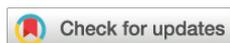RESEARCH ARTICLE

Humanities and Social Sciences Students' Views on the Use of AI Tools for Academic Purposes: Practices, Benefits, Challenges, and Suggestions

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Abstract: Students' views on AI tools can inform the development of a new policy framework for their use in higher education. In this context, this paper examines the views of higher education students at the University of Patras on the practices, benefits, challenges, and suggestions for these tools in academic contexts. A qualitative approach and semi-structured interviews were used to collect the research data, involving 17 humanities students at the University of Patras. Students seem to use AI tools mainly for writing papers and searching for information. They recognize benefits in terms of enhancing cognitive development, while also expressing concerns that need to be addressed, such as the weakening of academic integrity and the tendency towards plagiarism. At the same time, students suggest the need for institutional support for the proper and responsible use of artificial intelligence tools, through training seminars, integrating rules into the educational process, and cultivating digital literacy to promote conscious, creative, and non-passive usage.

Keywords: higher education, artificial intelligence (AI), AI tools, AI applications

1 Introduction

In recent years, the rapid spread of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly tools such as ChatGPT, has led to significant changes in how higher education students approach learning and their academic responsibilities (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024a, 2024b; Lavidas et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2024). As a result, several countries have implemented policies to integrate AI into all levels of education (Aravantinos et al., 2024; Athanassopoulos et al., 2023; Voulgari et al., 2024). Specifically for higher education in many countries, for example, the US has approved the use of AI in universities on the condition that privacy, equality, and human supervision are ensured (UNESCO, 2023). Similarly, the Chinese Ministry of Education has issued guidelines on the use of AI and is encouraging the country's universities to create departments and courses geared towards this direction (CSET, 2023). Similarly, universities in Australia encourage their students to use AI tools, but at the same time emphasize the students' responsibility to use them properly. The European Union, both collectively and individually, has taken decisions to integrate AI into education. In this context, the European Union has established guidelines on the ethical use of AI tools (European Commission, 2022), and university institutions have organized conferences on the responsible use of these tools (European University Association, n.d.). Finally, in Greece, a committee was established in November 2023 to formulate a national policy for harnessing the potential of AI (Advisory Committee on Artificial Intelligence, 2024).

According to recent studies (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024a, 2024b; Baek et al., 2024; Chauke et al., 2024; Lavidas et al., 2024; Miranda et al., 2024; Ravšelj et al., 2025), university students worldwide appear to be predominantly positive towards the use of artificial intelligence tools, recognizing the multiple benefits that can result from their use in the learning process (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024a, 2024b; Baek et al., 2024; Chauke et al., 2024; Lavidas et al., 2024; Ravšelj et al., 2025). Nevertheless, a significant part of the literature also highlights the concerns that accompany the integration of these tools into higher education, which relate both to issues of ethics and academic integrity and to their general acceptance by the university community (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024a, 2024b; Chan & Hu, 2023; Chauke et al., 2024; Miranda et al., 2024).

Furthermore, existing studies have proposed the use of AI for academic purposes without systematically investigating the views of students themselves regarding the proposed practices.

It is also worth noting that most of the research focuses on students at international universities, mainly outside Europe, without focusing on specific schools or scientific fields. Considering that most productive artificial intelligence tools focus primarily on text production and processing, there appears to be particular research interest in studying students who mainly produce written work during their studies, such as students of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS), whose studies are most closely linked to text-centric AI tools as they rely heavily on essays, research papers, and theoretical analyses (Lavidas et al., 2024). These students often deal with language and analytical tasks, where AI tools like automatic writing or text rewriting systems can have a direct and meaningful impact. Furthermore, unlike disciplines that emphasize experimental or numerical data, HSS students are required to develop argumentation, critical thinking, and theoretical documentation—elements that the presence of AI can significantly influence. For this reason, their study offers a fertile field for examining both the opportunities and challenges that AI brings to the academic community of students.

In this context, the present study focuses on students of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Patras, seeking to capture not only the perceived benefits and expressed concerns, but also the students' own suggestions regarding the integration of tools such as ChatGPT into university teaching and learning. Therefore, this work will contribute to a more thorough understanding of the challenges and opportunities arising from the use of generative artificial intelligence in higher education. Recording students' views and concerns about the use of AI can serve as a guide for developing targeted interventions that promote the responsible use of these technologies. In this context, teachers and university program designers can use the results to shape educational practices that meet the contemporary digital needs of students by integrating AI tools in a pedagogically appropriate manner. Ultimately, universities can utilize the findings to enhance students' digital literacy and promote academic ethics in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

1.1   Research Questions

This study will focus on the following research questions:
RQ1: How do HSS' students use AI tools for academic purposes?
RQ2: What benefits do HSS' students perceive from using AI tools for academic purposes?
RQ3: What challenges do HSS' students face when using AI tools for academic purposes?
RQ4: What are the suggestions of HSS' students for using AI tools for academic purposes?

2   Literature Review

Previous research on the use of AI tools for academic purposes has been conducted mainly outside the European Union, following mainly the quantitative approach. No research has been found that has studied the views of students in the humanities and social sciences alone, except for the research by Lavidas et al. (2024), which mainly focuses on the factors that explain students' intention to use these tools. More specifically, the studies by Acosta-Enriquez et al. (2024a) and (2024b), conducted in Peru with 499 and 201 students, respectively, the aim of the first was to analyze university students' attitudes toward the use of ChatGPT in their academic activities. The aim of the study by Acosta-Enriquez et al. (2024b) was to assess the knowledge, concerns, attitudes, and ethical views regarding the use of ChatGPT by Generation Z students in higher education (HE) in Peru. In addition, the study by Arowosegbe et al. (2024) was conducted in the United Kingdom with 136 students and aimed to assess the use, perceptions, perspectives, and challenges of using generative artificial intelligence (Gen-AI) in higher education. Furthermore, the study by Baek et al. (2024) was conducted with 1,001 students and aimed to investigate how university students in the US perceive and use ChatGPT, and how this use relates to social structures and personal characteristics of students. The study by Chan & Hu (2023) was conducted in Hong Kong with 399 students from various disciplines, and it aimed to investigate university students' perceptions of generative artificial intelligence technologies (GenAI), such as ChatGPT, in higher education, focusing on familiarity, willingness to use, potential benefits, challenges, and strategies for effective integration. Chauke et al. (2024) conducted a study in Hong Kong with 10 students to investigate postgraduate students' perceptions of the benefits of using artificial intelligence tools, with a focus on ChatGPT, on their academic success at historically disadvantaged universities in South Africa. In addition, the research by Darwin et al. (2023) was conducted in Indonesia. Seven students participated in the study, which aimed to investigate EFL graduate students' perceptions of the benefits and limitations of using artificial intelligence (AI) in the context of critical thinking development. Meanwhile, the research by Sartono et al. (2023) aimed to

investigate the factors that influence the willingness of higher education students to use chatbots. In addition, Summers et al. (2024) conducted a study with 13 nursing students in Australia, and the aim of the study was to investigate nursing students' views on the application and integration of generative AI tools in their studies. The research by Miranda et al. (2024) was conducted with 532 students in the Philippines and aimed to examine the use of generative AI (ChatGPT, Gemini, Bing AI, etc.), devices, reasons for use, barriers, perceptions of students, teachers, and administrators, as well as ethical issues in the use of AI in higher education. In a global study (Yu et al., 2024) conducted with 328 students, the aim of the study was to gain knowledge about the various effects on the learning experience of users when using the ChatGPT artificial intelligence tool in higher education. Ravselj et al. (2025) conducted a global survey of higher education students, and the questionnaire was translated into Italian, Spanish, Turkish, Japanese, Arabic, and Hebrew, suggesting participation from those regions. The survey aimed to investigate the use of generative artificial intelligence by higher education students, focusing on its benefits, challenges, perceptions, and impact on the learning experience.

In summary, the international literature shows that students use AI for practical benefits but express significant concerns about its validity and academic ethics (Lavidas et al., 2022a). Despite these useful findings, knowledge remains limited on how the same issues manifest themselves in the Greek university context, particularly among students of Humanities and Social Sciences. This work attempts to fill this gap by focusing on the experiences, views, and suggestions of a group of students who come into daily contact with AI tools.

3   Methodology

This study follows the qualitative approach, aiming to explore in depth the views of students at the University of Patras regarding the use of AI tools for academic purposes. Qualitative research is appropriate when the goal is not to generalize results but to understand complex phenomena, such as students' relationships with new technologies and their personal experiences of using them (Creswell, 2014).

The research was conducted in April 2025, and all ethical guidelines were followed during its implementation. Participants were informed in advance of the purpose of the survey and the possibility of withdrawing at any time, and they gave their consent to participate in the survey. All data remained anonymous and confidential, and it was ensured that no information in the publication of the results could lead to the identification of the participants. This research was approved by the Institutional Review Board of the Department of Educational Science and Early Childhood Education of the University of Patras (77925/23-10-2023).

The research sample (see Table 1) consists of seventeen (17) undergraduate students (12 women and 5 men) from the University of Patras, coming from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Specifically, 13 students from the Department of Educational Sciences and Early Childhood Education (10 in their third year and 3 in their fourth year of study), one (1) student from the Department of Philosophy (second year of study), two (2) students from the Department of Education and Social Work (both in their third year of study), and one (1) student from the Department of History and Archaeology (fourth year of study) who use AI for academic purposes. All participants were between 20 and 22 years old.

Table 1   Students' demographic characteristics ($N = 17$)

Variable	Frequencies
Gender	
Female	12
Male	5
Departments	
Department of Educational Sciences and Early Childhood Education	13
Department of Philosophy	1
Department of Education and Social Work	2
Department of History and Archaeology	1
Year of Undergraduate Study	
Second Year	1
Third Year	12
Fourth Year	4

Note: Participants were Greek undergraduate students aged 20–22 years, enrolled in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Patras.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling, based on clear inclusion criteria: (a)

attending at least two courses during the spring semester, (b) previous contact with AI tools, and (c) willingness to participate in a lengthy interview. Participants were invited to participate in the study through personal communication. The aim was to achieve the greatest possible variety in terms of year of study, gender, and degree of familiarity with AI.

Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews, which provide flexibility in the formulation of questions and promote the natural flow of conversation, while allowing participants to express themselves freely (Creswell, 2014). To ensure methodological rigor and the credibility of the qualitative findings, a comprehensive assessment of the semi-structured interview protocol was undertaken before the main data collection phase. The preliminary version of the instrument was subjected to a pilot test involving three undergraduate students from the School of HSS at the University of Patras, who were not included in the final research sample. The pilot phase aimed to examine the clarity, comprehensibility, and relevance of the questions, as well as to evaluate the natural progression and coherence of the interview dialogue. Following the pilot implementation, the instrument was established through expert review. Two scholars with expertise in qualitative methodology and educational technology independently evaluated the alignment of each question with the study's research objectives, assessing semantic clarity, theoretical adequacy, and thematic balance. Their constructive feedback led to the revision of the questions to elicit more detailed and reflective responses from participants. The final version of the instrument consists of five questions. The first part of the questions (see Table 2) focused on the students' opinions on the use of AI. It then focused on the benefits, then on the concerns students face when using AI tools, and finally on suggestions for using these tools for academic purposes. Each interview lasted approximately 25 minutes and was conducted via an online platform. In this study, we stopped the interviews at 17 students because after the 15th student, the findings reached saturation. Saturation was assessed systematically by recording the number of new codes per interview; no new codes were added in the last two interviews.

Table 2   Semi-structured interview questions

No.	Question
1	Students' experiences with AI:
1.1	Which AI tools do you use and for what purpose (give some examples)?
1.2	How do you use AI daily at university (give some examples)?
2	Benefits of using AI applications for academic purposes:
2.1	Do you see any benefits from this use in your studies? If so, what are they (give me some examples)?
3	Concerns about the use of AI applications:
3.1	Do you have any concerns or reservations about the use of such tools? If so, what are they (give me some examples)?
4	Suggestions for integrating AI into the educational process:
4.1	Do you believe that artificial intelligence should be incorporated into the university's educational process? If so, how (give me some examples)?

The data obtained from the interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants. The participants' approval was sought for the transcribed texts. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data (Creswell, 2014). Initially, codes indicating the key aspects of the transcribed texts were identified in accordance with our research questions, and then the basic categories for grouping these codes were identified. The matching of text segments to codes was done separately by two researchers who independently developed initial codes and compared them. Their agreement was measured (Cohen's κ = 0.81, "very good"), and discrepancies were discussed until consensus was reached. The research results present the categories that emerged from the analysis as well as the corresponding codes with specific examples.

4   Results

The following paragraphs outline the main analytical categories that emerged from the thematic analysis, structured in accordance with the study's research questions. Within these categories, specific subcodes and examples of students' opinions are presented in quotes, capturing the underlying themes and recurring patterns identified in the participants' responses.

4.1   Use of AI tools

The tool that seems to be used most by the students in the sample is ChatGPT, which is usually used for writing assignments and generating ideas. According to the data, students also seem to use other AI tools such as Grammarly, Perplexity, Google Translate, Canva, Deepseek, DeepL Translator, Notion al, Gama, QuillBot, Sazan, and Gemini. For example, subject 5 states that "...I often experiment with Canva, which now has AI capabilities and posters for children's activities..." Subject 11 adds that "...I also use gama, which helps me create presentations with very nice graphics..." Subject 1 states that "...ChatGPT is the most basic tool I use mainly for guidance in understanding and thinking..." Finally, subject 14 states that "... many times gemini gives me more understandable answers, as I told you about the previous topic, so it gives me more alternatives..."

4.2   Practices of utilizing AI for academic purposes

Table 3 presents, in descending order of appearance, the categories corresponding to the practices of utilizing AI by students. The practice that seems to dominate among students is the use of AI for writing papers. This category includes specific uses such as: ideas for paper structure, syntactic checking of sentences, school assignments, improving writing quality, text structuring, creating summaries, creating posters, videos with images, creating educational material, creating visual material, inspiration and creation of activities, presentations, drafts, spelling assistance, and task management. Subject 1 states that "...It acts as an assistant when I write assignments, to get ideas or when I want to think about the structure of the assignment..."

Table 3   Practices of utilizing IT tools by students ($N = 17$)

Categories	Frequencies	Relative Frequencies
Writing assignments	16/17	94.12%
Searching for information	15/17	88.24%
Translating texts	11/17	64.71%
Study tips	8/17	47.06%
Information processing	4/17	23.53%
Text paraphrasing	2/17	11.76%

The second practice that students mention for using AI is searching for information. This approach enhances understanding and knowledge retention. This category includes specific uses such as: clarification of concepts, search engine, information search, cross-referencing of information, identification of key concepts in academic articles, searching for information with references to sources, understanding philosophical theories, philosophical questions, searching for scientific articles, and faster note-taking. For example, subject 8 states that "... I am experimenting with Perplexity AI, which has built-in sources and helps to search for information accurately..." Finally, subject 9 states "... when I read a philosopher, such as Kant or Aristotle, and I don't fully understand an argument, I use ChatGPT to explain it to me in a simpler way...".

The third practice where AI is used is text translation. These applications facilitate understanding and enhance access to multilingual sources. This category includes specific uses such as: word translation, communication, understanding foreign-language texts, and correcting and improving English texts. Subject 7 argues: "... Deepl is more reliable than Google Translate because it has higher quality translations and is more suitable for texts, reports, or articles that you may want to translate or even write..."

Another practice refers to students using IT tools for study advice. This category includes specific uses such as: study plans, study support, and examples of philosophical concepts. Subject 5 states that "... To create more effective study plans...".

The fifth practice refers to information processing. This category includes specific uses such as: reliable sources, bibliographic references, and theory connections. Subject 8 states that "...It helps me find connections between theories..." Furthermore, subject 1 states that "...It gives me answers that are more targeted to the sources. It helps me find reliable information..." Subject 14 emphasizes that "...I use artificial intelligence to find some articles or bibliography to do some work..."

The last practice includes text paraphrasing. This category includes specific uses such as: summarizing, paraphrasing, and rephrasing sentences. For example, subject 8 states that "...Many times, instead of reading 30 pages, I ask for a 500-word summary to understand the

basic meaning..." Finally, subject 12 emphasizes that "...I use QuillBot for paraphrasing and rephrasing sentences, especially when I want to avoid repetition...".

4.3   Benefits of utilizing AI for academic purposes

Table 4 presents, in descending order of appearance, the categories corresponding to the benefits of utilizing AI by students. The main benefit that seems to emerge from the interviews is time savings. For example, subject 1 comments that "... the main benefit is that it saves me a lot of time, *i.e.*, some things that would take me longer to do without the tools now take me much less time..." Finally, subject 5 agrees with subject 1, saying that "... I save time in searching for information and writing text...".

Table 4   Benefits recognized by students from the use of AI tools ($N = 17$)

Categories	Frequencies	Relative Frequencies
Time saving	14/17	82.35%
Flexibility and autonomy	12/17	70.59%
Improved quality of work	11/17	64.71%
Critical thinking and cognitive development	10/17	58.82%
Understanding of information	7/17	41.18%
Language benefits	3/17	17.65%

The second benefit that students seem to gain from using AI applications is flexibility and autonomy, *i.e.*, there is an increase in autonomy and independence, learning flexibility, exam preparation, a personal assistant, and 24/7 availability. For example, subject 11 comments that "...Of course, it has made my studying much easier because it helps me understand difficult concepts more quickly. I can ask a AI tool anything I want at any time of the day and get an immediate answer...". Furthermore, subject 1 states that "...When I write an assignment, I can ask the AI to identify any inaccuracies and help me structure it better. I also feel more independent with these tools. After all, I don't have to wait for my professor, etc., to explain something to me because I can ask ChatGPT directly...".

The third benefit that students seem to have, according to the data, is related to the enhancement of critical thinking and cognitive development, specifically the enhancement of creativity, the organization of thoughts and ideas, improving the way of thinking, and enhancing synthetic ability and exploration. As subject 12 states, "...Also, using them has helped me improve my way of thinking, because they lead me to see information from different perspectives..." Finally, subject 3 responds that "...It puts you in the process of thinking about whether what it provides you with is okay to use as you wish and to take it a step further and achieve the result you want...".

The fourth benefit that students seem to gain from using AI applications is understanding information. Specifically, this includes understanding difficult concepts, understanding through simplification and examples, understanding difficult philosophical texts, improving and supporting comprehension, and preparing for oral exams. For example, subject 7 states, "...Some of the benefits I think AI has in my studies and in my daily life in general are that I can understand some difficult concepts. Especially at university, a course may be difficult for me, or some of the things mentioned may be difficult for us, so AI provides a little help so that I can better understand what is being asked of me...".

The fifth benefit that students seem to report gaining from using AI is an improvement in the quality of their work, both in terms of improving the quality and organization of their studies and the organization of their thoughts and ideas, as well as improving their writing. For example, subject 2 states, "...The quality of my work and assignments has definitely improved. When I write an assignment, I can ask AI to identify any inaccuracies and help me structure it better..." Meanwhile, subject 10 comments that "... There are definitely benefits because it helps me write assignments, organizes the topics for me, how I will write them, and definitely finishes the work faster when you have a plan...".

Another benefit that students who use AI seem to recognize is the linguistic benefits. In the category of linguistic benefits is support for spelling and grammar. Subject 4 states that "...However, when it comes to grammar, the truth is that it has a more academic character and helps with writing better." Finally, subject 12 states that "...Yes, especially when I write in English. Many times, I am not sure if I am using a word or expression correctly. With the help of tools such as Grammarly, I see my mistakes, they are corrected on the spot, and I learn. Even

in Greek, it has helped me write more correctly and with greater accuracy. It's like having an editor next to you all the time...".

4.4   Concerns about the use of AI for academic purposes

Table 5 presents, in descending order of frequency, the categories corresponding to students' concerns about the use of AI. The main challenge students seem to face when using the Internet is the unreliability of the information provided. Students are concerned about the inaccuracy of these tools, the validity of the information, misinformation, the unreliability of the content, incorrect wording, and non-existent information. For example, subject 6 states, "Let's say that often the content they provide may be wrong, so you have to cross-check the information they give you because it may not be valid. You have to check the answers you are given and whether there is...". Subject 10 agrees with subject 6, saying that "... When I ask it for some information, it gives me an answer that I know is not correct, and even though I ask it politely to correct it, it continues to give wrong answers or produce answers, *i.e.* when I ask it for some articles, it creates information that does not exist...".

Table 5   Concerns recognized by students from the use of AI tools ($N = 17$)

Categories	Frequencies	Relative Frequencies
Unreliability of the information provided	14/17	82.35%
Weakening of critical thinking	13/17	76.47%
Weakening of academic integrity and a tendency	12/17	70.59%
Excessive dependence	9/17	52.94%
Ethical dilemmas	7/17	41.18%
Weakening of creativity and authenticity	7/17	41.18%

A second concern of students who use AI has to do with the possible weakening of critical thinking, as according to the students, they are concerned about the loss of critical thinking, its undermining and restriction, as well as the failure to develop basic skills such as critical thinking and argumentation. Subject 7 states that "...students become addicted to it and can no longer do any work or create their own content on any subject without consulting artificial intelligence. In other words, their critical thinking is no longer cultivated, and so they will reach a point where they will not be able to do anything on their own...".

Another concern expressed by students is the weakening of academic integrity and the tendency toward plagiarism. Students are mainly concerned about academic integrity and plagiarism, the risk of copying, the deterioration of their academic image, the reduction of effort, and the security of their data. For example, subject 7 states, "...Certainly because, as is well known, especially ChatGPT, what it does is collect information from various articles or sources, so it collects the information it wants to draw a conclusion and respond to us very quickly and easily, without us understanding how many sites it has consulted. So yes, plagiarism definitely exists, it's just that we don't understand it so easily and immediately...".

Furthermore, students express concern about their own excessive dependence on the use of such applications. There is concern both about excessive dependence and about student addiction. Subject 5 comments that "...I am afraid that I will become overly reliant on the tools and that my critical thinking or ability to compose my own work will be affected...".

Another concern expressed by students has to do with the ethical dilemmas they face when using AI, *i.e.*, ethical concerns, ethical considerations, and the ethical use of such tools. Subject 1 wonders whether an assignment produced exclusively with the use of AI can be considered his own, *i.e.*, "...And another concern about the issue of authenticity, *i.e.*, whether an assignment written with the help of AI remains mine...". Subject 5 wonders about the ethical use of such tools when the student does not mention anywhere that they have used them, "... I wonder whether it is ethically correct to use AI in academic texts, especially if I do not mention its use...".

The final concern that seems to emerge from the students' comments is the weakening of creativity and authenticity; they are mainly concerned about issues of authenticity and creativity. Subject 2 states that "...There is also the issue of the authenticity of assignments. As many students do a large part of their assignments by copying from AI, something is lost in terms of each person's authenticity..." Finally, subject 12 comments that "...If you rely too much on a tool to correct or formulate your texts, you may lose your own sense of expression...".

4.5   Proposals for the use of AI for academic purposes

Table 6 presents, in descending order of appearance, the categories corresponding to the students' proposals for the use of AI. The main suggestion that students seem to propose regarding the use of NT is student education, *i.e.*, the need to train both students and teachers in the proper use of such tools. How students suggest this is as follows: training students and teachers in the correct use of these tools, seminars, courses, and workshops, training in information evaluation, comparative thinking exercises, and training to reduce fear. Subject 8 states that "...Perhaps there could be digital literacy courses or seminars that show how to cross-check information, how to verify its accuracy, and how to use it creatively rather than passively. AI is a tool—it should not become a substitute for thinking..." Furthermore, subject 1 states that "... Students could also be trained in how to use these artificial intelligence tools responsibly. Through seminars and courses...".

Table 6   Students' suggestions for the use of AI for academic purposes ($N = 17$)

Categories	Frequencies	Relative Frequencies
Training in the use of AI for academic purposes	14/17	82.35%
Integration of AI and learning support	13/17	76.47%
Responsible use	10/17	58.82%

Furthermore, one suggestion made by students is the integration of AI and learning support, *i.e.*, the use of AI intelligence as an aid to studying but also as a means of contributing to better education for students. This can be integrated into the university through enhanced teaching, faculty support, the presence of the human factor and not exclusively AI, conscious and balanced integration, teaching support, integration into supervised assignments, administrative support, research support, enhancing collaborative learning, balancing digital and physical learning, evaluating and identifying errors and biases, as a supportive tool and valuable assistant, and educators integrating AI and creating questions and tests. Subject 5 states that "...Artificial intelligence can be used as a support tool in studying. With guidance and limits, artificial intelligence can be used as a supportive tool in studying, creating teaching materials, or even practicing lesson plans...". Furthermore, subject 11 states that "... First of all, there could be guidance from teachers through lectures and training programs on how artificial intelligence could be used properly. Teachers could also incorporate AI tools into their teaching...".

Finally, another suggestion that students have regarding the use of AI applications is that they should be used responsibly, *i.e.*, students should use AI tools but do so in a way that is beneficial to themselves, *i.e.*, that contributes to their development. In other words, there is a need for responsible use, with moderation and limits, pedagogical judgment, and without demonization. Subject 4 states that "...It should not replace activities such as face-to-face collaboration; there should be a balance between digital and physical learning. Students should first evaluate information and identify possible biases and errors, and not accept them uncritically, which should essentially be taught by teachers..." Furthermore, subject 13 states that "...Perhaps it should, but in moderation. And there should also be some nice features in terms of the AI itself and its use. Let's say, when it comes to evaluating a student's work to see what can be corrected, yes! But when, let's say, someone asks it to design a certain assignment or anything else, the application should indicate that it cannot be done...". Finally, subject 7 states that "... It gives us some ideas if we lack inspiration, but I believe that the right way to integrate it into the university is to do so in moderation and within limits...".

5   Discussion

The findings of the present research demonstrate that AI has been integrated into the academic daily life of the students in the sample and meets needs at multiple levels. The students use AI tools for writing assignments, searching for information, translating text, processing bibliography, receiving advice for their study, and paraphrasing text. The findings of the previous studies agree with the data of the present research regarding the fact that students use AI tools to find information (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024b; Chan & Hu, 2023; Chauke et al., 2024; Ravšelj et al., 2025), to articulate their ideas more clearly (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024b; Arowosegbe et al., 2024; Chauke et al., 2024; Ravšelj et al., 2025), to better understand demanding concepts and to improve the quality of their assignments (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024b; Chan & Hu, 2023; Chauke et al., 2024; Miranda et al., 2024; Ravšelj et al., 2025).

According to the answers of students in the sample, the benefits that they can derive from the utilization of AI are the enhancement of critical thinking and intellectual development, flexibility and autonomy, time saving, improvement of writing quality, understanding of information, and linguistic benefits. Similarly, previous studies agree that students acquire the ability of critical thinking (e.g., Chauke et al., 2024), autonomy in learning is enhanced (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024a; Arowosegbe et al., 2024; Baek et al., 2024; Chan & Hu, 2023; Ravšelj et al., 2025; Darwin et al., 2023), and enhancement of analytical ability is realized through the rapid processing and summary of information (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024a; Chauke et al., 2024; Darwin et al., 2023).

The concerns that dominate among the students of the sample who use AI tools in their studies are the weakening of integrity and propensity towards plagiarism, weakening of critical thinking, unreliability of the information provided, excessive dependence, ethical dilemmas, and weakening of creativity and authenticity. The findings of the study are confirmed also by previous works, which demonstrate that the students' concerns are the limitation of critical thinking (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024b; Miranda et al., 2024), instances of excessive dependence (Chan & Hu, 2023; Chauke et al., 2024; Darwin et al., 2023), limitation of initiative and self-activity (Chauke et al., 2024), ethical concerns (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024a, 2024b; Arowosegbe et al., 2024; Chan & Hu, 2023; Chauke et al., 2024), violation of academic integrity and plagiarism (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024a; Baek et al., 2024; Chan & Hu, 2023; Chauke et al., 2024) as well as the reliability and correctness of information (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024a, 2024b; Arowosegbe et al., 2024; Baek et al., 2024; Chan & Hu, 2023; Miranda et al., 2024).

Finally, the students of the sample indicate how they would like these tools to be used in their studies. The ideas that appear to dominate among the students who use AI tools in their studies are the need for integration of AI and support in learning, education, and responsible use of these tools. The integration of AI into learning and the support of it could be realized through the enhancement of teaching, balance between digital and in person learning, support of the professors regarding the use of these tools, as it is something new both for the students and for the professors, but also through the introduction of assessment exercises and the identification of errors and biases, so that students are taught how to process the plethora of information that these tools can provide to them (Lavidas et al., 2022b). The integration of AI tools in higher education has been highlighted in several studies, with students emphasizing that this process should be implemented in a way that maximizes the benefits for learners while also addressing existing inequalities among them (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024b; Arowosegbe et al., 2024; Babo et al., 2024; Baek et al., 2024; Darwin et al., 2023; Yu et al., 2024). Still, students suggested that they should receive proper education and training on the use of these tools. This can be achieved through specialized courses and seminars that promote the responsible use of AI tools. The findings of this study align with previous research, emphasizing the pivotal role of education in ensuring the effective and ethical integration of AI in learning (Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024b; Baek et al., 2024; Chan & Hu, 2023; Yu et al., 2024). Finally, students emphasized the need for the responsible use of AI tools. This can be achieved through conscious engagement and the establishment of clear boundaries, enabling users to recognize when the use of such tools should be limited. Similarly, Chauke et al. (2024) report student perspectives on the integration of AI in education, which align with the findings of this study, highlighting the importance of moderation and defined limits in its use.

6   Recommendations and limitations

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has evolved rapidly, transforming societies worldwide and reshaping the landscape of education. The growing adoption of AI technologies by students highlights the need for new educational policies in higher education that promote the constructive and ethical use of such tools. To achieve this, universities should develop a comprehensive framework of guidelines that clearly define both acceptable practices and prohibitions related to AI use.

Moreover, both students and academic staff should receive systematic training through specially designed courses and workshops. These initiatives would enable students to utilize AI as a supportive learning tool rather than as a substitute for their own intellectual engagement, while supporting educators in identifying and preventing potential misuse. Universities must also ensure equitable access by providing the necessary technological infrastructure so that all students have the opportunity to develop digital competence and responsible AI literacy.

Finally, to prevent the misuse of AI tools and to maintain fair and reliable student assessment, higher education institutions should adopt alternative evaluation methods that emphasize authentic performance and critical thinking—such as oral examinations, debates, or project-based

assessments. Such approaches would safeguard academic integrity while aligning assessment practices with the realities of AI-enhanced learning environments.

The study highlighted important aspects for the utilization of AI tools. However, the findings are restricted by the small and homogeneous sample. Moreover, the findings were based on self-reports, and this fact usually leads to biased responses (Lavidas & Gialamas, 2019). Future research should involve larger and more diverse student populations and adopt mixed methods designs to enhance validity and generalizability. Finally, comparative studies across academic disciplines would also provide a deeper understanding of contextual differences.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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