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AI IN HIGHER EDUCATION: STUDENTS' VOICES IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

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Purpose: This paper examines how students of the Faculty of Organization and Management perceive and evaluate the implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) in the learning process, communication, and educational administration, as well as its role in the (re)shaping of university ethical standards.
Design/methodology/approach: The study is based on a survey conducted among 82 undergraduate students of the Department of Applied Linguistics. The questionnaire consisted predominantly of closed-ended (single and multiple choice) and semi-open questions. In several instances, a Likert scale was applied with a view to examining the intensity of respondents' attitudes and opinions. The research investigates the extent to which students use AI as a practical tool supporting language-related tasks and office management activities within the academic environment.
Findings: The results indicate that the increasing integration of AI into higher education significantly influences educational practices and institutional management. Students demonstrate a largely pragmatic engagement with AI technologies; however, their attitudes toward the ethical implications of AI remain ambivalent. In particular, students frequently negotiate the boundaries between assistance and authorship, as well as between automation and personal responsibility. The findings also reveal a strong awareness of issues related to reliability, accountability, and academic integrity.
Research limitations/implications: The study is limited to undergraduate students from a single department, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other academic disciplines or institutional contexts. Further research across different faculties and universities could provide a broader perspective on AI use in higher education.
Practical implications: The findings may inform universities and educators in developing guidelines and policies that support the responsible and ethical use of AI in teaching, learning, communication, and administrative practices.
Originality/value: The paper contributes to the growing discussion on Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED) by offering empirical insights into students' perceptions of AI integration in both educational and organizational contexts, with particular attention to emerging ethical considerations in academic environments. The information obtained may be useful for universities in planning strategies to address the issues of privacy and data governance, access and distribution of AI tools, and institutional accountability.

Keywords: artificial intelligence (AI), artificial intelligence in education (AIED), higher education, educational technology, students' perceptions, digital transformation, organization and management, communication, academic integrity.
Category of the paper: Research paper.

1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly revolutionizing the landscape of higher education, challenging the established modes of research, impacting teaching and learning processes, and transforming administrative operations at universities. In the sphere of teaching content, educators have found themselves at the crossroads, where they need to establish what is still worth teaching, how to successfully implement Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED) to enhance the teaching process, and finally how to assess students' progress. They are grappling with the dilemma of what AI will mean to their students' future and how best to prepare them for an ever-changing workplace environment. OpenAI and other tech giants admit their strategy is to overhaul university education by reaching out and embracing every facet of student and campus life. Educational and institutional objectives aside, the ethical use of AI is key to ensuring transparency, integrity, accountability and personalization of teaching-learning dynamics.

Both educators and students are actively following advances in technology, as well as testing AI-powered tools and undeniable opportunities they present, often at lower financial costs and less time-consuming, while realizing the potential risks such as inaccurate or entirely false information and the loss of data privacy. It should be emphasized, though, that while AI enables university teachers to enrich their instruction, machine learning cannot and will not substitute humans, hence the highly favored idea to always center educators and advocate their agency to decide what content to choose and how to deliver it. Equally important is the recommendation to adopt a 'human-centered AI' perspective (Shneiderman, 4) with regard to learners at all levels of education. This approach has been implemented at the Silesian University of Technology University, where students from the Department of Applied Linguistics were invited to participate in a pilot study and report on the intervention of AI-driven technologies in everyday learning routine, highlighting their educational, social and ethical factors, as well as comment on institutional applications and evaluate their own level of trust in AI in Education (AIED).

Concurrently, the need to reexamine the purpose of higher education is vital in the era of ChatGPT, released by OpenAI in 2022, which can generate responses to a wide range of questions posed by students. ChatGPT draws on the datasets it has been trained on and produces answers based on predictable patterns, in most cases perceived by students as fully satisfactory solutions to academic requirements. Traditionally, before the introduction of AI tools in

universities, undergraduates facing a difficult academic task learned how to tackle it, made mistakes and corrected them, and usually appreciated the complexity of the learning process. Today, however, many students tend to bypass the more problematic aspects of academic work in order to accelerate the completion of assignments, often as a strategy to avoid frustration or anxiety, under the sometimes false impression that using AI tools reflects their participation in technological achievements. In May 2025, a new version of ChatGPT Edu, designed specifically to fully assist students with academic work, was announced, so the temptation to integrate this tool across educational and learning contexts is likely to become even harder to resist, promising hyper-efficiency while simultaneously reducing students' workload.

Finally, AI is increasingly applied to streamline university administration and management. It can automate routine procedures, such as enrolment or documentation processing, facilitate communication with students, support data-driven decision-making, e.g. by analysing institutional data related to students' progress, or optimize workflows and increase the efficiency and transparency of educational governance. While such systems are often promoted as key instruments for enhancing efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness, both students and academic staff must also consider the extent to which these technological advancements can be trusted and used responsibly.

2. Research Methodology

The pilot study conducted among a group of students aimed to collect the opinions of Applied Linguistics undergraduates at the Faculty of Organization and Management regarding the use of publicly available artificial intelligence (AI) tools in higher education (UNESCO, 2023). Above all, the paper focuses on the importance and implications of cutting-edge technological solutions in higher education management, presumed support of teaching-learning activities, and (re)shaping ethical attitudes in the era of digital transformation and AI-augmented world (European Commission, 2025).

To design and develop the authors' original research survey questionnaire, the Microsoft Forms application was used, which allowed for anonymous data collection and real-time recording of responses. The questionnaire was structured around five principal areas of investigation addressing:

1. respondents' demographic characteristics (age, gender, year of study),
2. respondents' everyday experiences in using next-generation applications,
3. the role of AI in learning process and university management,
4. the assessment of assets and liabilities (opportunities and risks) related to the implementation of digital solutions in teaching,
5. ethical reflections and recommendations for responsible application of AI.

The questions were predominantly closed-ended (single and multiple choice) and semi-open. In several instances, a Likert scale was applied with a view to examining the intensity of attitudes and opinions. The survey concluded with two open-ended questions.

The questionnaire was completed by 82 first-, second-, and third-year students of Applied Linguistics at the Faculty of Organization and Management of the Silesian University of Technology in Zabrze. They study two foreign languages simultaneously: English is their obligatory language B, taught from B2 level, while the secondary languages (language C) to choose from are French, German, Italian, or Spanish, taught from A1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The sample was purposive, as the study targeted a specific academic group of undergraduates representing frequent and advanced users of digital innovations within a humanistic and linguistic context.

The study, based on the diagnostic survey method and a structured questionnaire, was conducted in October 2025. The questionnaire was anonymous and the participation entirely voluntary. Respondents were informed about the main objective of the study and ensured that the use of data would be exclusively for scientific purposes. Data collection was conducted online to ensure full accessibility and convenience when completing the survey across various devices, such as computers, tablets and smartphones.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to scrutinize the collected data. Quantitative data were processed using percentage distributions of responses and comparative analyses of selected variables. Subsequently, open-ended reports were subjected to content analysis to establish recurring themes, emotions, and attitudes toward AI. Additionally, visualizations of selected analyses in the form of graphical charts were prepared using ChatGPT-5, powered by the new GPT language model, the latest and the most useful for real-life problems and queries (GPT-5, OpenAI).

3. Results

The first area examined in the study concerned respondents' demographic characteristics. The results indicate that the majority of respondents were women (73%), which may reflect their greater inclination toward language learning and academic engagement. Male respondents constituted 25.6% of the sample, and two respondents (2.4%) declined to disclose their gender. This observation may suggest that the general tendency in the humanities, where female students have traditionally predominated, remains consistent.

The surveyed cohort comprised young adults, with the predominant age group being 20-22 years old, accounting for 81.7% of all respondents. Participants aged 23-25 constituted 14.6% of the sample, while 3.7% were older than 26. Since young people belong to the most enthusiastic users of modern technological tools, the selection of this target group was

a deliberate decision on the part of the authors of the questionnaire. The younger generation is typically characterized by both curiosity and openness to educational innovation, as well as high adaptability to technological changes. Young people eagerly embrace state of the art digital tools as part of the learning process and use them accordingly.

The vast majority of respondents (70%) were second-year students, while third-year students accounted for 30% of the sample. This choice was also intentional, targeted at capturing the perspectives of more advanced learners, for whom the role of AIED has become increasingly significant in academic research and independent scientific projects.

In the second section, respondents identified their skills, competences and hands-on experience with next-generation applications and systems. Participants demonstrated diverse levels of experience, with 57.3% declaring moderate competence, 37.8% rating their experience as good or very good, and 4.9% having no experience whatsoever. The large proportion with moderate to high competence may confirm that, indeed, young adults demonstrate the highest degree of technological expertise. Moreover, the survey revealed that the most frequently used applications include text generators, AI-based translators, and language correction programs.

The most popular and, consequently, most frequently used AI tool was ChatGPT, used by 90.2% of respondents, which attests to a dominant role of the generative language model among higher education students in linguistics-related fields. The second most popular tool was DeepL (78.0%), indicating that translation applications continue to play an important supportive role in foreign language acquisition. Grammarly (52.4%) ranked third, being primarily used for linguistic proofreading of academic texts and written assignments. Less popular tools included Google Bard / Gemini (23.2%) and other applications (12.2%), often chosen for graphic or study-planning purposes, e.g. creating timetables.

These data may indicate that the respondents express a strong preference for text- and language-based platforms, rather than analytical or visual systems, which is closely aligned with their field of study and the didactic needs of Applied Linguistics curricula. These further underscore a high level of students' awareness of digital tools that not only support and expedite language learning process and text preparation or edition, but also facilitate academic work and linguistic competence development.

The next query in the survey concerned the specific areas in which the use of digital innovations was justified. An overwhelming majority of respondents (85.4%) employed AIED tools in the area of language learning and translation, confirming a strong link between intelligent technologies, communication, and foreign language acquisition. 68.3% used AI to write and edit texts, whereas 56.1% utilized it to plan and manage their studies, indicating that these systems support not only the development of linguistic competences but also hone organizational skills. A relatively smaller group of respondents (39.0%) reported using digital assistants for project inspiration, while only 6.1% mentioned other, non-specified applications. To conclude, an overriding impression is that the predominant use of AIED among linguistics

students involves supporting cognitive and communicative processes, rather than altogether substituting individual academic effort.

The third aspect of the study pertained to AI in learning practices and higher education management. It began with questions focusing on the use of intelligent tools in two distinct areas: private and academic. The analysis of the collected data reveals that in both contexts the dominant frequency of use is several times per week (54.9% and 56.1%, respectively). Minor differences can be discerned among respondents who use these tools daily: 15.9% for academic purposes and 12.2% in private life. Conversely, occasional use is more frequent in private settings (14.6%) than in academic contexts (11%). However, these slight differences may indicate a high level of integration of digital infrastructure into students' daily lives and, as a consequence, suggest that the boundary between private and academic function is becoming increasingly blurred.

The survey also examined whether AI-based assistants influence respondents' learning styles and strategies. A total of 63.8% of respondents confirmed that using AI tools to some extent affected their learning approaches, attesting to the growing influence of digital culture on students' cognitive strategies. Only 9.8% stated that generative systems did not impact their learning, while for 22% it was 'hard to say,' possibly reflecting their ambivalent perception of the ongoing transformation of the learning process. Overall, the findings suggest that intelligent technologies have become an integral part of students' learning practices (Kukulska-Hulme, 2016), marking a shift from traditional education models toward a more personalized, technology-enhanced process of AI-assisted learning (Pham, Nguyen, Ha, & Nguyen Ngoc, 2023).

Subsequent questions addressed the use of AI in supporting learning practices and academic work. A detailed analysis revealed that respondents find these tools promising when planning, deepening their knowledge of particular subjects, and editing written assignments. More than two-thirds of respondents (68.3%) reported using digital tools to support more efficient self-regulated learning, while an even higher percentage (74.4%) resorted to AI systems to better understand complex course content and bridge knowledge gaps, thus confirming the role of AI in enhancing cognitive mechanisms. The use of new technologies also appears to be significant in editing academic written assignments (71.9%), mainly to improve language accuracy and the stylistic quality of texts. A smaller but nevertheless notable group (41.5%) reported using such tools for administrative writing, indicating an awareness of their potential not only in learning activities but also in organizational and bureaucratic contexts.

Most respondents also declared that they verify the accuracy and credibility of the answers and solutions generated by AI systems: nearly half (45.1%) do so 'regularly', and 26.8% 'always'. This high proportion reflects a strong level of cognitive awareness and critical engagement with AI-based tools. A vast majority of participants (84.2%) believed that the use of AI-assisted systems enhanced their learning efficiency: 36.6% 'strongly agreed', 47.6% 'rather agreed', about 11% adopted a neutral stance, and only 4.9% disagreed.

These results correspond with earlier observations regarding the type, frequency, and context of AI tools application: the more frequently they are employed, the more likely they are to be perceived as a factor increasing learning productivity and efficiency. Furthermore, 80.5% of respondents described AI systems as intuitive and user-friendly: 37.8% 'strongly agreed' and 42.7% 'rather agreed.' Only 6.1% reported difficulties in using such tools, whereas 13.4% adopted a neutral stance. These results may indicate a low-entry barrier and suggest that advanced technical expertise is not required to use AI-based systems effectively.

The fourth area of interest explored in the study concerned the assessment of assets and liabilities (opportunities and risks) associated with the use of digital environments in higher education. The analysis of the data confirms that respondents hold a highly positive view of AI's capacity to promote equal education opportunities and enhance the learning process. More than three-quarters of respondents (75.6%) emphasized that learning-support innovations help equalize students' opportunities (Holmes, Bialik, Fadel, 2019; OECD, 2023) by providing assistance to individuals with varying levels of linguistic and digital competence. The statement that universities should ensure access to basic digital tools was received an even higher level of acceptance (78.1%), indicating growing expectations among younger generations for institutional support and the integration of new interactive technologies into university infrastructure. A vast majority (81.7%) expressed interest in having a personalized, AI-based student assistant capable of reminding them about deadlines, due payments, and providing tailored, up-to-date information. Such generative systems, if properly implemented, may in the future become platforms that enhance both equity and efficiency, successfully reducing information access barriers. Respondents therefore advocated the introduction of well-designed solutions that could significantly upgrade the quality of higher education.

Another component of the survey sought to determine the potential of digital resources in administrative communication. A total of 78.1% of respondents believe that such tools could streamline and enhance interactions with university administrative units, particularly with the Dean's Office or Student Services Office. The implementation of modern communication solutions would thus facilitate the automation of routine administrative mechanisms, which would, in effect, reduce bureaucracy, expedite the flow of information, and significantly improve the quality and accessibility of university services. For higher education management, these findings may indicate that respondents anticipate a modern, responsive, and digitally supported administrative system in which AI would play a key role. This tendency is aligned with the concept of the 'Smart Campus' (SURF, n.d.), where technologies support not only teaching activities but also administrative tasks and a steady flow of communication.

In contrast, respondents' views were far more heterogeneous with regard to ethical considerations and perspectives. A total of 54.9% agreed that students should have the right to decline the use of next-generation technological tools during classes when such refusal is grounded in personal convictions or justified by well-founded ethical concerns. On the other hand, 26.8% expressed either neutral or opposing positions, indicating that the use of these tools

within the academic environment does not entail significant risks. Although AI-based technologies are widely employed and generally embraced as auxiliary instruments for teaching and learning, respondents strongly emphasized the importance of maintaining autonomy and freedom in their use. Consequently, the responsible implementation of digital tools in higher education requires not only advanced technological solutions but also, arguably of greater importance, clear and transparent institutional policies, systematic digital literacy training, and sustained, co-operative academic debate (European Commission, 2024; OECD, 2023).

The final part of the survey concerned ethical reflections and recommendations for further responsible and critical use of AI technologies in all spheres of academic life. This section opened with a statement expressing considerable misgivings about the use of generative tools at universities. A high proportion of respondents (75.6%) agreed that AI might foster plagiarism ('strongly agree' 30.5%, 'rather agree' 45.1%), whereas 17.1% remained neutral, and only 7.3% categorically disagreed. At the same time, a substantial majority of participants (78.1%) agreed that students should be officially required to disclose the use of digital assistants in the preparation of their theses, while 11% expressed a neutral stance, and a further 11% disagreed. This distribution of responses indicates that students are well aware of the relationship between the use of AI tools and the risk of academic misconduct, reflecting both a high level of ethical awareness and a certain degree of limited trust in the fair and accountable use of intelligent technologies within academic contexts. Respondents are highly committed to the principle of transparency and would appreciate institutional policies requiring the disclosure of the use of language models, especially in academic writing.

In response to the question examining respondents' awareness of the use of digital innovations, a total of 78% assessed their level as high, yet only 55% knew what was legally permitted. This discrepancy reveals a form of cognitive dissonance, where declared knowledge and confidence do not correspond to familiarity with the applicable rules and regulations. Such a gap underscores a rather superficial understanding of digital support mechanisms, shaped primarily by practical experience rather than ethical reflection.

The final set of ethics-related queries addressed the issue of regulating the use of AI at universities. A vast majority of respondents (81.7%) declared the necessity of establishing clear regulations regarding the use of intelligent technologies in academic life, while only 4.9% disagreed. This was one of the highest-rated items in the entire survey, demonstrating a strong demand for transparent rules concerning the ethical dimension of AI use. Similarly, 75.6% of respondents expected that the institutions themselves should use AI transparently, which may be perceived as an explicit call for partnership-based communication, with the university serving as a model of responsible and ethical innovation use.

The research group was unable to clearly determine, though, whether the academic community engaged in a broader debate on digital support mechanisms. Notably, 48.8% of respondents selected the response 'I do not know', while 26.8% indicated 'No', suggesting either limited or complete lack of institutional initiatives addressing ethical issues related to

digital technologies. Only approximately one-quarter of respondents confirmed that such discussions were currently taking place within the academic community.

The survey was concluded with two open-ended questions investigating assets and liabilities associated with the use of next-generation systems in academia. The most frequently mentioned benefit was 'learning support' (33.8%), followed by 'information and organization' (31.1%), 'time saver' (17.6%), and 'idea or language generation' (8.1%). The 'unspecified' category accounted for 31.1% of responses. The highest risk was attributed to 'plagiarism and dishonesty' (19.2%), followed by 'decline in critical thinking or total dependency' (11%). Among other liabilities were error making, AI hallucinations, lack of privacy, and the potential loss of image protection, each mentioned by fewer than 5% of respondents, while 'other' category accounted for as many as 60.3% of responses.

AI is thus perceived primarily as a supportive tutor and organizational coordinator, with operational and practical benefits occupying a central place in students' agenda, while academic integrity emerges as the most significant concern, and plagiarism and misconduct as the most relatable risks. Respondents also expressed some reservations regarding the potential impact of AI use on cognitive competences. Finally, the relatively high proportion of responses categorized as 'other' indicates the need to refine coding categories in future analyses and suggests that many concerns and uncertainties surrounding AI remain rather nebulous.

4. Discussion

The survey conducted among 82 students of Applied Linguistics revealed a complex picture of versatile ways in which artificial intelligence is integrated into academic practices, and demonstrated generally favorable, yet diverse, attitudes toward its presence in learning, teaching and academic life in general. The quantitative and qualitative analysis of the 34 survey questions identified several key areas of interest: the frequency and context of AI use, the impact of digital tools on learning and communication, the ethical dimension of AI implementation, as well as the perceived assets and liabilities associated with its use.

The vast majority of respondents reported using AI-based modern solutions daily or several times per week and confirmed their primarily instrumental and auxiliary function. Most respondents also believe that supportive technologies make the learning process effective and more flexible (Holmes et al., 2019), at the same time reiterating that some behaviors may lead to misapplication or excessive reliance on ready-made solutions and result in cognitive autonomy failure. The analysis of responses further suggests that the research group perceives AI-powered tools not as a novelty, but as a useful and user-friendly digital partner supporting learning, planning, and communication. Their role centers around assisting rather than replacing human decision-making, facilitating and structuring the didactic process rather than substituting

it, which confirms the trend observed in literature toward the personalization of learning through modern technologies (Fazlagić, 2022). Meanwhile, respondents demonstrate a critical and reflective approach, acknowledging the imperfections or biases in generated output and remaining alert to the phenomenon of AI hallucinations (Ajuzieogu, 2024), or inaccurate and non-factual content generated by AI systems.

General feedback also acknowledged discrepancies between respondents' ethical awareness and the lack of clear formal regulations, which highlights a certain deficiency in institutional communication and limited visibility of ethical initiatives. These findings are further underscored by responses to the open-ended queries, which testify to the perennial clash between efficiency and academic integrity: while modern systems indeed streamline learning processes, they simultaneously challenge traditional notions of authorship and creative autonomy. The findings therefore contribute to the broader theoretical discussion on the role of artificial intelligence in higher education by illustrating how students negotiate the boundaries between technological assistance and academic autonomy in their everyday learning practices.

The survey conducted by the authors in October 2025 is part of a most recent trend in empirical research on generative artificial intelligence in higher education, with a particular focus on the student perspective and the field of applied linguistics. Previous research provides clear evidence that the rapid dissemination of AI-based tools in both the academic environment and the learning process has become increasingly prominent (Holmes et al., 2019; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). The present study confirms this observation, emphasizing the growing implementation of generative tools with a view of improving users' efficiency and supporting their participation in academic activities.

Moreover, previous studies have shown students' ability to adapt quickly to new digital solutions and to use information technologies as a neutral support for learning (Selwyn, 2016). The results obtained in the study are consistent with the approach presented. Respondents depict AI mainly as a tool that supports the completion of university assignments, but, similarly to the UNESCO report (2023), they also voice concerns about excessive trust in automatically generated content. Among other concerns expressed by the respondents were the potential impairment of critical thinking skills and risks to the integrity of academic practice.

A decidedly innovative contribution of the study lies in highlighting the need for institutional regulations - or rather the lack thereof - as a central factor underlying respondents' ambivalent attitudes toward generative tools. Previous research in this field has focused primarily on individual uncertainty or a lack of awareness regarding what is permitted and what is not (Akgun, Greenhow, 2022). The data obtained indicate that students do not lack ethical sensitivity; rather, what is missing are clear, formalized rules governing the acceptable use of AI tools within the university context. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of Williamson and Eynon (2020), who emphasize that ethical challenges in the era of digital education system are systemic rather than individual in nature.

The results of the study contradict some of the literature suggesting that laying down institutional regulation may be perceived by students as an attempt to curb their autonomy (Selwyn, 2016). Consequently, they indicate a lack of comprehensive, transparent guidelines, ethical standards, and formal and legal responsibility on the part of the university authorities, which further indicates a shift in the existing paradigm towards a co-decision-making and co-creative model of university management, where students submit a request for clarity and transparency rather than unlimited freedom. Similar trends have been noted in the latest European report on the concept of responsible artificial intelligence in education (European Commission, 2025).

Another point consistent with previous studies is the ambiguous perception of AI tools in education. According to the findings of Holmes et al. (2019) and the OECD report (2021), the available digital tools increase learning effectiveness, but at the same time can generate risks related to addiction and superficial information processing. The results obtained illustrate this ambivalence, revealing tensions between real productivity and concerns about independent critical thinking and academic integrity. This phenomenon is supported by the idea of transitioning from digital fluency to digital wisdom, understood as the ethical, reflective, and conscious use of new technologies (Floridi, 2019).

The results above have supported the authors' research hypotheses. The hypothesis of frequent and instrumental use of AI tools was fully confirmed and is consistent with the results of international studies. The assumption that the lack of formal and legal regulations may contribute to students' ethical uncertainty was also confirmed, which, in turn, correlates with current studies and reports analyzing gaps in the education management process (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019; UNESCO, 2023). The only unconfirmed part of the study was the assumption that students considered all legal regulations to be too restrictive, whereas respondents clearly expressed the need for a specific ethical framework and open academic debate on the subject.

Further research in this area should extend the analyses presented in this study by increasing and diversifying the group of respondents and by introducing comparative perspectives across different academic disciplines and universities. The next stage of research could involve analysing the opinions of teaching and administrative staff regarding the integration of artificial intelligence into university management processes. Comparing the perspectives of students and academic staff may reveal important differences in the perception of the boundaries of responsibility and autonomy in the digital education ecosystem. This could be complemented by qualitative studies analyzing the impact of ethical regulations and transparent rules on the actual decisions made by students regarding the use of generative tools. Research of this kind could contribute to the development of a reflective culture of AI use in higher education, where new technologies become not only the objects of critical analysis, but also elements of a coherent ethical and regulatory framework.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the survey results, a number of practical recommendations can be formulated, with potentially serious implications for higher education management. It is imperative that a clear set of principles or a code of conduct regulating the use of ethical AI at the university (European Commission, 2024; UNESCO, 2023) is developed. Such a code should contain definitions and examples of acceptable and legal practices, as well as procedures for their verification. Additionally, it is indispensable to initiate an open debate concerning the disclosure of the use of generative tools use in the preparation of diploma theses and semester projects, along with easily accessible information on the implementation of such technologies by the university itself.

Secondly, in the field of education, training programs and workshops for both students and teaching staff, focusing on reflection, agency and accountability of generally available digital tools, should be implemented. Furthermore, reflective academic tasks, such as comparing texts written with and without digital assistance, need to be actively promoted. The curricula of academic courses that contain elements of communication or teach digital skills should be modernized to incorporate content related to AI ethics and transparency, e.g. through learning scenarios that would help students distinguish between legitimate assistance and sheer plagiarism in academic work.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that artificial intelligence has already become an integral component of students' academic practices and learning strategies. While respondents generally perceive AI as a valuable tool that enhances efficiency, supports learning processes, and facilitates access to information, they simultaneously recognize the ethical challenges associated with its use. The findings highlight the importance of developing transparent institutional policies, strengthening digital literacy, and encouraging critical reflection on the role of AI in academic work. Ensuring a balanced integration of technological innovation with ethical awareness and institutional responsibility will therefore be crucial for shaping a sustainable and responsible model of higher education in the era of artificial intelligence.

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