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Artificial Intelligence-enabled virtual assistants : a systematic review on redefining user engagement in libraries

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This literature review addressed the transformative impact of AI-enabled virtual assistants on user engagement within library settings. It aimed to investigate the role of AI in enhancing library services and user experiences, resources and expertise regardless of time and location. The study focused on AI technologies such as natural language processing and machine learning to be utilised to provide personalised, responsive, and efficient interactions with patrons. Key themes explored included the democratisation of access to information, improved user engagement, and the evolving role of librarians in the digital age. The problem this paper tackled lay in understanding how AI-enabled virtual assistants reshaped the landscape of library services and the implications for user engagement and librarian responsibilities. The main objective was to analyse the impact of AI on library services and user experiences and to provide insights into the potential benefits and challenges associated with their integration. The literature review utilised document analysis and a systematic review of publications to synthesise existing research on AI-enabled virtual assistants in library settings. It critically examined the implications of AI technologies for library practice, policy, and research, mainly focusing on operational efficiencies and strategic opportunities for libraries to meet the evolving needs of their communities. Ethical considerations surrounding the use of AI in libraries, such as privacy, equity, and user autonomy, were also discussed. The study's recommendations included prioritizing the responsible integration of AI into library services to enhance user experiences and operational efficiencies. Stakeholders in the library and information science community were urged to collaborate in developing ethical guidelines for the deployment of AI technologies in libraries. Libraries, policymakers, and researchers were encouraged to take action to ensure the responsible and ethical deployment of AI technologies, ultimately fostering a more inclusive, responsive, and dynamic environment for lifelong learning and discovery.

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