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A.I. and Adult Education – Adoption or Rejection?

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ABSTRACT

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in adult education has sparked significant interest, offering the potential to revolutionize how adult learners access and engage with education. AI can provide personalized learning experiences, adapt to individual learning styles, and offer flexible, scalable solutions tailored to the unique needs of adult learners, who often juggle various responsibilities. These benefits suggest AI could enhance engagement and retention, making lifelong learning more accessible.

However, the adoption of AI in adult education is met with both optimism and hesitation. A primary concern is technological literacy. Many adult learners, particularly older or digitally disadvantaged groups, may struggle with AI-driven platforms, creating a digital divide. There is also a fear of job displacement due to automation, particularly in vocational and career-focused education, where AI may be seen as a threat rather than a tool.

Educators also exhibit mixed feelings toward AI. While some embrace it as a tool to improve teaching efficiency, others fear it might replace human instructors, undermining the personal connections valued in adult education. Moreover, adult learning often involves emotional, social, and experiential dimensions that AI might fail to fully capture.

Nevertheless, AI advocates argue that these technologies should complement rather than replace human educators, automating administrative tasks, offering data-driven insights, and enhancing learning through personalized content. To successfully integrate AI, institutions must overcome barriers such as digital literacy and ensure AI supplements, rather than diminishes, human interaction.

In conclusion, the future of AI in adult education depends on addressing these challenges, balancing technological advancements with human expertise to create a more inclusive, flexible, and effective educational environment. AI holds significant promise but requires careful implementation to meet the diverse needs of adult learners.

Keywords: A.I; Adult Education; adoption; threat; learners