

جامعة يحيى فارس المدية

Université Yahia FARÈS Médéa

مخبر تعليمية اللغة والنصوص (م.ت.ل.ن)

Laboratoire de Didactique de la Langue et des Textes

المنصة الجزائرية للمجلات العلمية



Justice, Law, and Moral Responsibility in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Institutional Ethics and Educational Challenges in African and British Literary Narratives

Justice, droit et responsabilité morale à l'ère de l'intelligence artificielle : éthique institutionnelle et défis éducatifs dans les récits littéraires africains et britanniques

Diby KEITA

Email: keita.diby@yahoo.fr

Universite yambo Ouologuem de Bamako (Mali)

Revue Didactiques

ISSN 2253-0436

Dépôt Légal : 2460-2012

EISSN : 2600-7002

Volume 15 N° 01 Janvier - Juin 2026

Pour citer l'article :

Diby KEITA (2026) «Justice, Law, and Moral Responsibility in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Institutional Ethics and Educational Challenges in African and British Literary Narratives» *Didactiques* Vol. 15 N° 01, pp 123-136

<https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/PresentationRevue/300>

Justice, Law, and Moral Responsibility in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Institutional Ethics and Educational Challenges in African and British Literary Narratives

Diby KEITA

Email: keita.diby@yahoo.fr

Universite yambo Ouologuem de Bamako (Mali)

Phone: (+223) 65822252 / 70214616

(Received : 06/ 04/ 2026

Accepted : 15/ 06/ 2026

Published : 30 / 06/ 2026

Abstract

This article analyzes the intersections of justice, law, and moral responsibility in the age of artificial intelligence through a comparative study of African and British literary narratives, with a particular focus on institutional ethics in educational contexts. It addresses the emerging problem of how AI-driven technologies reshape traditional conceptions of fairness, accountability, and authority within learning institutions, especially in societies marked by historical inequalities and uneven technological access. Drawing on selected literary texts, the study demonstrates that both African and British narratives anticipate and critically reflect tensions between human ethical judgment and algorithmic governance, revealing risks of bias, exclusion, and epistemic injustice. The findings highlight that African literature tends to foreground communal ethics and contextual moral reasoning, while British narratives often interrogate procedural rationality and institutional control. The article concludes that literary perspectives provide valuable insights into the ethical limitations of AI in education and underscore the need for culturally responsive and human-centered frameworks to ensure equitable and just institutional practices.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, institutional ethics, justice, moral responsibility, education, comparative literature

Introduction

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence into educational systems has generated renewed debates on justice, law, and moral responsibility, particularly in relation to institutional ethics and equitable access to knowledge. This study examines how African and British literary narratives engage with these concerns by anticipating or reflecting ethical dilemmas linked to technological governance, algorithmic decision-making, and the transformation of pedagogical authority. Existing scholarship has explored institutional ethics and postcolonial justice (Bhabha, 1994; Fanon, 1961), as well as the sociocultural implications of education in African and British contexts, while recent studies in AI ethics in education emphasize issues of bias, accountability, and data governance. However, limited attention has been given to the role of literature as a critical site for interrogating these emerging challenges across different cultural traditions.

The main objective of this research is to analyze how literary texts from African and British traditions represent and critique the ethical implications of AI-mediated educational systems. Specifically, the study seeks to (1) examine the portrayal of justice and institutional authority in relation to technological change, (2) compare the ethical frameworks underlying African and British narrative responses, and (3) assess the extent to which literature contributes to rethinking moral responsibility in AI-driven educational environments.

The research is guided by the following questions: How do African and British literary narratives conceptualize justice and law in technologically mediated educational contexts? In what ways do these texts expose ethical tensions between human agency and

algorithmic governance? How do sociocultural contexts shape literary representations of institutional responsibility?

The study advances the hypothesis that African literary narratives emphasize communal ethics and contextual moral reasoning as counterpoints to the abstract rationality of AI systems, whereas British narratives tend to foreground institutional regulation and procedural accountability. It further hypothesizes that literature not only critiques the ethical limitations of AI in education but also proposes alternative, human-centered models of justice grounded in cultural specificity and moral engagement.

1. Method:

This study adopts a qualitative comparative methodology based on close textual analysis of selected African and British literary works, focusing on representations of justice, institutional ethics, and emerging technological paradigms in educational contexts. It mobilizes a multidisciplinary theoretical framework combining postcolonial theory, ethics of artificial intelligence, and law and literature approaches to interpret how narratives construct and critique moral responsibility and institutional authority. The analysis is conducted through thematic and interpretive methods, enabling the identification of convergences and divergences in ethical perspectives across cultural and literary traditions.

2. Results

The findings of this study reveal significant convergences and divergences in the ways African and British literary narratives engage with justice, institutional ethics, and moral responsibility in the context of artificial intelligence mediated educational systems.

2.1. Justice and Institutional Authority in the Context of Technological Change

The relationship between justice and institutional authority undergoes significant transformation in contexts shaped by technological change, particularly with the growing influence of artificial intelligence in educational systems. Literary narratives from African and British traditions offer critical insights into how authority is constructed, contested, and legitimized in such evolving environments. In *Arrow of God* by Chinua Achebe, the tension between indigenous authority and colonial administration illustrates the fragility of imposed institutional systems, while *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens portrays an education system governed by rigid rationalism and utilitarian principles. These texts, though historically situated, resonate with contemporary concerns about technologically mediated authority, where algorithmic systems risk replicating forms of exclusion and epistemic control.

The reconfiguration of institutional authority through technological mechanisms reflects enduring ethical tensions between formal systems of control and lived experiences of justice. In *Arrow of God*, the erosion of traditional structures under colonial pressure underscores how externally imposed systems fail to account for local moral frameworks, a dynamic comparable to the imposition of AI-driven decision-making in education without cultural contextualization. Achebe writes: “*The world is like a Mask dancing. If you want to see it well you do not stand in one place*” (Achebe, 1964, p.45). This shows the necessity of multiple perspectives in understanding justice, a principle often neglected by rigid institutional technologies. Similarly, in *Hard Times*, Dickens critiques the mechanistic logic of institutional authority through the character of Thomas Gradgrind, who declares: “*Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts*” (Dickens, 1854, p.1). This reduction of knowledge to quantifiable data parallels contemporary algorithmic governance, where educational assessment risks privileging measurable outcomes over holistic

understanding, thereby raising concerns about ethical limitations and the narrowing of justice.

Overall, both African and British literary narratives reveal that institutional authority, whether colonial or technologically driven, is often marked by tensions between abstraction and lived reality. Chinua Achebe emphasizes the importance of contextual and communal approaches to justice, while Charles Dickens exposes the dangers of dehumanized institutional rationality. In the context of artificial intelligence in education, these literary insights underscore the need to critically reassess how authority is exercised, ensuring that technological systems remain accountable to ethical principles that prioritize human experience, cultural diversity, and social justice.

2.2. Comparative Ethical Frameworks in African and British Literary Narratives

African and British literary traditions articulate distinct yet intersecting ethical frameworks through which questions of justice, law, and moral responsibility are negotiated. These frameworks are particularly relevant in the context of artificial intelligence, where ethical decision-making is increasingly mediated by algorithmic systems. In African literature, ethical reasoning is often grounded in communal values and relational accountability, while British literary works frequently foreground individual conscience and institutional legality. In *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, the ethical order is embedded in communal norms and cultural continuity, whereas *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen emphasizes moral judgment shaped by individual reflection and social propriety. These differing ethical orientations provide a critical lens for examining contemporary debates on AI in education, where questions of fairness, bias, and responsibility are central.

The comparative analysis of African and British literary narratives reveals divergent yet complementary approaches to ethical

responsibility, particularly in how moral judgments are articulated and enforced. In *Things Fall Apart*, the ethical framework is deeply rooted in collective responsibility, where individual actions are evaluated in relation to communal harmony and ancestral traditions. Achebe writes: “If one finger brought oil it soiled the others” (Achebe, 1958, p.87). This proverb encapsulates a relational ethic in which individual behavior directly impacts the collective, a perspective that challenges the individual-centered logic often embedded in technological systems. In contrast, *Pride and Prejudice* presents an ethical framework grounded in personal moral development and introspection, as illustrated in the line: “I have been a selfish being all my life” (Austen, 1813, p.221). Austen’s narrative emphasizes the importance of self-awareness and individual moral reform, aligning with institutional frameworks that prioritize accountability and personal responsibility. When applied to AI-driven educational systems, these contrasting ethical paradigms highlight the tension between collective well-being and individual evaluation, raising critical questions about fairness, inclusivity, and cultural bias in algorithmic governance.

The comparison between African and British literary ethical frameworks demonstrates that conceptions of moral responsibility are deeply shaped by cultural contexts and narrative traditions. While Chinua Achebe foregrounds communal ethics and relational justice, Jane Austen emphasizes individual moral agency and social accountability. These perspectives offer valuable insights for addressing ethical challenges in artificial intelligence, particularly in educational settings, where systems must balance collective equity with individual assessment. Ultimately, literature provides a critical space for envisioning more inclusive and culturally responsive ethical models capable of guiding the responsible development and deployment of AI technologies.

2.3. Literature and the Reconfiguration of Moral Responsibility in AI-Driven Educational Environments

The increasing integration of artificial intelligence into educational environments has prompted a reconfiguration of moral responsibility, particularly concerning accountability, fairness, and human agency. Literature, as a reflective and critical medium, plays a central role in interrogating these transformations by exposing the ethical implications of technological systems on learning processes and institutional practices. In African and British literary traditions, narratives engage with questions of responsibility in ways that resonate with contemporary concerns about AI, especially in relation to power, knowledge production, and social equity. For instance, *No Longer at Ease* by Chinua Achebe highlights the ethical dilemmas of individuals caught between traditional values and modern institutional demands, while *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley explores the consequences of human creation and the abdication of responsibility, themes that parallel current debates on AI autonomy and ethical accountability.

Literary representations of moral responsibility reveal the complexity of ethical decision-making in contexts where authority is dispersed between human and non-human agents. In *No Longer at Ease*, the protagonist's ethical conflict reflects the pressures of navigating institutional expectations and societal obligations, illustrating how moral agency is often constrained by systemic forces. Achebe writes: "*A man who makes trouble for others is also making trouble for himself*" (Achebe, 1960, p.132). This statement underscores the interconnected nature of ethical responsibility within a community, a principle that challenges the impersonal logic of AI-driven systems. In *Frankenstein*, the absence of accountability in the act of creation is evident in the line: "*I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather the fallen angel.*" This highlights the consequences of neglecting moral responsibility in the pursuit of

knowledge and innovation. The novel anticipates contemporary concerns about artificial intelligence, particularly the risks associated with creating autonomous systems without adequate ethical oversight, thereby emphasizing the necessity of embedding accountability within technological design and implementation in educational contexts.

The analysis of African and British literary narratives demonstrates that literature plays a crucial role in rethinking moral responsibility in the context of artificial intelligence. Through the works of Chinua Achebe and Mary Shelley, it becomes evident that ethical accountability must remain central to both human and technological systems, particularly in education. Literature not only critiques the limitations of institutional and technological frameworks but also offers alternative visions of responsibility grounded in relational ethics, caution, and foresight. These insights underscore the importance of developing AI systems that are ethically grounded, culturally sensitive, and aligned with the broader goals of justice and human development.

3. Discussion:

The findings of this study highlight that literary representations of justice and institutional authority provide a critical framework for interrogating the ethical implications of artificial intelligence in education. African narratives, particularly in the works of Chinua Achebe, emphasize relational and communal conceptions of justice, where moral responsibility is distributed across individuals and their social environment. This perspective challenges the abstraction and standardization inherent in many AI-driven systems, which often rely on quantifiable metrics and algorithmic objectivity. As demonstrated in *Arrow of God*, authority loses legitimacy when it fails to account for local epistemologies and cultural norms, suggesting that AI systems in education must

similarly integrate contextual sensitivity to avoid reinforcing systemic inequities.

In contrast, British literary narratives, particularly those of Charles Dickens, foreground critiques of institutional rigidity and the dangers of reducing human experience to measurable data. In *Hard Times*, the emphasis on “Facts” reflects an early warning against the mechanization of knowledge and the erosion of ethical judgment. This concern resonates strongly with contemporary debates on artificial intelligence in education, where algorithmic decision-making risks privileging efficiency over equity. The novel thus anticipates the ethical limitations of systems that prioritize data-driven outcomes while neglecting the complexity of human learning and moral development.

Furthermore, the comparison between African and British literary frameworks reveals that both traditions converge in their critique of institutional systems that fail to uphold ethical responsibility. While African literature underscores collective accountability and cultural embeddedness, British literature highlights individual moral agency and institutional critique. These complementary perspectives align with the concerns raised in postcolonial and ethical theory, as articulated by Homi K. Bhabha and Frantz Fanon, who emphasize the importance of hybridity, power relations, and the moral consequences of institutional authority. In the context of AI, these insights suggest that ethical frameworks must move beyond universalist models to incorporate pluralistic and culturally responsive approaches.

Finally, the study demonstrates that literature serves not only as a site of critique but also as a source of ethical imagination for addressing the challenges posed by artificial intelligence in education. By foregrounding narratives that question authority, expose injustice, and reconfigure moral responsibility, literary texts

contribute to the development of more inclusive and reflective institutional practices. The integration of insights from African and British literary traditions underscores the necessity of balancing technological innovation with ethical accountability, ensuring that AI systems in education remain aligned with principles of justice, equity, and human dignity.

4. Conclusion

This study has explored the intersections of justice, law, and moral responsibility in the age of artificial intelligence through a comparative reading of African and British literary narratives. The results demonstrate that African texts foreground communal ethics, relational accountability, and culturally grounded conceptions of justice, while British narratives emphasize individual moral agency, institutional critique, and procedural rationality. Both traditions converge in their critical stance toward rigid institutional systems, revealing their limitations in addressing ethical complexities within technologically mediated educational environments. The analysis further indicates that AI-driven systems in education risk reinforcing bias, reducing ethical responsibility to technical procedures, and marginalizing contextual and human-centered approaches to knowledge and assessment.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that educational policymakers and institutional stakeholders adopt interdisciplinary frameworks that integrate ethical, cultural, and literary perspectives into the design and implementation of artificial intelligence systems. Greater emphasis should be placed on transparency, accountability, and inclusivity to ensure that AI technologies align with principles of justice and equity. Furthermore, the incorporation of literary studies into AI ethics education is essential for fostering critical thinking and moral awareness among students and practitioners. Such an approach would contribute to

the development of more responsible, context-sensitive, and ethically grounded educational technology

Biography:

- Achebe, C. (1958). *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann.
- Achebe, C. (1960). *No Longer at Ease*. London: Heinemann.
- Achebe, C. (1964). *Arrow of God*. London: Heinemann.
- Austen, J. (1813). *Pride and Prejudice*. London: T. Egerton.
- Dickens, C. (1854). *Hard Times*. London: Bradbury & Evans.
- Shelley, M. (1818). *Frankenstein*. London: Lackington, Hughes, Harding, Mavor & Jones.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge.
- Fanon, F. (1961). *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press.
- UNESCO. (2021). “Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence”, *UNESCO Reports*, [online] available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org>, [consulted 6 April 2026].
- Floridi, L., Cowls, J., Beltrametti, M., et al. (2018). “AI4People—An Ethical Framework for a Good AI Society”, *Minds and Machines*, 28(4), pp. 689–707, [online] available at: <https://link.springer.com>, [consulted 6 April 2026].
- Holmes, W., Bialik, M., & Fadel, C. (2019). “Artificial Intelligence in Education: Promises and Implications for Teaching and Learning”, *Center for Curriculum Redesign*, [online] available at: <https://curriculumredesign.org>, [consulted 6 April 2026].