Advances in Vocational and Technical Education (2025)
Clausius Scientific Press, Canada

DOI: 10.23977/avte.2025.070228
ISSN 2523-5834 Vol. 7 Num. 2

AI-Enabled Teaching Research in Water Conservancy Vocational Colleges

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Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Water Conservancy Vocational Education, Teaching Innovation, Smart Water Conservancy, Virtual Simulation

Abstract: This study explores the application models and practical outcomes of artificial intelligence (AI) technology in teaching at water conservancy vocational colleges. Research indicates that AI has significantly enhanced teaching quality and students' comprehensive competencies through the construction of smart teaching platforms, virtual simulation systems, personalized learning pathways, and data-driven governance mechanisms. However, during the application of AI, water conservancy vocational colleges face challenges such as technology integration, resource development, and teacher capacity building. Strategies including improving infrastructure, strengthening teacher training, and deepening industry-education integration are essential. AI-enabled water conservancy vocational education is a systematic project that will drive the field toward intelligent, personalized, and collaborative development.

1. Introduction

With the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) technology, the field of vocational education is undergoing profound transformations. As the primary platform for cultivating technical and skilled talent in water conservancy, water conservancy vocational education faces new requirements and challenges brought by the development of new quality productive forces. AI-enabled teaching in water conservancy vocational education is a process that deeply integrates intelligent technology with education and teaching, reconstructs the teaching ecosystem, and enhances the quality of talent cultivation. In recent years, many water conservancy vocational colleges have actively explored AI applications. For example, Shandong Water Conservancy Vocational College innovated the digital vocational education path of "One Network, Four Integrations," while Guangdong Vocational College of Water and Electric Engineering promoted the construction of AI application projects [1].

The application of AI in water conservancy vocational teaching is not only about technological innovation but also involves systematic changes in educational philosophy, teaching models, and governance systems. Currently, research predominantly focuses on the technical applications themselves, while systematic studies on application models, effectiveness evaluation, and strategies to address challenges remain relatively insufficient. Based on this, this paper combines practical

cases from water conservancy vocational colleges to systematically analyze the application models, effectiveness, and challenges of AI-enabled teaching. It proposes development recommendations to provide references for the deep integration of AI technology and water conservancy vocational education [2].

2. Application Models of Artificial Intelligence Technology in Water Conservancy Education

2.1. Application of Virtual Simulation Technology

Water conservancy vocational colleges utilize AI technology to construct smart teaching environments, achieving teaching process optimization and resource sharing. Shandong Water Conservancy Vocational College has established a new digital path for water conservancy vocational education through its "Integrated Wired-Wireless Campus 5G+MEC Private Network" and the "Four Integrations" education model. The college has upgraded its campus network to create a transmission environment characterized by "low latency, high concurrency, and perceptive capabilities," built smart classrooms and practical training venues, and equipped them with seamless attendance systems and smart class signs, significantly enhancing the efficiency and quality of teaching and learning.

Chongqing City Management College has developed the "Learn in Yu Cheng" smart teaching platform using AI technology, creating a "cloud brain" that integrates 100 smart classrooms. Additionally, the college has established 5G holographic remote interactive smart classrooms and a teaching big data monitoring platform, realizing smarter teaching, more efficient learning, and more intelligent evaluation. These infrastructure developments provide a solid foundation for the application of AI technology in water conservancy vocational education [3].

2.2. Construction of Smart Teaching Platforms

Virtual simulation technology addresses the challenges in hydraulic engineering practical training, such as "invisible phenomena," "inaccessible environments," high costs, and high risks. Shandong Water Conservancy Vocational College has leveraged virtual simulation information technology to establish a virtual simulation training base for hydraulic engineering, constructing a comprehensive virtual simulation training system and promoting dynamic adjustments in water conservancy programs. Based on facilities such as the Hydraulic Engineering Virtual Simulation Training Center, BIM Training Center, Smart Safety Monitoring Training Center, and Safety Education Base, the college has upgraded its hardware standards and developed VR teaching resources covering hydraulic engineering design, construction, cost estimation, and management [4].

Tianjin University offers a micro-program in "AI + Smart Water Conservancy," applying new AI technologies to meet emerging demands in the water conservancy industry, including hydrological forecasting, water resources development and utilization, hydraulic calculations, hydraulic structure design, engineering construction, safety monitoring, and water conservancy scheduling. The program features AI-powered courses such as "Digitalized Design Systems for Hydropower Engineering," "Computer Vision and Engineering Perception Pattern Recognition," and "Secondary Development of Intelligent Robots and Practical Applications in Hydraulic Engineering," providing students with a hands-on and cutting-edge virtual simulation learning experience.

2.3. Application of Virtual Simulation Technology

AI technology enabling personalized learning serves as a critical approach to achieving the

educational principle of "teaching students according to their aptitude." The artificial intelligence application construction project at Guangdong Vocational College of Water and Electric Engineering supports the development of a RAG knowledge base and intelligent agent assistant application based on local private data. This system enables capabilities such as private domain knowledge Q&A, information extraction, text summarization, question generation, and assisted text creation. By leveraging AI and large model technologies, the project reshapes the new paradigm of power education. Through multimodal interaction, customized intelligent roles, and adaptive learning path planning, it enhances the industry-education integration model and constructs an intelligent solution covering the entire chain of teaching, learning, management, and services [5].

3. Concrete Outcomes of Artificial Intelligence Applications

The application of artificial intelligence technology has significantly enhanced the teaching quality in water conservancy vocational colleges. Sichuan Water Conservancy Vocational College has successfully deployed DeepSeek locally and meticulously compiled the DeepSeek Application Practice—Teacher's Edition, bringing new opportunities and transformations to teaching, research, and management. DeepSeek assists teachers in efficient lesson preparation by automatically generating lesson plan frameworks, creating teaching resources, intelligently recommending educational materials, producing multimodal courseware, and optimizing teaching processes, thereby improving both lesson preparation efficiency and teaching quality [6].

During classroom interactions, DeepSeek can design multi-level questions, role-playing activities, and debate exercises, providing multilingual translation support and cultural background annotations to enhance classroom engagement and boost student participation and learning outcomes. Additionally, DeepSeek improves the assignment and evaluation system by automatically generating tiered exercises, intelligently grading assignments, analyzing homework data, recommending personalized learning paths, and providing teachers with detailed assignment analysis reports. These functionalities comprehensively elevate teaching quality.

AI-enabled water conservancy vocational education effectively promotes the holistic development of students' capabilities. Tianjin University’s micro-program in "AI + Smart Water Conservancy" adopts a training model emphasizing "solid foundations, broad perspectives, and strong interdisciplinary integration" to cultivate comprehensive and exceptional future leaders in intelligent construction and operation engineering. These talents are equipped to meet the evolving demands of the "smart water conservancy" industry, new applications of AI technology, and the emerging literacy requirements of intelligent construction projects, possessing capabilities in "intelligent design, smart construction, and wise operation and maintenance."

4. Challenges and Countermeasures

4.1. Technology Integration and Data Security Challenges

Water vocational colleges face challenges in technology integration and data security during the application of AI. Guangdong Vocational College of Water Resources and Electric Engineering has set clear security requirements for its AI applications: the ability to handle high-security data and run high-security computational tasks. The college mandates that equipment maintenance services must be provided for no less than three years, and software maintenance services for no less than one year. During the warranty period, if any quality issues or potential defects are found in the equipment, the supplier must replace it free of charge without affecting the project timeline [7].

To address these challenges, water vocational colleges need to strengthen their technical security systems to ensure the stable and reliable operation of AI systems. Sichuan Water Conservancy

Vocational College, for instance, has successfully deployed DeepSeek locally to enhance data security and improve teaching and industry-academia collaboration efficiency. This localized deployment approach not only ensures data security but also boosts efficiency in teaching and industry-academia integration, providing a valuable reference for other water vocational colleges [8].

4.2. Challenges in Teachers' Competence and Development

Teacher Competence and Development are key challenges in empowering water vocational education with artificial intelligence. Shandong Water Conservancy Vocational College adheres to the principle of fostering virtue and cultivating talents, strengthens the development of teacher ethics and conduct, promotes school-enterprise "dual-subject" collaborative education, formulates scientific and reasonable team training plans, and enhances the faculty's governance capacity, teaching implementation ability, and application promotion capabilities. The college optimizes team composition, improves informatization levels, utilizes virtual simulation technology to enhance digital capabilities, and comprehensively advances the construction of a "dual-qualified" teaching faculty [9].

Chongqing City Management College employs big data and artificial intelligence to strengthen digital-intelligent training for "dual-qualified" teachers. Over the past two years, the college has developed 1,450 new courses, established one national-level professional teaching resource repository, and three provincial-ministerial level professional teaching resource repositories. These initiatives have effectively enhanced teachers' AI application capabilities and digital literacy, providing crucial faculty support for empowering water vocational education with artificial intelligence.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The integration of artificial intelligence into teaching within water conservancy vocational colleges constitutes a systematic project. By constructing smart teaching platforms, applying virtual simulation technologies, planning personalized learning paths, and implementing data-driven governance, it has significantly enhanced teaching quality, student competencies, industry-education integration, and educational equity. During the application of AI, water conservancy vocational colleges face challenges such as technology integration, resource development, and teacher capacity building. Addressing these requires strategies including improving infrastructure, strengthening teacher training, and deepening industry-education integration.

In the future, AI-enabled water conservancy vocational education will evolve toward greater intelligence, personalization, and collaboration. Large AI models will be more widely applied in professional water conservancy teaching, providing students with smarter learning experiences and more personalized academic support. Virtual simulation technologies will more closely mimic real engineering environments, offering more immersive practical teaching experiences. Industry-education integration will deepen further, with schools and enterprises collaborating to develop more high-quality teaching resources and jointly cultivate highly skilled talents meeting the demands of smart water conservancy development [10].

Water conservancy vocational colleges must keep pace with advancements in AI technology, continuously promote innovation in education and teaching, provide strong support for training high-quality water conservancy talents, and contribute significantly to the sustainable development of China's water conservancy sector.

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