

Artificial Intelligence in Microbiological Research: Methods, Applications, and Implications

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionising microbiological research by enabling the rapid analysis of complex biological data and improving the accuracy, efficiency, and reliability of scientific investigations. Recent advances in machine learning, deep learning, and bioinformatics have transformed AI into a powerful tool for studying microorganisms, their genetic composition, evolutionary patterns, and interactions with hosts and the environment. AI-driven computational models can process large and complex datasets far more efficiently than conventional analytical methods, allowing researchers to identify meaningful patterns and generate accurate predictions in a shorter period. AI has numerous applications in microbiology, including microbial identification and classification, prediction of antimicrobial resistance, microbial genome analysis, disease diagnosis, outbreak surveillance, and drug discovery. Advanced image recognition algorithms assist in the rapid identification of bacterial, viral, and fungal pathogens, while genomic analysis tools facilitate the detection of mutations, virulence factors, and resistance genes. AI also supports the development of precision medicine by enabling personalised treatment strategies based on microbial and patient-specific data. Furthermore, AI-powered epidemiological models help monitor the spread of infectious diseases, predict potential outbreaks, and assist public health authorities in implementing timely preventive measures. Despite its significant advantages, the integration of AI into microbiological research faces several challenges. These include concerns regarding data quality and availability, model interpretability, algorithmic bias, privacy and security of biological data, and ethical and regulatory considerations. Addressing these issues is essential for ensuring the responsible and reliable use of AI technologies in healthcare and research. As computational technologies continue to advance, AI is expected to play an increasingly important role in microbiology by accelerating scientific discoveries, improving diagnostic accuracy, supporting the development of novel antimicrobial agents and vaccines, and strengthening global public health initiatives. This article discusses the diverse applications, advantages, challenges, and prospects of artificial intelligence in microbiological research.

Keywords: Analysis of the microbiome predictive modelling, infectious disease, big data analytics, computational biology, personalised medicine

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Received Date: June 09, 2026

Accepted Date: June 28, 2026

Published Date: June 29, 2026

Citation: V. Basil Hans. Artificial Intelligence in Microbiological Research: Methods, Applications, and Implications. Research & Reviews: A Journal of Microbiology and Virology. 2026; 16(2): 23–36p.

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become a significant tool in various sectors like astronomy, healthcare, and materials research. Microbiology is getting in on the AI excitement too as interest in the microbiome and other areas is growing rapidly. In this work we explore the relevance of AI in microbiological research in terms of applications, methodologies and ethical issues. It includes AI-based experimental design and data-analysis processes important to microbiology such as computer vision, genetic interpretation, and assay

assessment. We discuss the major uses of AI in microbiology such as pathogen detection, drug development, and prediction of antimicrobial resistance. The sorts of microbiological data and the experimental-design and data-analysis workflows enabled by AI are described. Foundational elements of AI including machine-learning architectures and natural-language processing are discussed as well as the history of AI in microbiology. Finally, future research possibilities that may foster AI applications in microbiology and promote human wellbeing are discussed [1].

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN MICROBIOLOGY: FUNDAMENTALS

Artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionised several scientific areas, including microbiology, which studies the living beings invisible to the naked eye but that affect daily life, the environment and other species. A lack of understanding of microorganisms can produce health disasters, agricultural crises, and environmental difficulties that complicate human progress and survival. The complexity and diversity of microbial life, as well as the variety of sorts of microbial data and high-throughput acquisition techniques have hindered microbial study. The powerful ability of AI in natural language processing, structured data prediction and unstructured data generation on different forms of data is a good solution to solve these difficulties.

Microscopic organisms are not visible to the naked eye. They are found in water, soil and air and affect humans, crops, livestock, the environment and production. There are millions of species. They are essential for human health, the growth of crops, livestock farming, environmental management, industrial chemical manufacturing, and food safety and production. There are at least three challenges to study microbes. First, it is difficult to research microbial life, phenomena, formation and development without complete information of the entire population at a given time or space point. Second, the contamination or interference leads to a fractured knowledge and a change of perspective from local, temporal or prioritised perspectives to that of the whole. Third, microorganisms are various and complicated, which challenges exact analysis based on certain entities or functions, process or pattern, or fixed development. With the continuous growth of sequencing-based, structured, heterogeneous microbiological databases, a paradigm change of deep-learning-based, distribution-relation-constrained data-interaction microbial research has begun. With the development of high-throughput techniques that generate various and enormous volumes of microbiological data from varied mediums, domains and scenarios [2], the usefulness and availability of AI approaches for microbiology have been proposed.

BACKGROUND HISTORY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is being applied in life sciences, especially in microbiology and in studies connected to infections. Surveys of AI in life sciences for large-scale drug discovery are mostly focused on AI methodologies connected to drug development, and AI-assisted acquisition, quantification and analysis of high-content and time-lapse images. What is the microbiome? The microbiome is one of the most inhabited biomes on Earth, consisting of billions of bacteria and their collective genomes that are found in a defined context such as the human body. To explore microbiome creation, stability and function, mechanistic understanding, modelling and computational microbiome design are essential, and large data sets and artificial intelligence are crucial.

The evolution of AI in life sciences is driven by the creation of novel AI and machine learning (ML) approaches, the introduction of larger datasets that encourage new tasks, and the concomitant development of experimental designs that generate huge pharmacological data. There has also been a renewed impetus for the quest for next-generation inhibitors targeting likely therapeutic targets prioritising diseases listed by the World Health Organization (WHO). For instance, the first broad-spectrum molecule active against both gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria was identified and a new therapeutic candidate against Gram-negative and methicillin-resistant Gram-positive bacteria was obtained. These examples show a rising interest in developing new AI activities to further microbiological research and to assess how the latest AI technologies can significantly improve laboratory work and data processing.

Core AI Methods for Microbiology

With the emergence of the generative Auto-regressive Transformers (GATs), Artificial Intelligence (AI) has made significant progress and dissemination in economics, politics, science, and culture. While AI systems are evaluated on their capabilities, not on discriminating categories, some cross-disciplinary macro-level techniques are often relevant to systems as different as Chat-GPT, DALL-E 2, Alphafold and AlphaZero. Bacteria are a useful subject, not only because they are the prevalent life form on Earth, but also because of the intricacy of experimental planning and data analysis needed at a research level. It is, therefore, useful to first review the general field before looking into microbiological instances of AI approaches in experimental design and data processing. The following is a summary of fundamental AI principles and methods pertinent to both GATs and the specialised field of microbiology [1].

The most prominent AI tools today, such as DALL-E and ChatGPT, are built on multiple AI methodologies (often discussed in technical literature but rarely in textbooks), and each of these uses vertical, top-down generative modelling. However, these models have limited specificity to microbiology or the life sciences more broadly [2]. The same applies to recent technical literature on more specialised datasets or laboratory procedures. These latter attempts at least point out the requirement for specific datasets and operational methods. Bacteria provide highly motivating examples for considering core AI concepts. They are more numerous than all other organisms combined, constitute a large fraction of the biomass and metabolic activity of the terrestrial biosphere, are ubiquitous in every ecosystem, and pose planning and interpretation challenges at multiple hierarchical levels throughout the course of exploration. A historical review describes general trends in AI prior to the critical achievements of deep learning that now dominate both GATs and the wider field.

Data Types and Data Creation in Microbiology

The large volume of data generated in microbiological investigations over the past decades has offered unparalleled prospects for understanding biological systems through AI. In microbiology labs, data is gathered by use of experimental approaches. The most common are genetics and phenotypics. The general field of genomics is high-throughput isolated genomes, amplicon sequencing, metagenomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, etc. [2]. Phenotypic assays include classic low-throughput assays as well as high-content image-based screening. New techniques – such as single-cell measurements – expand the investigation of biological systems. But the microbiology community must keep producing more and better data, because reliable, accurate, robust and reproducible AI systems require on high-quality training data [3].

AI-DRIVEN EXPERIMENT DESIGN AND DATA ANALYSIS

AI-driven experimental design and data analysis has significant promise to handle complex problems in microbiological research, including high-content image analysis and the interpretation of genomic and metagenomic material. Microfluidic imaging devices provide high throughput automated microscopy of single cell organisms and materials, which produce gigabytes of data every day. Hence, there is a worldwide increasing effort to derive new biological knowledge from these datasets, as well as an increasing demand for standardised data formats and integration with AI-driven interpretation and description methodologies.

Natural language processing and generative AI inspired approaches can be applied by biologists to automatically choose experimental methods from peer-reviewed online publications, predict experimental outcomes and annotate computerised laboratory records. These methodologies allow for the automation of microbiological testing and record-keeping, currently largely done manually worldwide, and the discovery of biological rules from observational data [2].

Deep learning and supervised machine-learning methods are becoming more common for the classification of high-content single-cell pictures from several microbiological experiments. Various integrated equipment available on the market are compatible with standard laboratory techniques. Furthermore, machine-learning methods are employed to estimate the function associated with metagenomic sequences and to infer associated metabolic networks and cellular-modelling algorithms [4].

Experimental Design and Optimisation

Basic capabilities and underlying restrictions of systems to aid microbiology experimental design (fuel selection, enzyme characterisation, laboratory strain development) have been demonstrated either by offering optimised parameters or simply increasing throughput.

The development of a variety of approaches to useful microbial products and access to systematically produced strains is evolving. Significant progress has been made, however the restricted number of viable microbiological candidates for highly desired products suggests the need to investigate factors influencing assembly or modify cassettes. A pathway design method and software tool have been developed for addressing the issues in pathway design. Biodesign continues to move forward at an unnecessarily slow pace.

Microbiology in the Light of Computer Vision Based on Images

Microorganisms are important in environmental applications and public health. Automatic detection of microorganisms or analysis of microbe images has been pursued since around 1995 and has advanced from classical machine-learning (ML) and image-processing technologies to supervised-learning methods, deep models, generative models, and finally to self-supervised approaches. Recently, convolutional neural networks (CNNs), deep-belief networks and transfer learning have allowed to efficiently classify bacteria, algae, protozoa and fungi without the need for extensive manual feature extraction. However, the datasets are still limited, which limits the generalisation capacity of deep-learning models. To solve this problem, hybrid models, sample-augmentation approaches and other ML components have been introduced. Future works should focus on modelling architectures such as MobileNet, autoencoders and attention-based CNNs, dimensionality-reduction techniques such as locally linear embedding and t-distributed stochastic neighbour embedding, and hybrid combinations of self-supervised, few-shot, semi-supervised and neuro-fuzzy approaches. The synergy potential of swarm-intelligence algorithms – such as particle-swarm optimisation, artificial-bee-colony, and SALP-swarm metaheuristics – should further be exploited [5].

Studies have shown that ML speeds microorganism image processing and automatic classification is not only time-saving but also produces objective, reproducible and high throughput evaluations [6]. High-content images obtained following microfluidic culturing or multi-objective screening can provide rich contextual information for microbial physiology but also offer added complication. So, CNNs are becoming a significant family of models for these time-lapse image sequences.

Analysis of Genomic and Metagenomic Data

The rapid expansion of next generation sequencing technologies has led to the collection of vast amounts of genomic and metagenomic data at an unprecedented rate. This transition needs the development of new methodologies for the interpretation of the generated datasets. Machine learning algorithms are used to provide predictive models in metagenomics based on sequence composition and many omics data [7].

The reproducibility crisis has also infected the life sciences, and microbiome research are not immune to this issue: it has been shown that just 20% of studies published in top journals were repeatable [8]. For this purpose, some groups have proposed the incorporation of machine learning methods in the data-processing pipelines and provide model agnostic explanations that allow researchers to understand if the final model and the conclusions drawn from the data are in accordance with the underlying biological questions framed prior the experimentation.

Analysis of Phenotypic and Functional Assays

The ongoing pathogen conferring antimicrobial resistance is a global health emergency. The introduction of new diseases and variations of existing pathogens continues to be a formidable problem. There aren't a lot of good antibiotics, and new ones are frustratingly slow to develop. Drug repurposing in pharmaceuticals is a technique to destroy or control pathogenic germs by searching for current safe

medications on market. In addition, high throughput screening (HTS) with unparalleled technical possibility further broadens the field for researchers to actively hunt therapeutic possibilities against infections.

Powerful image processing, machine learning (ML) and deep learning (DL) techniques also motivate researchers to shift towards non-genetical and non-chemical-curative ways of anti-pathogen methods. Some 50 documented food-borne diseases have been found, some of which are globally distributed and continue to circulate globally. A considerable quantity of scientific material has been written to explain crucial aspects of these infections at different levels. However, the diversity and frequent introduction of new pumping pathogens, COVID-19 variation, make it high non-to-multi-dimensional and impossibly tough for humankind to make the forecast and recommendation over human pathogenic viruses at the same level by 2000s or 2010s [2].

MICROBIOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS

Microorganisms are the main component of Earth's biodiversity and both good and bad for all living organisms. Therefore, utilising AI-supported research methods for studying microorganisms might have deep ramifications for the progress of knowledge. Special attention is placed on several applications of AI-assisted microbiological research relevant to continuing global concerns such as health, food, agriculture, renewable energy, and chemical pollution.

Detection of harmful bacteria from food, soil, clinical samples or water is crucial for public health. Bacteriophages are natural biological controls against harmful microorganisms. Predicting antibiotic resistance in infections based on a pathogen's genetic sequence alone will streamline the administration of antibiotics and improve public health [1].

Screening of the biological activity of natural chemicals in extracts has the potential to discover new antibiotics from natural sources. The search for novel medicines effective against drug-resistant diseases from natural sources has recently gained worldwide attention. The AI models can considerably speed up the discovery of new bioactive chemicals and hence enable the discovery of new antibiotics [2].

Detection and Surveillance of Pathogens

The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI), especially machine learning, creates new opportunities for the speedy and accurate detection of pathogens. Traditional, extensively used microbiological diagnostic methods face the difficulty of accurate identification of the bacteria causing infections and disease. AI-based solutions have the potential to improve the speed and accuracy of the identification process and fulfil the unmet needs in clinical microbiology such as better management of the global burden of infectious diseases. Unmet demands include rapid and accurate detection of unculturable, slow-growing and drug-resistant bacteria from samples such as blood and accurate determination of the preventive and therapeutic techniques necessary. The capacity to identify an emerging infection caused by a drug-resistant strain before it spreads through the community could allow clinicians to intervene more quickly. Thus, AI systems can improve microbiological diagnostics and help in illness management, drug discovery, prediction of antibiotic-resistance and epidemiological monitoring [1]. These capabilities lead to improved patient treatment and a traceable background literature for decision support, assisting the rehabilitation of production industry sectors impacted by infectious diseases and bioweapons.

AI-assisted decision support aids in selecting the diagnostic method and tests, and in tracking infection agents. It focuses efforts on the most likely microorganisms based on environmental factors and other variables. Such systems allow to identify infections at an early stage, especially those that are resistant to antibiotics, which in turn results in more effective ways of diagnosis and speedier treatment decisions.

The main problems of traditional microbiological diagnostic procedures are: problematic sample collection or transport, slow cultivation or growth of the microorganism, defective diagnostic material or kit, insufficient isolation, identification or reporting by the diagnostic laboratory. Also hampered is the examination of outbreaks from unknown origins or from a malefactor like a bioweapon. Depending on the type of microbe and the clinical specimen being obtained, delays can vary from a few hours to several months. In these cases, AI gives rapid and accurate answers, allowing clinicians to focus on response planning. This helps to prevent the establishment of larger epidemics and other sub-disciplines of forensic microbiology such as travel medicine.

Antibiotic Discovery and Drug Repositioning

In view of the increasing threat of multidrug-resistant bacteria, significant advances have been achieved in the invention of novel antimicrobials. AI technologies are projected to greatly enhance the creation of next-generation antibiotics using innovative chemical scaffolds with distinct modes of action that can overcome existing resistance [9]. These technologies include AI-based methods that leverage genomic data to enable genome mining to mine “cryptic” biosynthetic gene clusters, perform virtual screening to identify existing molecules that interfere with critical bacterial activities, and generate de novo molecular designs to propose entirely new antimicrobial candidates. These AI methods speed up and broaden the search for new antimicrobials, and can be readily modified for antibiotic repurposing, an intriguing strategy that can considerably reduce the time required to bring safe and effective medicines to clinical usage [10].

Microbiome Research and Community Modelling

The human microbiome study attracts more attention due to its potential application in personalised treatment. The study of bacterial communities and their link to host phenotypes draws upon several scientific fields, including computer science, mathematics, statistics, bioinformatics and biotechnology. Accurate, quick and reliable analysis of high-throughput sequencing is a prerequisite to solve real-world microbiome challenges. Machine Learning (ML) approaches have been developed and deployed for microbiome data analysis, especially on bacterial communities [11]. The spread of germs promotes the establishment of complicated communities which may be related to the health status of hosts [12]. Within these communities most of the ML approaches developed to now have been to do classification, modelling and modelling composition. Bacterial community has attracted great attention due to its vital role in human health and its unrevealed complexity.

Antimicrobial Resistance Prediction

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a danger to world health and research of new medicines is a priority. But the growth of resistance to both new and old antibiotics makes finding ones that work difficult. Prediction of possible resistance prior to candidate selection is important and databases – such as BacMet and Comprehensive Antibiotic Resistance Database – provide information on resistance genes, phenotypes and genomes to assist in this effort. Traditional techniques typically rely on known resistance determinants, which might introduce bias and the potential for missing novel determinants. Scenario-based resistance prediction is possible with state-of-the-art machine learning models trained on bacterial genome sequences and antibiotic susceptibility testing data. Targeting specific diseases or resistance types, different methodologies are pursued. Pan-genome analysis improves performance by include information on the distribution of resistance genes in the core and accessory genomes in the host [9].

The availability of huge publicly available datasets is key to the widespread uptake of these models as high-quality data is the bedrock of any accurate machine learning system. AI systems have the potential to revolutionise the processing of healthcare data by prioritising the most relevant evidence, enhancing the efficiency of research, and aiding evidence-based decision-making. Antimicrobial resistance prediction is a simple example where machine-learning methods may have an advantage over rule-based methods, and the timely incorporation of AI into biomedical research could thus contribute substantially to the fight against AMR [13].

Metabolic Reconstruction and Cell Modelling

Several production processes are directly influenced by microbial metabolism. Therefore, accurate modelling of intracellular processes on genome size helps to forecast biomass composition and optical density correctly [14]. Microbial strains are used as cell factories for producing biological or chemical compounds. However, genome-scale metabolic models that simulate the system behaviour of microbial cell factories generally overestimate the maximal growth rate and material conversion rate based on the genotype. The relative biomass allocation to different cellular components under different growth conditions is an important feature to increase model accuracy. This involves the creation of mechanistic and cellular models for simultaneous prediction of cellular allocation and metabolites synthesis during the micro-organisms substrate consumption. The mechanistic model of *Escherichia coli* considers the four metabolites, chemicals involved in the production of amino acids and nucleic acids are modelled as a pool of three intracellular metabolites and growth associated and non-growth associated maintenance requirement is also estimated. The cellular model predicts the relative allocation of biomass under different carbon sources.

COMPUTATIONAL METHODS & TOOLS

Computational artificial intelligence (AI) is revolutionising microbiological research and has significant ramifications. It includes a varied range of machine learning (ML) architectures such as supervised and self-supervised deep learning for genomic data processing, and intelligent lab automation using reinforcement learning. It also comprises natural language processing (NLP) techniques for mining of abstracts, complete texts and publicly available databases. There is an increasing demand for diverse and adaptable data science solutions for high-throughput experimental systems. Therefore, there is a need for standardised and compatible formats for high-dimensional data and related metadata; computational notebook tools guarantee reproducibility and enable collaborative work.

The microbial community is important in industrial microbiology applications that improve production efficiency and product quality in several industries such as food, beverages, probiotics and biocontrol agents. Computational methods are essential to extract actionable insights from the complicated raw data for process control and product innovation in subsequent metagenomic analyses [7]. Microbial Community Analysis Tools (MCAT) systematically interrogates sequencing data, applying data-mining approaches such as combinatorial optimisation, distance metrics, and machine learning for microbial community evaluation and analysis [7]. The inclusion of AI technologies in microbiology workflows improves general adaptability and extends the range of microbial research and intervention such as bioimage analysis, molecular dynamics simulation, and virus–host interaction investigations [2].

Machine Learning Architectures in Microbiology

Machine learning (ML), in particular deep learning (DL) are increasingly used in microbiology, from single species identification to community composition analysis, cell tracking and multi-OMIC interpretations [5]. Recent self-supervised ML methods – such as SIMPLER and MicrobeBERT – enable the identification of host-associated microbial species, species interactions, and hypothesis development from the scientific literature [2]. Many DL models have been modified from established applications – such as computer vision – to address the particular requirements of microbiology, and the NVIDIA BioNeMo high-performance computing platform facilitates training on increasingly heterogeneous multi-OMIC data.

Language Processing for Literature Mining

Knowledge extraction from scientific literature is of crucial importance to stimulate innovation and maintain research momentum, especially for fast-evolving domains such as microbiology [15]. However, the exponential rise of information imposes huge demands on human effort and time, and these needs increase during developing outbreaks. Effective literature mining for knowledge extraction is, therefore, a significant and methodical task [16]. In the last few years, techniques of natural language

processing (NLP) have been increasingly applied and are used thousands of times each day in literature mining applications across many fields and archives. NLP for literature mining uses many strategies to enhance, accelerate and standardise knowledge extraction.

Reinforcement Learning for Laboratory Automation

Robots are employed to perform several laboratory jobs including measuring solubilities, performing chemical reactions, and automatically taking samples during water analysis. However, robot skills are often constrained to preprogrammed operations without sensory feedback. Automation in life sciences labs is often dependent on hard protocols, normally established for human-based procedures. Dual-arm or soft robots can simulate the actions of pipetting, liquid transfer or reagent addition. These jobs are a precise sequence of procedures, but the system still must deal with differences in the sample tubes, experimental settings and concentration ranges. So, the underlying mechanisms must be agile and responsive. One line of research is to educate robots to learn these complex tasks using goal-conditioned reinforcement learning. Deep reinforcement learning has shown efficacy for a subset of contact rich insertion problems but applying it to laboratory automation presents unique hurdles due to the difficulty of supplying environmental feedback in an open-loop automation system. The proposed goal-conditioned reinforcement-learning framework studies a sophisticated laboratory manipulation task, in which a robot must maintain continuous contact with the walls of a glass vessel throughout the entire execution, demonstrating the capability of reinforcement learning to tackle complex tasks in real-world laboratory settings that were previously unattainable [17].

Data Integration, Standardisation and Reproducibility

Research organisations and technology businesses are developing several AI frameworks, tools and application programming interfaces (APIs) to support microbiological research and data sharing. Open distribution efforts include work to create upload and intake pipelines; curation, overload mitigation and future-proofing; and machine-actionable metadata formats and ontologies [18]. AI approaches are generally dependent on large and rich datasets to reduce the risk of overfitting. Various ways have, therefore, been explored to maximise the usage and usefulness of microbiological datasets already collected. These solutions include sharing datasets, establishing robust mechanisms of dataset integration that ensure compatibility with original datasets, and setting conditions for dataset redistribution or combination [19].

OBSTACLES, BOUNDARIES AND ETHICS

The expanding use of artificial intelligence (AI) in microbiology brings to the fore important challenges, constraints and ethical concerns that impact on data quality, bias, generalisability, model interpretability, safety and security, intellectual property and regulatory compliance.

Microbiological datasets are valuable for many AI tasks, but many datasets are small and often lack the quality standards of an inhibitor, do not provide useful pretraining contexts, and lack sufficient depth and breadth in fluorescence-based image processing. The biased data use is a common problem in various domains and may lead to incorrect predictions. Most AI techniques are found to be safe by generating flaws which are corrected by human monitoring. However, misconduct in the underlying technologies brings hazards of lab pollution, biosecurity issues, and designing automation tools for misdirection or harm [2].

The problem of interpretability is commonly faced in modern scientific workflows, undermining faith on models. Many breakthroughs in theory have been made, but fully calibrated uncertainty estimates remain elusive. Algorithms trained with microbiology data performed well when tested in common-domain conditions or temporal variables, but the accuracy of the modelling decreased in out-of-domain conditions such as species extension [20].

The dual-use conundrum also applies to pipelines and AI-enabled platforms for automating laboratory operations. The main problem lies in the cross-disciplinary application in reducing the risk

of release of germs from safe and safe-like environments. For example, opening, culturing, and analysing organisms or RNA-DNA pools from biological material. The quasi-proprietary barriers of the discipline are overcome by the publication of computer code, freely available online, which enables experimentation through AI-based candidate selection. Such materials are an issue since learning progresses faster, as shown by the corresponding virus-mutation speed vs. generative algorithm complexity [21].

Data Quality, Bias and Generalisability

Data quality is starting to be recognised as an important aspect of modern machine learning applications [22]. AI technologies are frequently quite data hungry, and they require lots of training data. These datasets can have major effects on AI models, leading to problems of generalisability, bias and poor performance. Bias is the algorithmic bias that originates from the training dataset or the model itself; when it originates from the training dataset it can be decomposed into seven subgroups. When implemented in real-world scenarios, model bias is caused by under-representation and over-representation from the dataset. If the input data is not diverse and representative, the biases will only be amplified. The use of historical datasets will only strengthen the current prejudices in society. These impacts have been documented in several fields where machine learning has been used [23].

Interpretability and Trust in AI Outputs

AI-based systems are increasingly being used to recommend and intervene in areas such as biomedical science and healthcare. Therefore, interpretability, meaning knowing why AI makes certain decisions, and trust are highly relevant in decision-making based on AI outcomes. Trust in AI forecasts rests not only on the accuracy of the predictions, but also on the underlying comprehension of the basic processes and data involved in coming to such predictions. Deep learning models get state-of-the-art performance on many tasks yet the explanation for the predictions is often opaque. Many model-agnostic and model-specific interpretative mechanisms remain poorly understood even when networks are optimised, meaning that the insights that can be extracted from such models are limited and that faith in conclusions or judgements produced from AI is hindered. To fully realise the promise of AI, to alleviate ethical concerns, and to minimise the difference among different applicable situations, it is vital to address the trustworthiness and interpretability of AI implementations. Local Interpretable Model-Agnostic Explanations (LIME) are excellent candidate processes to analyse complex model predictions [10]. Instead of directly understanding the output of a black-box prediction model that is sometimes intractable, LIME approximates the model around the instance to be explained by an interpretable surrogate model such as a linear regression model or decision tree. Such an approximation helps to clarify the predictions of the complex model, increasing confidence in the model's behaviour and allowing for more informed decisions. But LIME only applies to classification problems. Deep learning models often produce accurate results long before anyone starts thinking about interpreting them. Reliable empirical investigations into any applicable model designs, learning methodologies or architecture improvements in microbiology are, therefore, still crucial.

Safety, Security and Dual-Use Issues

AI-accelerated research and innovation have numerous benefits, but also safety, security and dual-use risks. The more accessible AI technologies are, and the more accessible the underlying knowledge is, the greater the risk of potential misuse. While language models can generate biological sequence data and offer text-based support for procedure design, design tools can produce DNA and RNA sequences from high-level target specifications. This has led to an increased attention in the literature on the potential use of AI to facilitate the planned or inadvertent release, re-emergence or amplification of viruses or detrimental biological functions [24, 25].

Regulatory and Intellectual Property Issues

Artificial intelligence (AI) is revolutionising the drug discovery process, making it quicker and cheaper. Generative AI systems – such as ChatGPT and DALL-E – will democratise experimentation

in microbiology and other fields. AI can accelerate scientific development, but present new difficulties for the legislation and regulation of intellectual property (IP) [26]. Many jurisdictions have not yet faced the difficulties that may arise from the use of sophisticated AI in microbiological research.

AI systems can facilitate laboratory automation in the absence of a physical scientist. The problem under a quality-over-quantity approach is not how to build a working experimental pipeline but rather what experiments to do next and when to stop [27].

STUDIES OF CASES

The increasing resistance to clinically approved antibiotics has led to an increasing fascination of microbiologists by artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted antimicrobial discovery pipelines. This issue results in the search for active new antibiotics, drug repurposing from other fields and pathogen prevention. In early 2020, a peer-reviewed study applied AI on an unprecedented scale, using thousands of publicly available chemical and microbiological datasets, with state-of-the-art architectures, such as varyingly connected deep neural networks (in a hybrid considered suitable for structures of small molecules in files with well-established formats like SDF) and numerous graph- and pathway-theory-based characterisations (e.g., Simplified Molecular Input Line Entry Specification), molecular graphs as in Deep learning Studied batches of analogue chemical space through different units. Hypothesis generation Producing 2D-structures from a variety of chemical formats that antibiotic compounds could reach from low-affinity regions. Excitement about molecular structures Generally outperformed regarding the access to very high-inclined antibiotic-like regions. Analogue searches Generative adaptations logical perturbations on structures. Undertaking that all batch inputs were either public or synthetic but active structures [1]. Flourishing routes amenable to a vast array of matching antibiotic-like drug and elaborated partner architectures globed astounding curiosity delineated by deep generative synthetic design.

High-content imaging enhances basic discoveries, quantifiable loss-of-function viability during extended starvation addresses critical survival-based heterogeneity distinctions, and the adoption of widely reported multifactorial agents has been favoured while promoting multiple-skills training methods. An additional layer of high-content image dataset describes temporal response in ten popular bacterial species exposed single – that paints a powerful panorama of danger – current dependencies (causal machine learning formulates graphical structural assumptions to represent effect persistence and estimate possible virus/antibiotic priority compositions, state-space machine learning incorporates varied image data with bacterial frequencies via auxiliary graphical ideas to enrich human insight). Systematicity visualisation solid-state surface Pollution-hurt surface Collide target promoted-acquisition machine-image growth average green-algal Machine-Granted virulent disease microbial Infective Level. Bio-algorithm fast Bacterial-cell Image-writing SMIS constitutive designation systemic drilling-technique machine-paper-system conditioned mapping Half-life IFR Frequency-groundwork micro-bio-cosmic machine-remodelling virtual trying mapping-spectrum

Pipelines for AI-Assisted Antibacterial Discovery

The absence of novel antibiotics is a pressing global public health issue. The opportunity for lead prioritisation and prediction of microbial activity from huge chemical databases has increased, yet the number of novel antibiotics has decreased dramatically over the last several decades. Antibiotic discovery faces a global problem that is being met by artificial intelligence (AI) methods at an unprecedented rate [9]. A recent systematic assessment of 130 AI-assisted treatment and pairing strategies from multiple sources confirmed 18 strategies (introduction of novel antibiotics is almost impossible; drugs are repurposed instead. COVID drugs' also helps in acquiring information for repurposing. Candidates are already there but selection becomes a difficult task) (out of them 9 could be related to magnetic ones) that reinforced the confidence. So, every time a new possible therapeutic target was identified, AI-assisted treatment and matching could be performed by selecting suitable "books" from the solid literature "library" of the agent [10].

Generative molecular design approach using AI to lower the screening cost and improve the hit identification in antibiotic discovery. The discovery of Halicin, a broad range antibacterial compound active against drug-resistant strains, is an example of the utility of AI in antibiotic design. IBM researchers utilised an AI strategy based on conditional latent space sampling (CLaSS) to produce targeted broad-spectrum antibacterial candidates [12]. In under 48 days, CLaSS discovered, synthesised and experimentally verified two powerful lipopeptide compounds with efficacy against various diseases.

High Content Imaging for Microbiology: AI

Microbiological high-content imaging techniques yield vast volumes of image-based data reflecting the impact of experimental perturbations on cellular shape and behaviour across numerous time points and treatment conditions. High-content imaging investigations [2] can be made more accessible and have higher throughput by automating many of the processes normally performed by an expert microbiologist [6] using computer vision and deep-learning-based image-analysis techniques. The analysis of microscopy pictures taken under previously unattainable imaging settings has also been facilitated by deep learning, increasing the range of imaging techniques utilised in microbiological studies and supporting the development of new multimodal image-processing pipelines.

A variety of AI-enhanced high-content imaging pipelines have, therefore, been developed, including those for image quality enhancement, image denoising, object detection and tracking, organism categorisation, and the analysis of organism morphology or both morphology and behaviour. Some of these tasks can be automated partially or totally which saves time for data analysis. It has been claimed that the automation of whole-cell segmentation in fluorescence images of bacterially infected mammalian cells reduces the time of analysis by more than 90% compared to a fully manual analysis.

AI-powered analysis tools for high-content imaging datasets have been implemented into publicly available software packages including the BioImage Model Zoo, DeepCell, and CellProfiler.

AI for Genomic Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases

The rapid development of sequencing technologies has led to an extraordinary growth in the number of genomic data. Genomic epidemiology which monitors and examines the evolution of genomes over time and space and evaluates the most important adaptation underpinning pathogenicity, virulence and transmissibility [28] is based on these data. Knowledge of the dynamics of transmittable microorganisms is important for the creation of control and preventative strategies and the promotion of public and global health. It is important especially to learn about the formation of recombined variations and about horizontal-evolution mechanisms (e.g., plasmids) [2].

AI applications are not confined to genomic bioinformatics. AI models are used to facilitate trend-modeling analysis for transmitters with non-aggregated-sequence hinterland and anticipate the next possible strains to be released in a population. Develop tools to map variant congestion using the word2vec and observe the effects of popular co-variables.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Artificial intelligence is predicted to assume a strategic role in scientific innovation and productivity across fields. The distinct and rapidly increasing interest, investment and use of AI in microbiology demands attention to its future directions and ramifications to the field. Major areas of interest are: efforts to better incorporate existing resources into platforms that support cross-disciplinary use; adapting skill sets and education to incorporate these fast-moving technologies; and policies and governance that enable safe and ethical development, deployment and use of the methods across the wide range of disciplines to address large-scale issues such as the connection between climate change and public health (Yakimovich, 2024) [29].

Collaboration Ecosystems and Integrated Platforms

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is enabling the development of more complex and versatile systems that integrate large scale experimentation with high throughput data collecting and AI based analysis and prediction. Integrative platforms that autonomously organise, run and analyse experiments help steer research in a variety of microbiological applications, including bacterial chemotaxis and characterising host-range of viruses [2]. Collaborative ecosystems combine external experimental data with AI-based simulation and analysis to promote collective research on microbial populations, underlying processes, and emergent biophens in the industrial, medicinal, and environmental sectors [7].

These platforms can engage a growing number of professional and novice researchers and can foster conversation between microbiologists, AI specialists, and policy-makers. They can also be used for industrial and scientific purposes, outside the biomedical domain, hence broadening the contribution of AI to microbiology and life sciences.

Education, Skills & Workforce Development

Over the last decade, AI has become an integral part of high-throughput and high-content microbiology. Machine learning (ML) and deep learning (DL), two of the most important technologies of AI, are the basis of numerous novel applications for microbiologists. The purpose of such applications is mainly to analyse, interpret and mine data from photographs, genetic sequences and experimental results obtained from automated systems [2]. Microbiologists have poor understanding of AI related technologies, thus making it challenging to design effective solutions that are specialised for the sector. “Scientists would benefit from a workforce with high competence in computer science, data analysis, statistics, bioinformatics and automation”.

Although several universities and institutions worldwide provide training programs on ML and DL subjects in connection with programming languages, the courses rarely deal with microbiological applications. There are microbiology researchers who have not had the opportunity to specialised training and have resorted to self-learning programs. However, some microbiologists are having difficulties in developing AI-based solutions that fit their demands and want to learn new abilities more efficiently [30]. One important possibility is to promote AI-specific training in microbiology for a wider and more extensive adoption of ML and DL models and procedures particular to the area.

Policy and Governance Frameworks

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies are being integrated into various commercial and research activities and microbiology is no exception. In addition to classic bioinformatics and biostatistics approaches, AI is increasingly being implemented in microbiology with a broader array of methods, driven by increasing computational resources and the rapid accumulation of different forms of data. Supporting that expansion requires better availability and integration of heterogeneous data, and improved tools for data generation and sharing, data provenance tracking, and machine learning model maintenance. A healthy R&D ecosystem in AI-driven microbiology would also benefit from indicators of resource availability and quality for commonly used databases and models in the field, from standards for exchanging microbiology-specific data, metadata and models, and from oversight of emerging dual-use risks of AI in microbiology.

CONCLUSION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is starting to take on a key role in the science of microbiology. Its uses range from tools to technologies, theses, and factors, resulting in considerable advances in the understanding of diagnostics and other operations. Major advances have been made in predictive modelling of live micro-systems of bacterial life, viral sequence identification, etc. With the help of these new means and approach principles supported by AI, scientists seem to start a big revolution all over the sector.

Micro-organismic Artificial Intelligence includes several relevant topics and stages of development. Important steps forward in the discipline, well positioned to handle current and future challenges, are

pathogen detection, pharmaceutical development, and the growth of governance of artificial intelligence-based algorithms. Flexible training may broadly underpin the benefits of AI in microbiology, creating significant incentives to fully elucidate synthetic life. Rapid collation and intelligent curation of AI discoveries followed by bespoke design for best subsequent application to aquatic virus fauna is now seen as the key research goal [1].

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