opt in or out of data use. Moreover, developers should apply fairness and bias-detection tools to minimize the reinforcement of stereotypes in AI-generated outputs.

Conclusion

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is undeniably reshaping the boundaries of artistic creation in Nigeria, providing unprecedented opportunities while also posing complex challenges. As explored in this paper, AI-driven tools enhance artistic innovation, democratize access to creative expression, and support the preservation and reinvention of cultural heritage. These technologies offer Nigerian artists new frontiers to explore hybridized art forms that blend tradition with digital innovation. However, the transformative potential of AI is not without its concerns. Issues such as authenticity and artistic ownership, bias in AI algorithms, and ethical considerations present serious implications for the future of Nigerian art. These challenges call for deliberate policy actions, inclusive data practices, and ethical safeguards to ensure that AI contributes positively without marginalizing cultural identities. To reconcile the strengths of AI with the essence of human creativity, the paper recommends treating AI as a creative partner rather than a replacement.

Further, the integration of AI education in art institutions is crucial to equip the next generation of artists with the skills to navigate this evolving landscape. By implementing clear legal frameworks, culturally representative datasets, and ethical oversight, Nigeria can harness AI to foster a dynamic and inclusive creative sector. Ultimately, a balanced and informed adoption of AI in art promises to amplify human imagination, preserve cultural legacy, and position Nigerian artists at the forefront of global digital innovation.

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