



AI in the Global South: A South African Perspective.



Moroasereme Ntsoane
Founder & CEO: SummitAI

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AGENDA

- 1) Introduction
- 2) What is AI, really?
- 3) Global South & AI
- 4) South Africa's AI Landscape
- 5) Sectoral Applications
- 6) Opportunities for SA/Global South
- 7) Risks & Ethical Challenges
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What is AI, really?

- AI as a social, economic and political force
- Four core attributes of AI (per well received definitions):
 - Goal –oriented actions
 - Ability to learn or adapt
 - Autonomous decisions making
 - Influential to real or digital environments

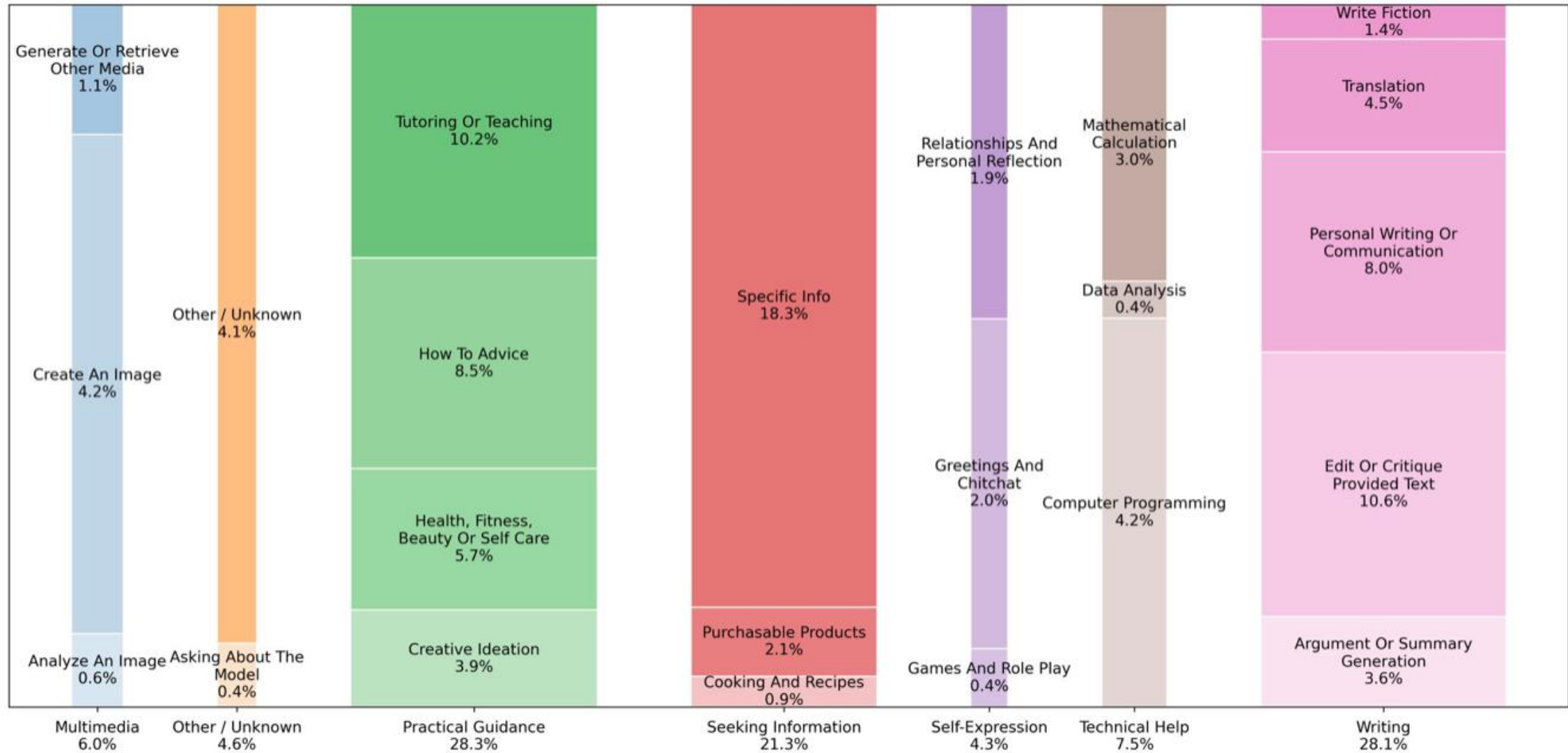
AI Classification Framework

- 1) **Scope of Intelligence :** Artificial Narrow Intelligence (ANI) vs Artificial General Intelligence (AGI)
- 2) **Learning Method:** Machine Learning (ML) vs Deep Learning (DL)
 - ❖ Rules-based Systems / Reinforced Learning / Unsupervised Learning
- 3) **Purpose of AI:** Analytical AI vs Generative AI.
- 4) **Logic Construction:** Symbolic AI vs Constructionist AI

Global South Context

- Global South lag.
- Digital divide widening:
 - infrastructure,
 - Compute,
 - Capital,
 - data,
 - skills.
- Sovereignty issues – who are the techno





Patterns of use: *Asking (advisor) - 49%*, *Doing (task completion) - 40%*, and *Expressing (personal self reflection) - 11%*. Source: OpenAI & Harvard 2025)

Albania's Minister Diella?



South Africa's AI Landscape

- PC4IR
- National AI Policy Framework (2024).
- AU AI Strategy
- State of Corporate and SOE adoption

Sectoral Applications

- Healthcare
- Finance
- Energy - Eskom
- Public Sector Service Delivery

By Myles Illidge



Deloitte report suspected of containing AI invented quote



Lower Artificial Intelligence Literacy Predicts Greater AI Receptivity

Stephanie Tully*
Chiara Longoni*
Gil Appel*

Abstract

As artificial intelligence (AI) transforms society, understanding factors that influence AI receptivity is increasingly important. The current research investigates which types of consumers have greater AI receptivity. Contrary to expectations revealed in four surveys, cross country data and six additional studies find that people with lower AI literacy are typically more receptive to AI. This lower literacy-greater receptivity link is not explained by differences in perceptions of AI's capability, ethicality, or feared impact on humanity. Instead, this link occurs because people with lower AI literacy are more likely to perceive AI as magical and experience feelings of awe in the face of AI's execution of tasks that seem to require uniquely human attributes. In line with this theorizing, the lower literacy-higher receptivity link is mediated by perceptions of AI as magical and is moderated among tasks not assumed to require distinctly human attributes. These findings suggest that companies may benefit from shifting their marketing efforts and product development towards consumers with lower AI literacy. Additionally, efforts to demystify AI may inadvertently reduce its appeal, indicating that maintaining an aura of magic around AI could be beneficial for adoption.

Opportunities for SA/Global South

- Leapfrogging legacy systems
- Solving developmental priorities
- Creating local innovation ecosystems



Swiss AI model (Apertus) , which is fully open source , transparent, and multilingual, and built with Swiss data protection and copyright laws.

Risks & Ethical Challenges

- Bias, exclusion, job displacement.
- Concentration of power
 - big Tech
 - big VC dominance
- AI governance and accountability.



Critical Reflections

- Why Global South voice matters in AI debates.
- Choice between importing models vs building contextual solutions.
- Existential “imperative” framing



Thank You!

info@summitai.co.za

www.summitai.co.za