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Research Article

Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions and Extent of Use of AI in School-Related Assignments

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Abstract
The use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in education continues to spark debate about whether it is a beneficial or detrimental addition to the learning environment. Mixed feelings have surfaced surrounding its use in school-related assignments, whether they are positive or negative. However, a gap between perception and extent of use is present, leading to a need for investigation. The researchers chose respondents from teacher education degree programs and employed a mixed-methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative tools to gather needed data. Questionnaires were distributed, and informal interviews were conducted. Results reveal that pre-service teachers show generally neutral perceptions on the use of AI. Their opinions depend on a case-by-case basis, the morality or ethics based on how AI was used. They also highlighted the need to exercise responsible use of AI. As for extent of use, in general, pre-service teachers have a balanced use, using AI to an equal extent when working on one assignment at a time and only using it on occasions over long periods of time.
Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), AI Platforms, Pre-Service Teachers, Assignments, Perceptions.

Introduction

Education in the modern age is experiencing changes with the presence of information technologies, especially artificial intelligence (AI). AI algorithms have become important elements in the learning process, utilized in learning management and training systems, supporting various learning and teaching activities (Wang *et al.,* 2024). Sanusi *et al.,* (2024) cited several other studies that have emphasized the pedagogical, individual, and wider societal advantages of teaching artificial intelligence (AI) in K–12 school settings. Since 2018, the body of scientific research supporting the potential of advanced tools, practical curricula, and pedagogical approaches to advance AI at the mandatory level of education has grown. The tremendous influence of AI, a major force behind innovation and growth in a variety of industries, including education, has intensified this expanding tendency. One of the emerging aspects of AI in education is its ability to adjust to the roles and responsibilities of a teacher. The rapid increase and development of AI technologies are changing the way teaching and learning work, leading to the need for teachers' need to understand deeply these tools (Karataş and Yüce, 2024). It is crucial to start this educational restructuring by looking at how AI technology will transform the role and responsibilities of teachers and how pre-service teachers are prepared for such changes, as they will be pioneering the future of education (Zhang *et al.,* 2023). According to studies of students in Asia and Europe, AI has expanded beyond its traditional role as an educational aid (Guan *et al.,* 2025).

Globally, researchers recognize that teachers' and pre-service teachers' perceptions play a vital role in determining whether AI is effectively adopted in classroom practice. Studies show that positive perceptions of

AI, such as its usefulness, accessibility, and reliability, strongly influence its actual implementation (Wang *et al.,* 2024). However, gaps in training, digital literacy, and ethical awareness often hinder the effective use of these technologies. Additionally, mixed feelings concerning the use of AI in education have also surfaced. The rise of generative AI in education, while attracting interest as to how they can use this tool to improve methods in teaching, learning, and assessment, has raised concerns about the accuracy, bias, academic integrity, and the role of human teachers (Ishmuradova *et al.,* 2025). Skepticism also remains among pre-service teachers, despite recognizing AI's potential (Gamlem *et al.,* 2026). An example of these tools is ChatGPT, an artificial language model developed by OpenAI. Jere *et al.,* (2024) have pointed out that ChatGPT, while possessing the promise of assisting teachers in various tasks, is unable to answer certain questions, such as those related to physical sciences, thereby raising greater concern.

In the Philippine context, similar trends have been observed. Alejandro *et al.,* (2024) found that pre-service teachers in Central Visayas generally exhibited positive perceptions toward AI applications, particularly in their usefulness and ease-of-use. However, their study also revealed that factors such as prior experience and institutional support had minimal impact on AI adoption. Likewise, Malacapay (2025) reports that while pre-service teachers in a state university demonstrated moderate preparedness and motivation to use AI in their academic work, many expressed uncertainty regarding its ethical implications and long-term impact on learning. These findings suggest that although awareness and attitudes toward AI are growing among Filipino pre-service teachers, consistent and meaningful integration into academic assignments remain limited.

The gap between positive perception and actual use underscores the need to investigate how pre-service teachers employ AI tools in their academic tasks. Specifically, there is limited empirical evidence about the extent of use of AI in school-related assignments and how perceptions such as usefulness, ease of use, and ethical awareness relate to actual practices. Addressing this gap is essential for teacher education programs in the Philippines to ensure that future educators are digitally competent and ethically and pedagogically equipped to harness AI effectively.

Objective of the Study

The study determined students' extent of use and perceptions of the use of AI in school-related assignments by exploring students' motivations and reasons for using AI in academic requirements, the degree of integration, and whether students perceive academic AI use positively or negatively.

Statement of the Problem

To examine students' extent of use and perceptions on the use of AI in school-related assignments, the following questions were asked:

1) How often do students use AI in their school-related assignments?
2) What AI platforms do students commonly use in school-related assignments?
3) How do students perceive AI use in school-related assignments?

Significance of the Study

The study was conducted to assess pre-service teachers' perceptions and extent of use of AI in school-related assignments. Therefore, it aims to provide useful findings for:

Students and Teachers: The study aims to provide valuable information for both students and educators on how to manage AI use in academic requirements, taking into consideration the extent of and perceptions of the use of AI technology.

Future Researchers: The study aims to contribute to existing knowledge regarding students' use and perceptions of AI in schoolwork.

Methods

Research Design

The research employs an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative tools to gather data regarding pre-service teachers' extent of use and perceptions of using AI in school-related assignments. Under the quantitative phase, questionnaires were used to provide a view of the participants' perceptions and the extent of use of AI. In the qualitative phase, the use of semi-structured interviews was instrumental in gaining a deeper, more detailed understanding of the chosen participants' responses, capturing personal insights. By gathering quantitative and qualitative data, the researchers

investigated not only the perceptions and level of AI usage by participants, but also the AI platforms used and the motivations behind them.

Participants

The study participants were pre-service teachers in various specializations enrolled in the School of Teacher Education and Liberal Arts (STELA) at Saint Louis University, Baguio City, Philippines. The researchers used the purposive sampling technique to select individuals with prior experience using AI tools for academic purposes. For the quantitative phase, there were fifty participants. For the qualitative phase, there were 9 purposively selected participants.

Data Gathering Procedure and Analysis

Structured questionnaires, adapted and modified from those of Jalagat and Al-Habsi (2017), Chan and Hu (2023), Stöhr *et al.,* (2024), and Weerasinghe and Abeysinghe (2024), were distributed to 50 pre-service teachers as the first step in the research process. Through these questionnaires, the researchers gathered quantitative information on the frequency of AI usage, preferred platforms, and opinions about its utility, usability, and ethical awareness. After completing the survey, nine participants were purposefully chosen for the semi-structured interviews to delve deeper into their perspectives, AI usage scenarios, and motivations. These interviews were done both in person and through online communication.

Quantitative data were examined using descriptive statistics like frequency and percentage to find patterns in the use and perception of AI. Thematic analysis was used to organize and group recurrent patterns and insights into themes in the qualitative data. Triangulation was also used by merging both data sets, improving the findings' validity and comprehensiveness. Careful adherence to ethical principles were maintained throughout the procedure, including informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary involvement. This method guarantees a thorough comprehension of pre-service teachers' perceptions and applications of AI in their academic work.

Results and Discussion

The quantitative results of this study are presented and discussed in the order of the questions found in the questionnaires distributed to the respondents.

Quantitative Results

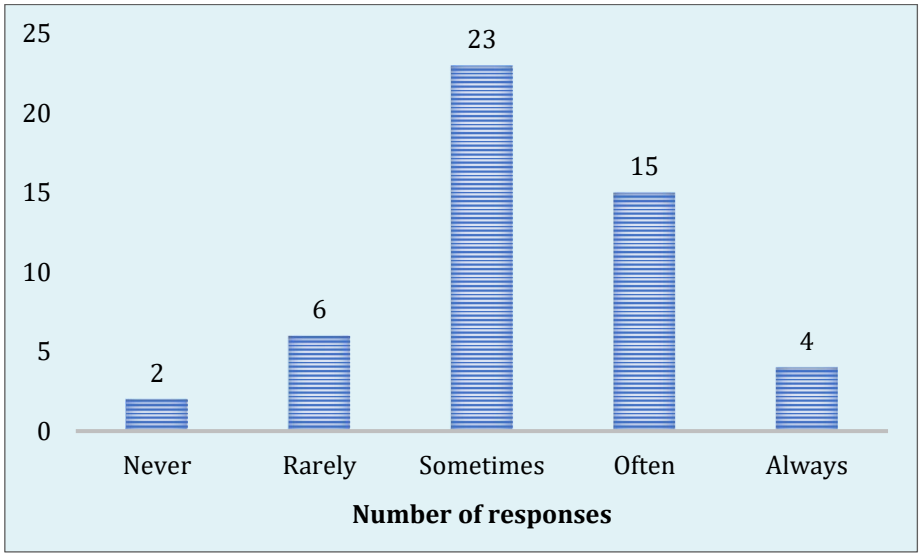

Figure 1. How often do you use AI in your school-related assignments?

The question regarding pre-service teachers' frequency of using AI technologies in school-related assignments produced different responses. Out of the 50 surveyed, 23 of them (46%) reported that they sometimes use AI in their school-related assignments, which makes up the majority. This indicates that AI is used in accomplishing assignments at times, though not consistently. This is also the case with those who use AI rarely (12%) and often (30%). There are also 4 respondents (8%) who always use AI. However, 2 respondents (4%) who never use AI are present, suggesting that not every pre-service teacher utilizes AI for their assignments. The results showing various degrees of frequencies in using AI in school assignments suggests that it is

embraced by most, with many leaning towards using it sometimes, often, or always. On the contrary, even with respondents using AI more often, there are also those who do not use it as much, whether they rarely use it or never use it at all.

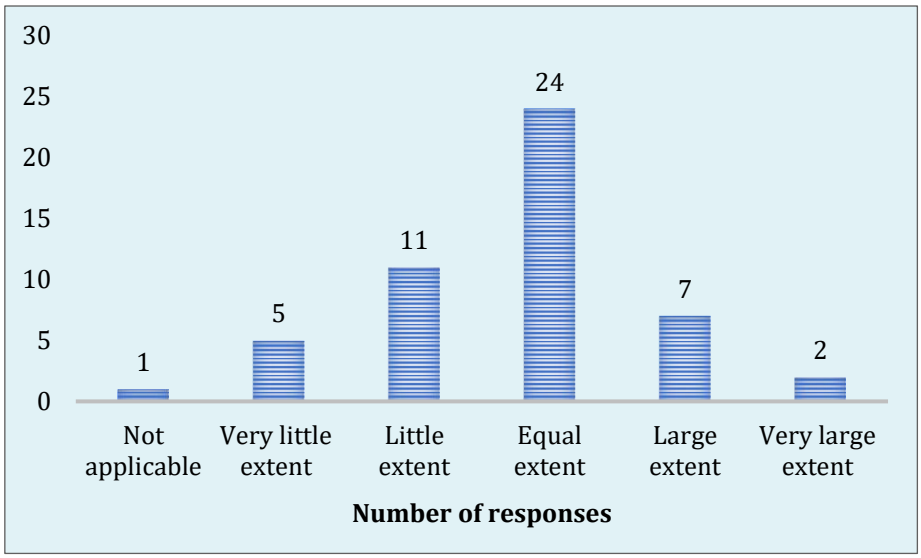

Figure 2. When working on one assignment at a time, to what extent do you use AI?

Table 1. Ranking of most used AI platforms.

AI platform	Frequency	Rank
ChatGPT (Free)	33	1
Grammarly	25	2
Google Gemini	23	3
Scribbr	17	4
Canva AI	14	5
Others*	13	6
ChatGPT Plus (Paid)	12	7
CapCut (ByteDance)	11	8
Adobe	6	9
Google Veo	6	9
Grok 3	6	9
Microsoft Copilot/Bing Chat	3	12
Perplexity AI	3	12
DeepSeek	2	14
Elicit	1	15
GitHub Copilot	1	15
Luma Dream Machine	1	15
Notion AI	1	15
Open AI Sora	1	15
Originality AI	1	15
Semantic Scholar	1	15
Typing Mind	1	15
None	1	15

The question that looks into the respondents' extent of use of AI when working on one assignment at a time revealed responses of varying degrees. Respondents who perceived that they use AI to an equal extent make up the majority (48%). This is followed by those who perceived to use AI to a little extent (22%), large extent (14%), very little extent (10%), and very large extent (4%). One respondent (2%) who also finds this item not applicable can also be found. The results show varying extents in the use of AI technologies in school-related assignments. With the majority of the respondents perceiving an equal extent in their use of AI when working on one assignment at time, this may demonstrate that pre-service teachers generally balance their use of AI tools and of original ideas or traditional methods. The respondents were asked to select the AI platforms they use for their school-related assignments, and they were allowed to choose all that applied. Out of 64 items,

including Others and None, only 23 items had responses. These items are also ranked based on the frequency of responses they have received, presented in Table 1. Conversely, Table 2 lists the AI platforms that respondents did not choose, or have 0 responses.

The results revealed that the Top 5 most used AI platforms are, from first to fifth: ChatGPT, Grammarly, Google Gemini, Scribbr, and Canva AI. This is followed by Others, in which respondents have chosen to specify certain AI platforms that were not mentioned in the questionnaire. Under this item are the following AI platforms: Google AI/Google; Aria (Opera's AI); Note AI; NotebookLM; Cici AI / Cici; Copilot; TikTok Tako; and Meta AI. Additionally, ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Google Gemini (formerly Google Bard) being some of the most used AI platforms in this study's results coincides with the findings of Weerasinghe and Abeysinghe (2024). The similarities between the results indicates consistency, supporting the validity of the findings. However, differences were also found, with this study having Scribbr and Canva AI among its top platforms. The presence of AI platforms without responses may imply that they may not be popular or well-known among the respondents, compared to the top platforms in Table 1.

Table 2. AI platforms without responses.

AIVA	Apertus	ArtSmart AI	Baidu ERNIE Bot	Boomy	Claude (Anthropic)	Colossyan
Craiyon AI	DALL·E	Descript	ElevenLabs	Fliki	Hanooman	HeyGen
Ideogram	Imagine with Meta AI	InVideo	Jasper AI	Kling AI	Leonardo AI	Lumen5
Midjourney	Mistral AI	Moonvalley	Mubert	Musicfy	Pika	Replit
Runway (Gen-2/3/4)	Scite.ai	Slide AI	Soundraw	Stability AI / Stable Diffusion	Stockimg AI	Suno AI
Superstudio Kaiber	Synthesia	Tutor AI	Udio	Wordtune	Zhipu / ChatGLM	-

The question inquires the reasons respondents use AI in their school-related assignments. Respondents were allowed to select all reasons that applied to them. The results (see Table 3) show that checking grammar (40) is the leading reason why the respondents use AI in their assignments, followed by summarizing content (38), enhancing subject knowledge (25), referencing and citing (24), and paraphrasing content (23). These findings were similar again to those in Weerasinghe and Abeysinghe (2024). Checking grammar is the top reason why the respondents use AI in both studies. Summarizing content and enhancing subject knowledge are also found on their top 5 reasons. This study differs, with referencing and citing and paraphrasing content leading. The top 5 items, with most of them related to writing research papers and similar activities (such as checking grammar, summarizing content, referencing and citing, and paraphrasing content), indicate that AI tools are often used for research assignments. AI tools are also used for enhancing subject knowledge, showing that AI helps with explaining complex or difficult concepts.

Table 3. Reasons respondents use AI in school-related assignments.

Item	**Frequency**	**Rank**
Checking grammar	40	1
Summarizing content	38	2
Enhancing subject knowledge	25	3
Referencing and citing	24	4
Paraphrasing content	23	5
Generating study notes	21	6
Writing assignments		
Preparing for examinations	17	8
Preparing presentations	16	9
Getting feedback for work	13	10
Generating code for computer programming	2	11
Viva voce / oral examinations		
Others (specified by respondents, including "for reviewing"; and "outlining lessons")		
None	1	14

Table 4. Likert scale.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	No answer
1) I think using AI technologies to complete my school-related assignments will save me time	2 (4%)	2 (4%)	7 (14%)	6 (12%)	11 (22%)	14 (28%)	8 (16%)	0 (0%)
2) I believe AI technologies can give me fast, individualized feedback for my school-related assignments	3 (6%)	3 (6%)	3 (6%)	10 (20%)	13 (26%)	12 (24%)	6 (12%)	0 (0%)
3) I believe that using AI technologies goes against the purpose of education	0 (0%)	4 (8%)	9 (18%)	16 (32%)	11 (22%)	4 (8%)	6 (12%)	0 (0%)
4) I might rely too much on AI technologies for my school-related assignments	7 (14%)	7 (14%)	11 (22%)	15 (30%)	5 (10%)	4 (8%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)
5) I believe using AI technologies can improve my digital competence	4 (8%)	4 (8%)	3 (6%)	12 (24%)	13 (26%)	10 (20%)	3 (6%)	1 (2%)
6) I believe using AI technologies can provide me with unique insights and perspectives	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	5 (10%)	13 (26%)	14 (28%)	9 (18%)	6 (12%)	0 (0%)
7) Using AI technologies will limit my opportunities to interact with others while completing coursework	1 (2%)	4 (8%)	11 (22%)	15 (30%)	11 (22%)	5 (10%)	3 (6%)	0 (0%)
8) I am concerned about how AI technologies will impact students' learning in the future	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (10%)	10 (20%)	6 (12%)	7 (14%)	22 (44%)	0 (0%)
9) The AI technologies I use make me more effective as a learner	2 (4%)	3 (6%)	3 (6%)	13 (26%)	16 (32%)	9 (18%)	4 (8%)	0 (0%)
10) The AI technologies I use improve my study grades	4 (8%)	1 (2%)	8 (16%)	14 (28%)	11 (22%)	7 (14%)	3 (6%)	2 (4%)
11) Using AI technologies to complete assignments and exams is cheating	5 (10%)	3 (6%)	4 (8%)	12 (24%)	4 (8%)	14 (28%)	7 (14%)	1 (2%)
12) Using AI technologies should be prohibited in educational settings	8 (16%)	7 (14%)	7 (14%)	15 (30%)	5 (10%)	6 (12%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)
13) Overall, I have a positive attitude towards the use of AI technologies in education	3 (6%)	2 (4%)	3 (6%)	16 (32%)	13 (26%)	8 (16%)	5 (10%)	0 (0%)
14) Overall, I have a negative attitude towards the use of AI technologies in education	2 (4%)	7 (14%)	8 (16%)	19 (38%)	9 (18%)	3 (6%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)
Note: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Slightly disagree; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Slightly agree; 6 = Agree; 7 = Strongly agree								

Table 4 above presents the 7-point Likert scale which focuses on the positive and negative perceptions associated with the use of AI on school-related assignments. Fourteen items were used, with every two items alternating between positive and negative statements on the academic use of AI tools. The last two items are exceptions, which are positive and negative statements, respectively.

Out of the fourteen prompts, seven of them had neutral as the majority response. This could suggest that the respondents neither definitely agree nor disagree, were at a point of indecision, lacked a clear opinion or understanding, or felt indifferent to the given statements. However, it is important to note that there are some

statements that had the highest frequencies leaning towards points 5, 6, 7 which indicated agreement. The most noticeable among them is statement 8, with the majority in point 7 or strongly agree. Despite the generally neutral findings in the table, most of the respondents strongly agreed that they are concerned with how AI technologies will affect learning for students in the future.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative results of this study are presented and discussed in the order of the interview questions asked of selected participants by discussing the themes that have surfaced upon performing thematic analysis.

How Do You Perceive the Use of AI Technologies in School-Related Assignments?

The participants presented mostly neutral views, with them focusing on both the advantages and disadvantages of using AI tools in school-related tasks. They highlighted situations in which the academic use of AI could be considered positive, such as the tool helping improve efficiency, academic support, accuracy, convenience, enhanced understanding, and critical thinking. They also emphasized instances or effects where the academic use of AI could be considered negative, such as overreliance or dependency, reduced self-confidence, reliability issues, unethical use, loss of originality, reduced personal effort, and reduced academic integrity. Most of the participants had neither fixed positive nor negative views, their perceptions on the academic use of AI depending on a case-by-case basis.

Can You Share a Personal Experience Using AI Technologies in School-Related Assignments That Was Positive or Negative?

The participants used AI in various circumstances, such as in writing research manuscripts, helping with writing revisions, creating notes, creating a study aid to clarify or understand complex tasks, finding resources for research paper writing, organizing and expressing thoughts clearly, speeding up the accomplishment of assignments, and summarizing content.

What Do You Think Will Be the Future of the Use of AI Technologies in School-Related Assignments?

The participants generally expressed that reliance on AI may increase in the future due to factors such as accessibility, advancement, simplification of tasks, workload reduction, and possible assistance in special education. Others have mentioned that reliance on AI may increase due to normalization, increased integration in academics, and the existing technological culture. The possibility of reliance on AI being used in professions beyond the education sector was also brought up. However, many of them have also pointed out the need to exercise caution, responsible use, and regulation in the use of AI, indicating that there is still a cautious or moderate attitude towards AI use and an awareness that not all AI-generated outputs are accurate, and human intervention is still needed to ensure correctness.

Convergence of Findings

Triangulation revealed strong convergence between the methods. Both the quantitative results and interview narratives demonstrated that pre-service teachers generally view AI in a neutral manner, the positive or negative aspects depending on how it is used in school-related assignments. Additionally, they use it primarily for grammar checking, summarizing, content enhancement, and other academic-support tasks. This convergence strengthened the reliability of the findings, indicating that the trends observed in the survey were reinforced by participants' actual experiences.

Divergence of Findings

Certain divergences emerged, offering additional insights. While survey responses reflected generally neutral stances with some leaning towards positive, interview data revealed deeper concerns regarding accuracy, misinformation, ethical issues, and academic integrity. This is also supported by the presence of two negative statements in the survey with a high level of agreement, specifically, how AI will impact students' performance in the future is a cause for concern and that AI is a form of cheating in academics. These nuances were not fully captured in the quantitative items and became evident through narrative accounts. Similarly, although many respondents indicated a "moderate" or "equal" extent of AI use, qualitative explanations showed that this moderation stemmed from caution, lack of clear guidelines, and fear of overreliance, rather than lack of interest or usefulness. These divergences highlight complexities in AI adoption that a single method would not have uncovered.

Complementarity of Findings

The qualitative findings complemented the quantitative trends by explaining the reasons for AI usage patterns. Interview responses clarified why grammar checking and summarizing were selected most frequently in the

surveys students used AI for efficiency, clarity, and time management**.** Qualitative insights also explained the selective use of specific AI platforms based on academic course demands and personal preference. Through this complementarity, the triangulated findings provided a more complete and contextualized interpretation of how and why pre-service teachers integrate AI into their academic work.

Enhancement of Validity and Credibility

The use of methodological triangulation strengthened the study by corroborating results, where consistent patterns across methods increased confidence in the accuracy of findings; by providing both breadth and depth, with surveys offering general trends and interviews explaining the reasons behind those trends; revealing nuances and contextual factors, such as concerns about accuracy, ethics, and overreliance on AI that were not fully captured through the quantitative data alone; and enhancing credibility and rigor, as the integration of two independent methods reducing the likelihood of method-specific bias. Through these contributions, triangulation ensured a more robust, well-supported, and comprehensive interpretation of the research results.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Students generally balance their use of AI technology, both when working on one assignment at a time to an equal extent and over long periods where they occasionally use it. This would show that they do not completely rely on AI technologies in their school-related assignments, even with the advantages these technologies offer.

The most commonly used AI platforms that students use are ChatGPT, Grammarly, Google Gemini, Scribbr, and Canva AI, showing their popularity of these technologies among students for their benefits in easing their workloads. As for why they use these platforms, they use them to check their grammar, summarize content, enhance subject knowledge, cite their references, and paraphrase content, showing a connection between these platforms and the reasons why they are used.

The majority of the pre-service teachers surveyed and interviewed were found to have a neutral stance towards the use of AI technologies in their school-related assignments. They believe that the use of AI depends on how it is used. However, they have also highlighted the need for responsible use and regulation of AI.

In this segment, the following are recommendations for:

Pre-Service Teachers

Use AI Responsively and Critically

Pre-service teachers should approach AI as a supplementary tool. They must verify AI-generated outputs against credible academic sources to avoid misinformation and maintain academic accuracy.

Strengthen Foundational Academic Competencies

Students are encouraged to continue to develop skills in writing, research, critical thinking, and analysis to prevent overdependence on AI for tasks that require personal intellectual engagement.

Teachers

Integrate AI and Digital Literacy into the Curriculum

Teacher education programs should include structured instruction on AI literacy, covering topics such as evaluating AI outputs, understanding limitations, ethical considerations, and practical applications in teaching and learning.

Promote Balance and Authentic Learning Experiences

Faculty should design learning tasks that cultivate independent thinking and creativity. Activities may include a combination of AI-enhanced tasks and strictly AI-free assignments to maintain academic rigor.

Future Researchers

Examine Long-Term Impacts of AI on Learning and Skill Development

Research should investigate how continuous AI use influences critical thinking, writing proficiency, academic independence, and professional identity formation among future teachers.

Assess the Effectiveness of Institutional AI Policies

As more institutions adopt AI guidelines, future researchers may evaluate how these policies affect student behavior, academic integrity, and perceptions of AI in learning.

Declarations

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Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in this study.

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