



## **BRIDGING THE GAP: ISLAMIC VIEWS ON AI INTEGRATION FOR NIGERIA'S SOCIETAL ISSUES**

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### **Abstract:**

Islam as a religion touches every aspect of man's life such that the past, present and future occurrences have been scripted in the Qur'an. Hence, the advancement in technology globally which has generated the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education, religion, economy, health, socio-cultural and a host of others can never be underestimated. AI has now become a veritable tool used in tackling any societal problems without stress. It is against this background that this paper examines the Islamic views on AI integration for addressing Nigeria's societal issues. In an attempt to do justice to this paper, secondary data were sourced from textbooks, journal articles, seminar papers, and newspapers, among others on the subject matter. The finding of this study shows that Islam supports the integration of AI as one of the technical methods for tackling education, religion and economic issues in Nigeria. The paper concludes that more awareness should be made of the significance and effective integration of AI in addressing the challenges facing the nations.

**Keywords:** *Islam, Integration, Artificial Intelligence, Societal Issues*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Islam is a religion that covers every aspect of human existence, such as the integration of modern technologies. Muslims strongly hold the notion that the essence of creation is to fully harness the potential natural and artificial resources on the surface of the earth for the betterment of humanity. Among these resources is the integration of Artificial intelligence (AI) to solve the various societal issues in Nigeria. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the process of making software think intelligently or computer-controlled robot works like the human mind which involves studying, analyzing and developing cognitive processes of the human brain to develop intelligent systems or software (Jahanzaib & Tarique, 2015).

Islam is a religion that is primarily built on the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW). Unarguably, the Glorious Qur'an emphasizes the need for acquisition, exploration and utilization of knowledge (Q.96:1-5). In addition, the a need for the diversification of the tools for acquiring knowledge, skills and values that would facilitate rapid growth and development of the society. Elmahjub (2022) noted that AI promotes human development. Islam gives room for legal innovations through the exploration of the various creatures of Allah. The significance of AI towards the Islamic da'wah can never be underestimated. AI has become one of the leading modern technological devices that have become a global phenomenon in effective and efficient Islamic evangelisation universally. The trend of AI globally has taken over the dissemination of the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet through animations, robots and machines. The need for AI in accessing and transmitting information on fiqh, Qur'anic exegesis, hadith, Qur'anic recitations, Sirah and others can be positively utilized to promote a knowledge-based and ideal Islamic society that is in line with the current digital technology globally.

It is pertinent to note that, the traditional method for seeking or asking for religious knowledge is now fading due to the easy access and integration of AI in solving

any ambiguous or unclear religious matters. However, Muhammad (2023) observed that the emergence of AI had posed a serious threat to the authority of religion due to its prone to false and manipulative information. The AI can be used to display or teach how to perform ablution, then proceed to observation of salat without any challenges and in a clear time. Similarly, the AI can be made to recite the Qur'an, perform hajj and do some religious activities that would aid the better understanding of the religion of Islam. AI can be used to power the deep understanding of religious teachings and practices (Fawaz, 2023).

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study examined the Islamic views on the role of Artificial Intelligence in solving Nigeria's societal issues. The study was a descriptive survey research. The researcher used secondary sources of data collection such as the internet, textbooks and other publishable articles from reputable journal outlets to do justice to this paper.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Artificial Intelligence and Nigerian Education**

The importance of education in every society can never be over-emphasized. The growth and development of every society lie in the educational system of that society. It is vital to note that the integration of modern technology in the educational sector is now taking a new dimension globally via the digitalization of the teaching and learning process using Artificial Intelligence. Thomas and Gambari (2021) stated that the establishment of the National Agency for Research in Robotics and Artificial Intelligence (NARRAI) marks the significance the Federal Government of Nigeria attached to the integration of AI in solving educational problems. Nigeria's educational system is facing several challenges which require technical measures to address to meet with the global 21st-century digital education. Moreover, Birabil and Ogeh (2020) identified the lack of dependable infrastructural facilities and amenities as one of the problems facing the educational system in Nigeria. In a similar vein, Okolo and Gregory (2021) also mentioned inadequate infrastructural facilities, insecurity and shortage of academic staff. Furthermore, Ogunode (2020) noted that insecurity is one of the major problems militating against the educational system in Nigeria.

In managing the educational system of Nigeria to meet international standards, there is a need for a total digital revolution through the use of robotics and machines that enhance effective and efficient teaching and learning processes. The pervasiveness of effective modern technological growth every moment can remedy the problems facing the educational system in Nigeria. Teaching and learning had gone beyond the teacher standing in the four walls of the classrooms but rather with improved technology. The problem of reliable instructional resources bedeviling the teaching and learning process can be curbed when the machines or robotics devices were effectively integrated to support the available instructional aids within and outside the classrooms. Also, if effectively managed, AI can help to solve the problems of infrastructural facilities, insecurity and shortage of academic and non-academic staff in most of the educational institutions in Nigeria.

Similarly, education can never thrive where there are security challenges to the lives and properties of the people. The standardization of the educational system of any nation lies in her effort to guarantee adequate security for its citizenry. Nigeria as one of the largest populated countries in Africa is seriously facing the problem of kidnapping, bandits, unrest and a host of other security challenges which has caused a major setback to the growth and development of Nigeria's educational system. However, Fawaz (2023) observed that the emergence of AI and other technologies had a tremendous impact on students via video conferencing thereby improving the learning quality. He added that the use of AI develops innovative tools and technologies that would enhance easy transformation from conventional traditional methods of teaching and learning. AI can be used to tackle various educational problems in Nigerian schools such as personalized learning data, data analysis, virtual classrooms and assessment. The integration of AI

can assist the teacher in the computation of results, detecting bombs or ammunition and improving the thinking skills of both the teachers and the learners.

### **Artificial Intelligence and Religion in Nigerian**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is intelligence created in the form of machines that are set to perform certain specific tasks (Robinson, 2018). This implies that AI can be used to carry out some religious rites and duties effectively. The pace at which the world is moving towards replacing the use of man with AI robots can never be underestimated. Indeed, most of the religious issues can be addressed using AI at the lowest cost. Moreover, the main motive of AI is to provide a machine that would think and act intelligently like humans. Robots can be used to solve some problems confronting people as a result of religion. The issue of bandits, herdsmen, Boko Haram, religious militants and host others that are incessantly attacking the people all in the name of religion can be fought using AI machines, drones and robots. Thousands of lives and properties can be saved if AI is effectively utilized. Detective machines and robots can be used to defuse bombs and censor the militants from within and far before they unleash their terrorist acts on the worshippers at the Mosques or Churches in Nigeria.

Robots may be used to perform various religious functions such as preaching and counselling when it is properly programmed for such tasks. This would reduce the stress of plying long distances, and save time and human lives. Religious activities such as daily worship, rituals and other religious rites may be effectively discharged using robots in place of humans. For instance, the teaching on how to worship God, fasting, holy pilgrimage and peaceful co-existence among the adherents of faiths may be taught or delivered using robots. Also, the insecurity challenges facing the country, particularly religious centres, constant attacks on various houses of worship, kidnapping of people during worship and killings of clergymen and members may be curbed using appropriate intelligence machines that can detonate bombs, track and neutralize the weapons of the militants.

### **Artificial Intelligence and the Economy in Nigerian**

The significance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to every sector can never be over-emphasized. AI is now being used in agriculture, engineering, medicine, politics, sports and the economy. Nigeria being one of the largest leading economies in Africa can never be left out in the effective integration of AI towards economic growth and development. The utilization of AI in the banking sector, offices, supermarkets, restaurants and other commercial activities would facilitate speedy economic growth and development. Similarly, productivity and accountability would be high. The benefit attached to the integration of AI into Nigeria's Economy is enormous such that public and private partnerships are essential for AI to thrive in Nigeria.

Ifejesu (2021) stated that Nigeria is one of the countries that recorded a high level of poverty rate and that less than 40% of Nigerians live on less than \$1 per day. International Finance Corporation noted that AI is highly instrumental towards eradicating poverty and promotes global international investment networking. Furthermore, AI is never a pushover when it comes to addressing financial crises or misappropriations that can lead to a greater fall in the economic system of the country.

## **CONCLUSION**

The contribution of AI technologies towards tackling education, religious and economic issues in Nigeria can never be over-emphasized. Islam is a religion that emphasises knowledge and innovations that do not go against the Qur'an and Sunnah. The integration of AI to solve education, religion and economic issues in Nigeria is a welcome development which opens the door for the utilization of advanced technological tools in tackling the country's challenges using machines and robots. It is concluded that AI is one of the veritable tools that can be used to tackle education, religion and economic challenges in Nigeria. It is vital to point out that the Nigerian government needs to intensify their efforts in the integration of AI to solve education, religion and economic challenges ravaging the country.

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