

## THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, AND TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICES

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### ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence (AI) is one of the rapidly developing trends in higher education that has changed the teaching, learning, and academic communication pattern. Universities all over the world are actively implementing AI-based technologies into the learning settings to boost the effectiveness of the educational process, promote the personalisation of learning, as well as enhance the productivity of academic activities. Although AI tools are becoming increasingly common in the educational sector, there are few empirical studies on how students and teachers use and view these tools in their daily studies. The paper will examine the place of AI in higher education by qualitatively researching the insights and opinions of students regarding AI-aided learning tools. Based on a socio-technical theoretical approach, the study utilizes the mediation of AI in academic practices, knowledge-forming processes, and the agency formation and identity formation of learners.

**Keywords:** artificial intelligence, higher education, AI tools, academic communication, digital learning, student agency

### Introduction

The boom in the development of Artificial Intelligence technologies has had a drastic impact on the various areas of social life, including education. Over the past years, the application of AI-powered tools in institutions of higher education has become more and more popular to aid teaching, learning, research, and academic communication. Types of these technologies are automated writing assistant, intelligent tutoring, adaptive learning, and data-driven analytics tools, which are aimed at improving the educational processes.

Artificial intelligence is changing the way people used to learn, as it allows creating new types of contact between the students, teachers, and the online course platform. The AI tools may help students in academic writing, give instant feedback, learn languages, and contribute to research. This has made AI technologies no longer a peripheral educational device but a part of the modern academic system.

The literature review has focused on technological abilities and pedagogical advantages of AI systems in teaching. The research shows that AI has the capacity to assist in individualized learning, enhance student engagement, and assist in efficiency of academic tasks. Nevertheless, such technological changes also pose significant concerns about academic honesty, AI use in an ethical and responsible manner, and the shift of human agency in the educational process.

The impact of AI technologies on students, as well as their perception, is a crucial aspect that needs to be considered to create effective teaching practices and policies. Students engage with AI tools in a variety of ways, using them as a part of the studying process, as part of writing activities, and of the knowledge building. Their views offer useful information to understand the way AI transforms academic practices and determines learning outcomes.

This paper seeks to discuss the application of artificial intelligence in higher education with reference to the student experiences. The study adds to the existing knowledge on AI-mediated learning by investigating the ways students with the help of AI tools use them, how they appreciate their usefulness and drawbacks, and how they handle ethical aspects of the topic.

### Methodology

The research design that will be used in this study is a qualitative research design that seeks to understand the experience and perception of students about using the artificial intelligence in



higher education. The study takes an interpretive approach that stresses the comprehension of the nature of interaction between the learners and AI technologies in real academic settings.

#### **Data Collection**

The information was gathered using an online survey which was given to the students at the university and of varying academic disciplines. The survey was also composed of open-ended questions aimed at obtaining a description of students experience with AI tools during the process of their academic work, their perception of potential benefits and drawbacks, and their attitude towards the ethical aspect of AI-aided learning.

The data is comprised of 100 open-ended answers obtained among undergraduate and graduate pupils. Respondents were asked to freely provide thoughts about their utilization of AI devices like writing assistants, generative AI applications, translation applications, and other online learning instruments to facilitation of their educational pursuits.

#### **Data Analysis**

The collected responses were analyzed using thematic analysis, which allows researchers to identify patterns and recurring themes across qualitative datasets. The analysis followed several stages, including familiarization with the data, initial coding, identification of themes, and interpretation of findings.

The analysis focused on three main dimensions:

1. students' academic practices involving AI technologies
2. perceptions of the benefits and limitations of AI tools
3. ethical considerations related to AI-assisted learning

This approach enabled a deeper understanding of how AI tools are integrated into students' learning practices and how they influence academic communication and knowledge construction.

#### **Findings**

##### **AI as a Support for Academic Productivity**

Analyzed it is, AI tools are commonly utilized by the students to facilitate in various academic processes, including writing, drafting, information search, and idea creation. As reported by most interviewees, AI-powered writing assistants are useful in helping them write their texts in better grammar, vocabularies, and to better organize their academic work.

It was also noted that AI tools conserve a lot of time when carrying out academic activities amongst students. The automated feedback will allow the learners to notice errors and to ameliorate their work in a reasonably brief span of time, thus they will be able to write and edit their work more effectively. In this respect, the AI technologies are applied as the online learning assistants that enable productivity and task control.

##### **Artificial Intelligence as an Extended Learning Environment.**

Another excellent theme that can be singled out with the assistance of the data is the role of AI as a substantial learning environment. Learning companions are students who refer to AI tools to explain, give examples, and other points of view regarding difficult problems.

Students reported that they acquired more academic concepts and learned more about the language with the repeated interaction with AI systems. Intelligence software enables the learners to experiment with writing styles, test other formulations, and acquire professional vocabulary. The practices are involved in acquiring academic literacy and critical thinking skills.

##### **Student Agency and AI-Mediated Learning**

Respondents noted that AI devices did not take over their intellectual work but instead assisted them in learning. Students feel themselves as active participants who strategically exploit AI technologies to gain better knowledge and improve their academic achievements.

The significance of being able to control the learning process was pointed out by many respondents. They referred to AI tools as auxiliary materials that help solving problems rather than making final decisions and interpretations to the learner.

Ethical Issues and Academic honesty.



Though there are advantages to the AI technologies, students were also concerned about academic integrity and the limits of ethics. Other participants were concerned that overdependence on AI-generated content would hinder critical thinking and originality in academic writing.

The absence of precise institutional guidelines on the usage of AI in academic tasks is also another issue that appears to be recurring. Students usually said that they were confused about what types of AI assistance were allowed and what kind of assistance can be considered as academic misconduct.

This uncertainty poses ethical issues to students who want to be good citizens and to meet their academic demands with the use of AI.

### Discussion

The results prove that AI can take an even more prominent role in academic practices in higher education. Learning is supported with the help of AI technologies that help to create the knowledge exploration and offer the instant feedback to learners, as well as to create the academic processes more efficient.

In the framework of socio-technical approach, AI-mediated learning is the result of the interaction between the students, the digital tools, the educational institution, and academic norms. The AI tools are mediating technologies, which shape the nature of knowledge production, communication, and evaluation.

Simultaneously, the ethical ambiguity of AI usage indicates that institutional clarity is required. The universities need to come up with clear policies that will differentiate between acceptable applications of AI-assisted learning and unacceptable applications that infringe on academic integrity.

Teachers should also re-evaluate the pedagogical approaches to the AI driven changes in education. Instead of banning AI tools, the instructors can incorporate them into the classroom learning experience as learning tools that facilitate reflection, revision, and critical thinking.

### Conclusion

The field of artificial intelligence is revolutionizing higher education through the redefinition of academic communication, learning processes, and knowledge creation. AI-based technologies can also be a good aid to the academic activity of students, allowing them to write in a more productive way and master their language better and explore more knowledge.

Meanwhile, the implementation of AI in higher education encourages significant ethical and pedagogical concerns. It is the responsibility of students to work out complicated choices on how best to use AI tools, and in most cases, there is no obvious institutional direction.

To overcome these issues the universities must come up with clear policies and pedagogically enabled strategies that can empower the use of AI in academic institutions responsibly. This can be achieved by abandoning the innovation that the AI has brought and the preservation of academic integrity to enable institutions of higher learning to develop new learning experiences that will equip students with the digital future.

The future research needs to discuss disciplinary variations in the use of AI, discuss the views of instructors on AI-mediated learning, and the future effect of AI technologies on academic practices.

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