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Exploring the Role of AI Managers at Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract

This study examines attitudes towards AI adoption in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to assess the need for dedicated AI Managers at HEIs by evaluating AI integration, the potential roles and responsibilities, and the perceived impact on educational quality.

The research employs a quantitative survey approach with responses from 387 participants (students, educators, and administrative staff) across HEIs from 11 countries. Data analysis involves descriptive statistics and regression analyses to evaluate respondents' attitudes towards AI implementation and governance.

Results indicate widespread positive attitudes toward integrating AI in teaching and administrative processes, although significant concerns remain about ethics, data privacy, and skill gaps. 71% of respondents from HEIs lacking a designated AI Manager role advocate for its creation, with expectations revolving around staff and student training, ethical oversight, and strategy development, highlighting perceived benefits to institutional AI readiness and enhanced study quality.

Findings underscore the need for structured AI governance within HEIs, recommending a formalised AI Manager role to bridge expertise gaps, mitigate ethical concerns, and enhance educational outcomes through strategic, responsible AI use.

This research uniquely combines empirical insights into AI adoption attitudes with practical recommendations for governance structures in HEIs, offering guidance for policymakers and educators regarding AI integration.

Keywords: AI management; artificial intelligence; higher education