

From Pen to Prompt: Investigating the Shift in Writing Practices with AI Tools Like ChatGPT

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Abstract

The impact of AI-powered tools like ChatGPT on students' language use, originality, and authorship perceptions is the main focus of this study, which examines how writing habits are changing in the digital age. The research investigates the frequency and uses of AI tools, spanning from academic and creative writing to recreational involvement, using data gathered from a Google Form survey given to 50 undergraduate and graduate students at Christ College, Vizhinjam. Additionally, the study looks into how students perceive these tools' effects on their writing practices, critical thinking, and originality. Results highlight the intricate connection between new technology and conventional ideas of writing, providing information about how digital support is changing the landscape of creative and educational writing. The findings reveal that while most students use ChatGPT primarily for academic writing and information gathering, concerns persist regarding overdependence, loss of creativity, and ethical implications. Despite recognizing its benefits for improving writing quality and efficiency, students remain cautious about its influence on critical thinking and originality. The study underscores the need to integrate AI ethics and digital literacy into educational curricula to foster responsible and creative engagement with emerging technologies, ensuring that AI serves as a complement rather than a replacement for human intellect and imagination.

Keywords: ChatGPT, Student authorship, Human-AI collaboration, Digital writing practices

Introduction:

The introduction of artificial intelligence (AI) has had a profound impact on how people write and communicate. A popular platform for creating, improving, and helping with written material, ChatGPT is one of the most significant AI technologies. While originality, critical thinking, and human ingenuity were valued in old writing techniques, the digital age has brought with it both new opportunities and problems. With AI being used for academic projects, creative writing, and informal interactions, students in particular are leading this change. This study explores how writing, authorship, and learning are changing in higher education settings due to AI tools like ChatGPT.

Significant concerns about originality, critical thinking, and student authorship are brought up by the use of AI tools into academic and creative writing methods. While ChatGPT boosts productivity and offers linguistic support, it can also result in dependency, less creativity, and a blurring of the lines between text produced by machines and that produced by humans. Rethinking education, authorship, and the changing notion of creativity in the digital age requires an understanding of how students utilise and interpret such tools.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate how often and why students utilise ChatGPT for writing in their academic, artistic, and leisure endeavours.
2. To examine how students view AI technologies in terms of creativity, writing, and critical thinking.
3. To evaluate how traditional writing methods and originality are affected by AI-supported writing.
4. To determine what obstacles and possibilities AI tools offer college students who write.

Research Questions

How often do students in their undergraduate and graduate programs use ChatGPT for various writing tasks?

How do students feel about ChatGPT's impact on their creativity, critical thinking, and

writing?

What influence does ChatGPT have on students' academic and creative writing habits?

What difficulties and moral dilemmas result from using AI in student writing?

Hypothesis of the Study

Null Hypothesis (H₀): Students' writing practices, originality, authorship perceptions, and critical thinking skills are not significantly impacted by the use of AI-powered technologies like ChatGPT.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): The employment of ChatGPT and other AI-powered tools has a big impact on students' writing habits, sense of originality, perceptions of authorship, and critical thinking skills.

Analysis

The survey explicitly tackles students' use of ChatGPT, opinions of its influence on originality, creativity, and writing quality, as well as their worries regarding ethics and over-reliance. Likert-scale items and frequency-based questions are included in the form to help record usage levels and attitudes related to it. The findings are more reliable because of this dual approach, which guarantees that the data will not only demonstrate usage patterns but also how students understand those behaviours in connection to their creativity and authorship.

The survey results provide insight into how people use AI writing tools. AI writing tools are occasionally used by the majority of responders. A bit more than half (54.7%) of the 53 respondents to the poll reported using these tools occasionally. 18.9%, a lesser percentage, said they used them every day. Even less frequent was weekly use (9.4%). But a sizable portion of those surveyed—17%—said they hardly ever use these tools.

This pattern implies that AI writing tools are currently viewed as supplemental help rather than as necessary for everyday jobs. Many people might only use them in response to particular difficulties like demanding workloads, the need for research, or time restraints. People prefer having AI available as a support system rather than a constant necessity in their writing process, as seen by the fact that occasional use predominates.

At the same time, the usage distribution reveals a range of user habits. Some people use AI sparingly or not at all, while others are cautious or choosy and have fully integrated it into their everyday routines. This diversity may be a result of their varying personal preferences, levels of technological confidence, or the particular requirements of their creative, professional, or academic activity. When taken as a whole, the data shows how AI technologies are seen as both useful and cautious, fulfilling a variety of functions based on the demands of the user.

A majority of respondents (69.8%) stated that their primary use of AI tools is for academic writing. Additionally, 50.9% of respondents said they use AI for general information or summaries. Other uses include grammatical correction (17%) and idea generation (30.2%). Creative writing was used the least frequently (11.3%).

These findings imply that rather than being sources of amusement or creative expression, people mostly see AI systems as useful tools. The expanding role of AI in assisting with learning, research, and production is reflected in the emphasis on academic writing and information collection. These techniques can be particularly useful for professionals and students when it comes to effectively organizing content, writing essays, and simplifying difficult subjects.

The lower usage rates for idea generation, grammatical correction, and particularly creative writing point to a more cautious or constrained use of AI in less formal jobs. This may suggest that while users are relying on AI largely for accuracy and speed in structured work, they would want to retain more personal control over the creative and stylistic aspects of writing. All things considered, the evidence shows that information management and education, not creativity, are where AI is thought to be most useful.

Concerns about overdependence (45.3%) and the possible loss of creativity (49.1%) were the most common among those surveyed. Additional issues were lack of critical thinking (34%), plagiarism/originality (43.4%), and ethical use (18.9%). An even smaller percentage (5.7%) said they had no worries.

Deeper skepticism regarding AI's long-term effects on human capabilities is shown in these worries. Many respondents worry that if AI is used more often, people won't need to think for themselves as much, which could lead to a decline in their ability to solve problems and be innovative. The concern about losing originality implies that people still view writing as a very creative and intimate activity, one that could be weakened if robots do too much of it.

Concerns over creativity, plagiarism, and ethics also show how people are beginning to doubt the distinctions between human and machine labor. Respondents understand that although AI might simplify jobs, it also brings up issues of fairness, authenticity, and ownership. Only a small percentage of participants said they had no worries, indicating that most individuals are still wary and aware of the potential and dangers of utilizing AI in writing.

64.2% of respondents have been using these tools for more than six months, indicating that most have been using them for some time. Just 9.4% of people have been using them for less than three months, and 26.4% have been using them for three to six months. AI technologies enhance writing quality and save time, according to several responders. Additionally, there is a strong belief that their reliance on AI has grown over time. The vast majority of responders (62.3%) believe that digital literacy and AI ethics should be taught in schools. 7.5% opposed the concept, while a smaller percentage (30.2%) were unsure.

Few respondents were relatively new users of AI writing tools; the majority had been using them for a considerable amount of time. This shows that people have already started incorporating the technology into their daily lives rather than just playing around with it sometimes. Many cited increases in writing quality and time efficiency,

demonstrating AI's utility as a useful tool that yields quantifiable advantages in both academic and professional settings. Respondents did, however, also recognize an increasing sense of dependence over time, which relates to previous worries about excessive dependence.

Strong support for teaching AI ethics and digital literacy in schools is also revealed by the study. It shows that people understand how important it is to train the next generation to use AI successfully and responsibly. Although some people were unsure and a minority rejected the idea, the general trend shows that AI is being accepted as a permanent component of contemporary work and education. Respondents think that by giving students the tools to handle AI's benefits and drawbacks, schools can guarantee that its application is morally sound, empowering, and balanced rather than detrimental.

The questionnaire's focus on pedagogical and ethical issues is one of its advantages. The wider ramifications of AI adoption in education are brought to light by concerns around plagiarism, originality, over-reliance, and the potential incorporation of AI ethics in the curriculum. This indicates that the survey looks into the ethical and scholarly ramifications of incorporating AI into students' writing processes in addition to documenting technological usage. It is especially beneficial to include an open-ended question about whether students view material produced by artificial intelligence as their own writing since it gives them the opportunity to critically think and provide qualitative insights that enhance the quantitative data.

Overall, the survey offers a solid starting point for the investigation, effectively connecting to the goals of comprehending authorship impressions, ethical issues, and student usage habits. It works well for collecting organised, unambiguous data from the sample of fifty three students.

Proposed Methodology

This study uses a descriptive and analytical research approach to investigate how students' writing practices, perceptions of authorship, and originality are affected by AI technologies such as ChatGPT. Convenience sampling was used to choose 53 undergraduate and graduate students from Christ College in Vizhinjam. A structured Google Form with both closed-ended and open-ended questions was used to collect the data. Frequency distributions and percentages will be used to analyse quantitative data from multiple-choice and Likert-scale items, and students' thoughts on authorship and originality will be captured through theme analysis of qualitative replies. A thorough grasp of how AI-assisted writing affects creativity, critical thinking, and ethical considerations is made possible by the mixed-method approach.

Relevance of the Study

By providing insights into how students incorporate AI into their academic and creative life, this study adds to the expanding conversation on digital writing practices. It is especially pertinent to higher education, where encouraging creativity and critical thinking is still crucial. The results will assist researchers, educators, and legislators in striking a balance between the benefits of AI-assisted writing and the requirement to maintain human creativity, authorship, and moral academic standards.

Limitations of the Study

The study only included 53 children from one school, which limits how broadly the results can be applied. Bias or underreporting of real consumption may be present in self-reported data.

The study mostly examines ChatGPT and gives little consideration to alternative AI-powered writing tools.

Conclusion

The study reveals that AI tools such as ChatGPT have become significant aids in students' writing practices, especially for academic and informational purposes. While these tools enhance productivity, accuracy, and linguistic support, they also raise valid concerns regarding originality, creativity, and ethical writing. The findings show that students largely view AI as a supplementary tool rather than a full substitute for human intellect. However, the increasing reliance on AI calls for a balanced approach—one that combines technological proficiency with critical thinking and creative engagement. Integrating AI ethics and digital literacy into the educational curriculum will ensure that students not only use these tools effectively but also responsibly, preserving the integrity of human authorship and innovation in the digital age.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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