

Chapter 2

The Role of AI in Virtual Counseling, Student Guidance, and Career Advising

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the evolving role of artificial intelligence (AI) in virtual counseling, student guidance, and career advising. It examines foundational AI technologies such as natural language processing, machine learning, and recommender systems, highlighting their applications in mental health support, personalized academic advising, and career planning. The chapter discusses the benefits of AI-driven tools, including scalability, personalization, and accessibility, while addressing challenges related to data privacy, algorithmic bias, transparency, and the need for human oversight. Future directions emphasize hybrid human-AI models, emotionally intelligent systems, culturally adaptive frameworks, and lifelong advising ecosystems. Ultimately, this chapter underscores the transformative potential of AI to enhance educational support through ethical, inclusive, and human-centered approaches, fostering improved student outcomes and well-being.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background: The Shift to Digital Education and Support Services

In the last ten years, the delivery of teaching, learning and student support services in schools has seen major changes everywhere. Rapidly advancing and widely used digital technologies have most importantly caused this transformation. Though digital education was already becoming popular, the COVID-19 pandemic caused the move to happen much faster than before. Because of the need for schools to be closed and everyone to keep a distance, educators and administrators quickly switched to online and hybrid methods to keep students learning. The move to digital has made changes to teaching as well as to the wider student support system. Over the years, students received academic advising, career counseling and mental health support mostly by seeing advisors in person. Yet, as we use digital tools more, these services are now often available online, taking over or adding to face-to-face meetings. Thanks to tele-counseling,

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