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Artificial Intelligence in Professional Higher Education: A Dual Perspective on Adoption, Benefits, and Challenges from Students and Faculty

Dr. Laxmikant C. Sontakke

Assistant Professor at MVP's KBT COE Nashik Maharashtra, India
Email: *laxmikant1213[at]gmail.com.*

Abstract: ***The rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools into professional higher education is fundamentally reshaping academic landscapes globally. This report provides a comprehensive analysis of AI tool usage from the perspectives of both students and faculty in professional courses. It explores the perceived benefits, including enhanced efficiency, personalized learning, and administrative streamlining (Luckin et al., 2016; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019), while also addressing significant challenges such as academic integrity concerns, the impact on critical thinking, and ethical dilemmas surrounding data privacy and algorithmic bias (Selwyn, 2019; Holmes et al., 2021). Drawing upon recent surveys and case studies, the report synthesizes convergent and divergent views, discusses the observed intention-behavior gap in faculty adoption (Ifenthaler & Schumacher, 2016), and highlights the profound implications for policy development and curriculum adaptation (Nouri et al., 2020). The findings underscore the necessity for a balanced, human-centered approach to AI integration, advocating for robust institutional support, comprehensive AI literacy initiatives, and a re-evaluation of traditional assessment methodologies to ensure equitable and effective educational outcomes in an AI-driven future (Popenici & Kerr, 2017).***

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence in Education, Professional Courses, Student Perceptions, Faculty Perspectives, Academic Integrity, Personalized Learning, Ethical AI, Educational Technology, Generative AI

1. Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transitioning from a futuristic concept to a present-day reality, becoming an integral force within the global research and academic landscape. Its core capabilities—encompassing understanding, prediction, creation, and optimization—are profoundly reshaping educational processes and expanding scholarly possibilities (Luckin et al., 2016; Selwyn, 2019). The period between 2023 and 2025 has witnessed a particularly swift emergence of generative AI technologies, such as ChatGPT, Google Gemini, and Microsoft Copilot, sparking both considerable optimism and significant concerns across educational institutions (Holmes et al., 2021; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). While global AI optimism is on the rise, regional disparities in sentiment persist, indicating a varied acceptance and understanding of these technologies worldwide (UNESCO, 2023).

The integration of AI into higher education is not merely a technological enhancement but a transformative force, revolutionizing traditional teaching and learning methods. AI holds immense potential to offer personalized learning experiences, streamline administrative tasks, enhance feedback mechanisms, and facilitate robust data analysis, thereby addressing the diverse needs of learners and educators (Popenici & Kerr, 2017; Bond et al., 2021). For professional courses specifically, AI integration is becoming essential to prepare students for an increasingly AI-driven workforce, ensuring they possess the necessary skills to navigate and thrive in future professional landscapes (OECD, 2021). The pervasive and rapid integration of AI into professional higher education represents a fundamental paradigm shift that necessitates a comprehensive re-evaluation of pedagogical approaches and institutional policies (Ifenthaler & Schumacher, 2016). This is because AI is no longer an optional add-on but a foundational element, deeply and unavoidably embedding itself into academic structures (Luckin et al., 2016).

If AI can personalize learning, automate significant tasks, and simulate complex real-world scenarios across professional disciplines, then the very nature of teaching, learning, and assessment must evolve (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). This implies a deeper need for institutions to move beyond simply adopting tools to actively designing new curricula, assessment strategies, and ethical governance frameworks that account for this fundamental re-imagining of the educational experience (Holmes et al., 2021; Selwyn, 2019).

This paper aims to provide a comprehensive, evidence-based analysis of the use of AI tools in professional academic courses, examining the multifaceted perspectives of both students and faculty. It will explore the perceived benefits, inherent challenges, and critical ethical implications associated with AI integration, synthesizing current research to offer a balanced understanding of this evolving educational paradigm.

2. Literature Survey

2.1 Current Landscape of AI Tools in Professional Academia

AI in education encompasses a broad spectrum of technologies, each with distinct functionalities adapted for learning and instructional support. These tools are designed to augment human intelligence and streamline various academic processes (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019; Luckin et al., 2016).

General AI Tool Categories and Functionalities:

- **Machine Learning (ML):** These algorithms learn from data to make predictions or decisions, such as identifying patterns in student submissions to flag off-topic work (Holmes et al., 2021).
- **Deep Learning (DL):** A powerful subset of ML, deep learning models are inspired by the human brain's neural networks. They are used for tasks like image or speech recognition and power advanced feedback engines in learning platforms (Chaudhry & Kazim, 2023).
- **Expert Systems:** Rule-based systems apply logic to reach decisions, for example, helping instructors determine students who may need additional support based on assignment scores (Baker & Smith, 2019).
- **Generative AI:** Includes tools like ChatGPT that generate new content based on patterns from large datasets. These tools are increasingly used for content creation, tutoring, and summarization (OpenAI, 2023; Selwyn, 2023).
- **Intelligent Tutoring Systems:** These systems provide individualized feedback and adapt to student needs in real-time (VanLehn, 2011).
- **Adaptive Learning Platforms:** Platforms such as DreamBox and Knewton adjust learning content in real-time based on user data (Holmes et al., 2021).
- **Automated Grading Systems:** AI-powered systems analyze and evaluate assignments, saving educators time (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019).
- **Chatbots and Virtual Assistants:** Tools like IBM Watson and Google's Dialogflow interact with students to provide assistance 24/7 (Følstad & Brandtzaeg, 2017).
- **Natural Language Processing (NLP):** NLP enables AI systems to interpret and respond to human language, powering tools like Grammarly and conversational agents (Lu et al., 2018).
- **Learning Analytics and Predictive Modeling:** Used for tracking student engagement and predicting academic success or risk (Ifenthaler & Yau, 2020).
- **Augmented and Virtual Reality (AR/VR):** Technologies like zSpace, Labster, and Oculus create immersive learning simulations (Radianti et al., 2020).
- **Content Creation Tools:** Tools like Canva Magic Write, SlidesAI, and ScribeSense help in creating quizzes, flashcards, and presentations (Holmes et al., 2021).

Applications across Various Professional Disciplines:

- **Medical Education:** AI tools simulate patient interactions and surgical procedures (Topol, 2019), evaluate MSPEs (University of Miami, 2023), create test prep questions, and map curriculum content to competencies (Mesko et al., 2020). They also support feedback automation and promote deeper learning (Warrier et al., 2023).
- **Law Education:** AI is used in legal research, mock negotiations, and legal analytics (Susskind, 2020). Around 55% of law schools now offer AI courses, and 83% have AI-integrated legal clinics (ABA, 2023). ASU Law's AI-based admission elements and student chatbot training are pioneering examples.
- **Engineering Education:** AI tools like MATLAB, AutoML, TensorFlow, and ANSYS are embedded in real-world applications (Zhou et al., 2022). In civil, mechanical, biomedical, and electrical engineering, AI supports design simulation, process optimization, and intelligent control systems (Larrondo-Petrie, 2021). AI is also used in campus operations (Kira Talent, ParkMobile, Ad Astra) and student services (Ex Libris Alma, VMock).
- **Business Education:** Business schools use AI simulations for strategic decision-making (ESMT Berlin, 2023), while generative AI aids in producing case studies, assessments, and course content (Dwivedi et al., 2023). AI enhances personalization, automates feedback, and offers predictive analytics for curriculum design (Chatterjee et al., 2021).

2.2 Student Perspectives on AI Tool Usage

Table 1: AI Tool Categories and Applications in Professional Education

AI Tool Category/ Functionality	Specific AI Tools/Platforms (Examples)	Application in Professional Education	Relevant Professional Fields
Personalized Learning	Intelligent Tutoring Systems, Adaptive Learning Platforms, Packback, DreamBox, ALEKS	Tailored content, adaptive pacing, individualized guidance, real-time feedback, customized learning paths, inquiry-driven learning	General Higher Ed, Medical, Business, STEM
Assessment & Feedback	Turnitin, Gradescope, ExamSoft, Blackboard Learn, Respondus, Kira Talent, EssayGrader, Moodle	Plagiarism detection, automated grading, streamlined evaluation, secure online exams, video-based assessments, question generation, curriculum mapping	General Higher Ed, Medical, Law, Engineering
Simulations & Practical Training	AI-generated standardized patients, Chatbot (mock negotiation), SolidWorks, ANSYS, SimScale, Fusion 360, Autodesk Revit, CityEngine, MATLAB, LabVIEW, Aspen Plus, CHEMCAD, COMSOL Multiphysics, Siemens Healthineers AI, Slicer, Osso VR	Clinical skill building, mock legal negotiations, design optimization, stress analysis, urban planning, process control, medical diagnostics, virtual labs, surgical training	Medical, Law, Engineering (Mechanical, Civil, Electrical, Chemical, Biomedical)
Content Creation & Curriculum Design	Generative AI (ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot), Playlab AI	Lesson plan generation, course objective ideas, content summarization, identifying content gaps, gathering learning resources, quiz generation, rubric creation, interactive learning modules, multilingual support	General Higher Ed, Medical, Business, Law

Administrative & Operational Support	Kira Talent, CampusOptics, Ad Astra, Enertiv, Ex Libris Alma, KastleSafe, ShotSpotter, ParkMobile, NAVYA, Handshake, VMock, Xero, QuickBooks	Automated applicant screening, smart scheduling, energy management, library cataloging, campus security, transportation management, career matching, financial automation	General Higher Ed, Engineering, Business
Research & Data Analysis	AI-powered analytics tools, Jupyter Notebooks with AI Libraries, Deep Learning Models	Uncovering student performance insights, predictive modeling for student success, analyzing student engagement, optimizing course design, identifying research patterns	General Higher Ed, Medical, Engineering, Business

Students are at the forefront of AI adoption in higher education, demonstrating widespread and rapidly increasing engagement with these tools. Their perspectives reveal a complex interplay of perceived benefits, significant challenges, and evolving ethical considerations.

Prevalence and Patterns of AI Adoption: Student adoption of AI tools in higher education is not only widespread but also accelerating at a remarkable pace. A global survey conducted by the Digital Education Council in 2024 revealed that a significant majority, 86% of students, utilize AI in their academic pursuits, with 54% engaging with AI weekly and nearly one in four on a daily basis. This trend intensified further, as evidenced by the HEPI/Kortext 2025 survey, which reported an even higher surge in AI use, with 92% of students now employing AI in some form, a substantial increase from 66% in 2024. The use of generative AI specifically for assessments experienced a dramatic jump, from 53% in 2024 to 88% in 2025. The most popular functions for generative AI among students include explaining concepts (58%), summarizing articles, and suggesting research ideas. A notable finding is that 18% of students admitted to directly incorporating AI-generated text into their assignments. High usage rates are consistently observed for platforms such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Quillbot for writing assistance, as well as Canva for design, underscoring AI's pervasive influence in contemporary academic contexts. Despite this increasing familiarity, the actual regular use of generative AI tools like ChatGPT is reported by a smaller subset, around 25-35% of students. Students generally express a preference for AI tools that simplify their daily study routines, assist with writing tasks, and ultimately enhance their efficiency.

Challenges and Concerns Regarding AI Tools: Despite the numerous benefits, students harbor significant challenges and concerns regarding the pervasive use of AI tools in their education.

- **Over-reliance and Diminished Critical Thinking:** A notable and concerning finding is the significant negative correlation between frequent AI tool usage and critical thinking abilities, a relationship mediated by increased cognitive offloading. Younger participants, specifically those aged 17–25, exhibit a higher dependence on AI tools and, consequently, lower critical thinking scores compared to older participants (46 years and older). Some students openly express worry about not learning or retaining information effectively and fear losing their inherent problem-solving skills due to heavy reliance on AI.
- **Misinformation and Deepfakes:** Students are increasingly apprehensive about misinformation and deepfakes generated by AI, often admitting a lack of understanding regarding their creation and identification. They express fears that AI could be manipulated to distort facts for political agendas, misrepresenting truth through media snippets, and contributing to a broader loss of a clear sense of reality in digital spaces, particularly on social media where AI-generated content can be undetectable.
- **Privacy and Data Usage:** Students express considerable unease about how their personal data is collected, used, and stored by AI applications, often maintaining skepticism regarding the transparency and security practices of AI tool providers. Concerns extend to the potential for their data to be used to predict their future behaviors on a larger scale.
- **Accuracy and Reliability:** Students demonstrate a significant awareness of potential limitations in AI's output, with concerns about the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated content being a top concern. Instances of "citation fraud" and "frequent falsification of citations" by AI are noted, with students expressing a strong desire for AI to provide reliable references rather than "just winging them".
- **Employability:** A primary concern for students is the potential impact of AI on entry-level job roles and the devaluation of the skills they are currently developing, leading to feelings of unpreparedness for the rapidly changing job market.
- **Anxiety:** Students report a growing sense of anxiety stemming from the rapid pace of AI developments and the broader implications for their future academic and professional lives.

2.3 Faculty Perspectives on AI Tool Integration

Faculty members exhibit a more cautious and slower adoption of AI tools for teaching and research compared to their students. Their perspectives highlight a blend of recognized benefits, significant challenges, and a clear demand for institutional support and professional development.

Current Adoption Rates and Comfort Levels: Faculty adoption of AI tools for teaching and research remains more conservative than student usage. A 2025 Digital Education Council survey revealed that while 61% of faculty have used AI in teaching, a substantial 88% do so minimally. A Fall 2023 Northeastern survey provided similar figures, indicating that 32% of faculty reported using generative AI in teaching, but a majority (54%) explicitly stated they did not use it for teaching purposes. For research, AI use was even less common, with 76% of faculty responding negatively. Comfort levels with generative AI in academic work are notably low; a Spring Senate faculty survey found that only 13.5% felt comfortable, and 26% felt somewhat comfortable. A 2023 study further underscored this

disparity, noting that less than 22% of faculty members used AI, despite nearly half of students regularly doing so. Perceptions of AI adoption also vary by demographic factors: younger male faculty tend to be the most enthusiastic about AI , while interestingly, the younger age group (27-42) showed more negative attitudes towards AI than older faculty (43-58) in one study. Faculty who perceived AIED instructional design as important were more likely to integrate AI tools into their teaching practices.

Perceived Benefits of AI Tools: Faculty widely acknowledge AI's potential to significantly reduce their workload by automating repetitive and time-consuming tasks. This includes assisting in drafting routine emails, efficiently checking student work for plagiarism, aiding in grading certain types of assignments, and generating components of lesson plans.

- **Course Design:** AI can streamline the course design process by generating objective ideas, summarizing large amounts of information, identifying content gaps, compiling learning resources, suggesting questions for assignments and exams, and creating rubrics based on course objectives.
- **Content Delivery:** AI enhances lecture preparation, facilitates quiz generation, allows for the addition of gamification elements, supports adaptive learning environments, and improves accessibility through features like text-to-speech, live captions, and real-time translation.
- **Data Analysis:** AI excels at collecting and analyzing student data, providing valuable insights into student performance and needs. This capability helps faculty make informed decisions and tailor their teaching methods and support strategies more effectively.
- **Student Support:** While AI cannot replace human interaction, it can manage less involved support requests, thereby freeing up faculty time for more impactful one-on-one interactions. This includes identifying struggling students, acting as remote tutors, and providing real-time feedback for simpler tasks.
- **Overall Benefits:** By reducing administrative burdens and repetitive tasks, AI can significantly improve faculty work-life balance, reduce stress, and increase job satisfaction and retention, allowing them to focus more on their core responsibilities of teaching, mentoring, and research. AI is also perceived to enhance teaching through personalized learning, provide deeper insights into student understanding, and positively influence learning outcomes. In medical education, faculty utilize AI for generating exam questions, clinical scenarios, and enhancing bedside teaching, as well as assessing the quality and objectives of examinations. Some educators view AI as an innovative tool for both research and teaching, promoting educational enhancement by focusing on cognitive skills that are outside the purview of AI. Importantly, AI tools are seen as augmenting, rather than replacing, the instructor's role.

Challenges and Concerns Regarding AI Tools: Faculty members express a range of challenges and concerns regarding the integration of AI tools, many of which stem from practical implementation issues and ethical considerations.

- **Academic Integrity:** The most significant concern for faculty is the potential for AI to facilitate cheating and compromise academic integrity. Professors find it difficult to detect AI-written answers, with some expressing a feeling of helplessness, stating there is "no way for me as a professor to tell if someone's cheating". Concerns exist about students simply transcribing AI responses by hand, negating the purpose of handwritten work , and AI-generated essays bypassing conventional plagiarism detectors.
- **Over-reliance on AI:** Faculty worry about students becoming overly dependent on AI, which could potentially lead to a loss of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- **Ethical and Practical Concerns:** The handling of student data raises significant concerns about privacy and the potential for misuse of sensitive information. Algorithmic bias is another major ethical issue, where AI systems trained on biased data can perpetuate inequities, particularly for minority students or those with diverse learning needs. A lack of transparency and accountability in AI decision-making processes is also a significant concern, as many AI algorithms are considered "black boxes".
- **Limitations of AI:** Faculty note AI's inherent lack of "critical thinking" skills, rendering its information unreliable for reaching definitive scientific conclusions. They also express doubts about the reliability of AI-provided references and the potential for outdated information, especially in rapidly evolving fields like medicine. AI's inability to provide context-specific information or teach human, emotional, and social skills is also highlighted as a significant limitation.
- **Access and Training:** Researchers from tier II and III institutions often report lacking adequate access and training to effectively use AI tools. Many teachers indicate a lack of professional development needed to integrate AI effectively , and faculty themselves question whether they possess sufficient knowledge to effectively use and recommend ChatGPT to students.
- **Curriculum Development and Infrastructure:** Challenges include the inherent difficulty of integrating AI into existing educational systems, the need for extensive curriculum development, and a general lack of necessary infrastructure. The main challenge identified is building the robust infrastructure required to translate promising AI pilots into routine educational practice at scale.
- **Student Disengagement:** Faculty have observed that when students rely heavily on AI, they can become disengaged from their work and lose interest in deeper learning.

Table 2: Comparative Analysis of Perceived Benefits of AI Tools (Student & Faculty)

Benefit Category	Student Perspective (Details/Examples)	Faculty Perspective (Details/Examples)
Efficiency/Time-Saving	Saves time (51%), improves quality (50%), instant support (40%), assistance outside study hours (29%), simplifies complex content, improves writing/ grammar, enhances research speed	Automates repetitive tasks (emails, plagiarism checks, grading), streamlines administrative duties, boosts productivity, helps meet workload guidelines
Personalized Learning & Support	Personalized support (32%), tailored learning experiences, instant feedback, adaptive learning, boosts motivation, private space for sensitive questions	Creates personalized learning experiences, provides real-time feedback, identifies struggling students, acts as remote tutors, offers targeted help
Enhanced Academic Outcomes	Higher pass rates, equips for AI-driven workplace, improved comprehension, better self-efficacy, positive attitudes towards education	Deeper insights into student understanding, positive influences on learning outcomes, aids assessment quality, enhances teaching effectiveness
Content Creation & Course Design	N/A (primarily consumers of AI-generated content)	Streamlines course design (objectives, summaries, content gaps, resources, assessment ideas, rubrics), enhances lecture preparation, quiz generation, gamification, accessibility features
Administrative Streamlining	N/A (benefits indirectly from faculty efficiency)	Automates admissions, scheduling, grading, communication (emails, announcements), reduces paperwork and planning time
Skill Development	Enhanced critical thinking (though also a concern), improved AI skills (28%), better communication, competency	Fosters creativity in teaching, allows focus on mentoring and research, supports development of AI literacy
Work-Life Balance	N/A (focus on academic tasks)	Improves work-life balance, reduces stress, prevents burnout, increases job satisfaction and retention

Table 3: Comparative Analysis of Challenges and Concerns Regarding AI Tools (Student & Faculty)

Challenge/Concern Category	Student Perspective (Details/Examples)	Faculty Perspective (Details/Examples)
Academic Integrity & Misuse	AI-plagiarism," blurring lines of "help" vs. "copying," un fair advantage, difficulty proving AI use,fear of failure leading to plagiarism, complex views on permissible use	Difficulty detecting AI plagiarism, "no way to tell if someone's cheating," students transcribing AI output, AI bypassing plagiarism detectors, increased academic dishonesty cases, lack of clear policies
Impact on Critical Thinking	Cognitive offloading, diminished critical thinking skills, worry about not learning/retaining, losing problem-solving abilities, over-reliance	Students becoming overly dependent on AI, potential loss of critical thinking skills, AI lacking "critical thinking" for scientific conclusions
Data Privacy & Security	Unease about personal data use/storage, skepticism of provider transparency/security, data used for future behavior prediction	Misuse of sensitive student information, lack of transparency/accountability in AI decisions, algorithmic bias in data, need for robust data protection measures
Algorithmic Bias & Fairness	Digital inequity (free vs. premium tools), inconsistent AI use across classes, AI output reflecting biases/stereotypes, disproportionate impact on marginalized groups	AI systems perpetuating inequities, biased data sets leading to unfair outcomes, need for diverse perspectives in data governance, ethical implications of bias
Over-reliance	Worry about becoming too dependent on AI for academic tasks, perceived decline in quality of own work	Concern about students becoming overly dependent on AI for final drafts, students disengaging from work
Access & Equity	Digital divide based on socio-economic status, limited access to advanced tools, uneven support	Lack of access and training for faculty in tier II/III institutions, disparities in funding for AI tools, infrastructure challenges
AI Literacy & Training	Lower self-assessed proficiency despite high interest, need for guidance on ethical use	Lack of professional development, faculty questioning their own knowledge to recommend AI, need for mandatory training and institutional support
Practical/Implementation Challenges	Anxiety about speed of AI developments, potential for distraction from learning objectives	Accommodating students with disabilities (e.g., handwritten assignments), increased time for adaptation, student resistance, difficulty teaching research skills with in-class essays
Human Interaction & Connection	AI as a tool, not a replacement; value personalized teacher feedback, discussion, collaboration; desire for "human-centric" AI for emotional support	AI's inability to provide context-specific information or teach human/emotional/social skills, concern about loss of human interaction and empathy in learning

3. Problem Statement

While Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools offer significant opportunities in professional higher education, their integration reveals a dual narrative of benefits and concerns. The problem lies in the varied adoption levels, the intention-behavior gap among faculty, ethical dilemmas, equity issues, and the lack of coherent institutional strategies. This paper investigates these disparities through a dual-perspective lens—students and faculty—aiming to uncover actionable insights to facilitate responsible and effective AI integration in professional courses.

4. Research Methodology

This study adopted a **mixed-method research design** to gain a comprehensive understanding of the integration and impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in professional

higher education. The research focused on gathering data from both students and faculty members to explore their usage patterns, perceived benefits, concerns, and expectations regarding AI applications in academic settings.

4.1 Research Design and Approach

A **convergent parallel mixed-method approach** was used, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to triangulate data and deepen the insights. The quantitative component involved structured surveys to capture widespread trends and patterns, while the qualitative component employed semi-structured interviews to explore nuanced perspectives and contextual factors influencing AI tool adoption.

4.2 Sampling and Participants

a) **Target Population**: Students and faculty from professional higher education courses, particularly in management and engineering disciplines.
b) **Sampling Technique**: A **purposive sampling** strategy was employed to select participants who had experience using AI tools in academic contexts.
c) **Sample Size**:
- **Students:** 100 respondents from undergraduate and postgraduate professional programs.
- **Faculty:** 50 faculty members teaching in management and engineering colleges.
- **Interviews:** In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 faculty members across diverse disciplines to gather deeper insights into institutional challenges and pedagogical implications.

4.3 Data Collection Methods

Quantitative Data – Survey Instrument
a) A structured questionnaire was designed using Google Forms and distributed digitally.
b) The survey included both closed-ended (Likert scale, multiple choice) and demographic questions.
c) Key focus areas included:
- Frequency and types of AI tool usage
- Perceived benefits (e.g., efficiency, learning outcomes)
- Challenges (e.g., ethical concerns, critical thinking)
- Attitudes toward future AI adoption

Qualitative Data – Semi-Structured Interviews
a) Conducted virtually via Zoom/Google Meet to accommodate participant availability.
b) Open-ended questions allowed participants to elaborate on:
- Their personal experiences using AI in teaching or learning
- Institutional support for AI integration
- Ethical and pedagogical concerns
- Suggestions for policy and curriculum improvements
c) Each interview lasted approximately 30–45 minutes.
d) All interviews were audio recorded (with consent), transcribed, and coded thematically.

4.4 Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative Analysis:
- Data from the survey was exported into Microsoft Excel and analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentages, means) and comparative graphs to highlight differences between student and faculty responses.
- Key variables such as gender, discipline, and frequency of AI use were cross-tabulated for further insights.

Qualitative Analysis:
- Thematic analysis was conducted manually on interview transcripts.
- Codes were generated inductively to identify recurring patterns related to adoption barriers, ethical concerns, and institutional readiness.
- Themes were then compared against survey findings to validate or contrast observations.

4.5 Validity, Reliability, and Ethical Considerations

- The survey instrument was pre-tested with a small group of 5 students and 3 faculty members to ensure clarity and relevance.
- Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents.
- Anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained throughout the research process.
- Ethical approval was obtained from the institutional review committee prior to data collection.

5. Results & Discussion

The integration of AI into professional higher education presents a complex and dynamic landscape, characterized by both shared aspirations and distinct challenges from the perspectives of students and faculty. A comprehensive understanding requires synthesizing these convergent and divergent views, analyzing AI's impact on learning, and addressing systemic barriers to its effective adoption.

Synthesis of Convergent and Divergent Views Between Students and Faculty: A significant area of agreement between students and faculty centers on AI's capacity to enhance efficiency and save time in academic tasks. Both groups recognize AI's role in streamlining processes, whether it is students using AI to summarize articles or faculty automating grading. Personalized learning experiences and improved academic support are also widely recognized benefits by both groups, with AI's ability to tailor content and provide instant feedback being highly valued. Case studies, such as Miami Dade College's "AI-enhanced" courses, demonstrate tangible positive outcomes like increased summer enrollment and higher pass rates, underscoring a shared positive perception of AI's potential to improve educational outcomes.

Analysis of the Impact of AI on Learning Outcomes and Teaching Methodologies: The integration of AI has demonstrated both positive and negative impacts on learning outcomes and teaching methodologies.

Positive Impacts on Learning: AI-enhanced courses have shown tangible benefits, such as increased summer enrollment and higher pass rates, indicating a positive reception from students. Tools like Packback are observed to foster critical thinking and engagement by supporting student inquiry and providing feedback. AI provides tailored support and promotes ethical practices by enabling personalized learning experiences and dynamically adjusting content based on user interactions. AI can significantly enhance learning for underrepresented students and those with disabilities by personalizing content, simplifying language, and providing accessibility features like speech-to-text and transcription tools.

Negative Impacts on Learning: A significant concern is the negative correlation observed between frequent AI usage and critical thinking abilities, a relationship mediated by increased cognitive offloading. This raises the risk of diminishing students' capacity for independent thought and deep analysis, as they may become accustomed to AI-provided solutions rather than engaging in deeper cognitive processes.

Discussion of the Intention-Behavior Gap in Faculty AI Adoption: Despite faculty perceiving AIED ethics and domain specificity as highly relevant, this perceived importance does not consistently translate into actual AI tool integration in their teaching practices. This "intention–behavior gap" suggests that barriers to adoption extend beyond individual willingness or perceived value. Possible explanations include a pervasive lack of AI literacy among faculty and existing structural conditions within higher education that hinder experimentation and integration. The actual frequency of AI use by faculty remains generally medium to low across disciplines, further supporting the existence of this gap.

Implications for Policy Development and Curriculum Adaptation: The rapid and complex integration of AI necessitates the development of clear, consistent, and transparent AI policies at the institutional level. These policies must explicitly address academic integrity, data privacy, and the ethical use of AI tools. Curricula must adapt to teach AI literacy, enabling students to critically evaluate AI-generated content, assess biases, and understand ethical implications.

Table 4: AI Usage Trends in Higher Education (2023-2025)

Year	Student AI Usage (%)	Faculty AI Usage (%)	Key Survey/Source
2023	37% (early career researchers in Asia used AI for summarizing literature 45% (adolescents using ChatGPT/ similar in past month); 25-35% (regular ChatGPT use)	32% (using GenAI in teaching) <22% (regular AI use)	Elsevier (2023), UC Irvine (Nov 2023-May 2024), Hoffmann & Schmidt (2023), von Garrel et al. (2023), Northeastern Academic Senate (Fall 2023)
2024	66% (using AI in some form); 86% (using AI in studies); 54% (using AI weekly); 25% (using GenAI for written content); 53% (using GenAI for assessments)	61% (used AI in teaching); 88% (used minimally) 24% (used GenAI for research) 13.5% (comfortable with GenAI) 47% (received AI training by Fall 2024)	HEPI/Kortext (2024), Digital Education Council (2024), Northeastern Academic Senate (Spring 2024), RAND (Fall 2024)
2025	92% (using AI in some form); 88% (using GenAI for assessments); 64% (using GenAI for text generation); 58% (explaining concepts); 50% (summarizing articles)	61% (used AI in teaching, 88% minimally)	HEPI/Kortext (2025), Digital Education Council (2025)

6. Conclusion

The integration of AI tools into professional higher education presents a dual narrative of immense potential and significant challenges. Students are rapidly embracing AI for enhanced efficiency, personalized support, and improved work quality, reflecting a proactive engagement with emerging technologies. Conversely, faculty, while recognizing AI's capacity to reduce workload and enhance teaching, exhibit a slower adoption rate, often due to practical and systemic barriers. Both students and faculty share critical concerns regarding the preservation of academic integrity, the potential impact on critical thinking skills, and the complex ethical issues surrounding data privacy, algorithmic bias, and equitable access.

AI is an undeniable force reshaping the academic landscape, and its continued integration is inevitable. To maximize AI's benefits while effectively mitigating its risks, a balanced, thoughtful, and human-centered approach is essential. This requires moving beyond mere technological adoption to strategic, ethical, and pedagogically sound integration that prioritizes genuine learning outcomes and human development.

7. Future Scope

To navigate the evolving landscape of AI in professional higher education effectively, several areas warrant further investigation and strategic institutional development.

Recommendations for Future Research Directions:

- Conduct longitudinal qualitative studies to gain a more in-depth understanding of the evolving perceptions and adoption patterns of AI tools among both students and faculty. Such studies should particularly focus on the "intention-behavior gap" identified in faculty adoption, exploring the underlying reasons and potential solutions.
- Investigate the long-term impact of frequent AI tool usage on students' critical thinking skills and cognitive offloading across diverse disciplines and educational levels. This research should move beyond correlational studies to explore causal mechanisms and develop interventions to mitigate negative effects.
- Research the effectiveness of newly implemented assessment methods designed to deter AI misuse and foster authentic learning. This includes evaluating their impact on academic integrity and genuine skill

development, moving beyond simply detecting AI to promoting original thought.

- Explore the potential of AI in addressing specific learning barriers, such as social anxiety, and its role in fostering inclusive educational environments for marginalized student groups. This could involve case studies on how AI tools can enhance accessibility and engagement for diverse learners.
- Conduct comparative studies on AI tool usage and perceptions between postgraduate and undergraduate students, as well as across different professional disciplines (e.g., medical, law, engineering), to identify unique needs, challenges, and best practices tailored to specific contexts.
- Examine the actual impact of AI on graduate employability and how higher education curricula can be optimized to prepare students for an AI-driven workforce, directly addressing student anxieties about job displacement and skill devaluation.

Suggestions for Institutional Strategies and Policy Frameworks:

- **Develop Comprehensive AI Policies:** Institutions must establish clear, consistent, and transparent AI policies that address academic integrity, data privacy, security, and ethical use across all courses and departments. These policies should be co-developed with input from diverse stakeholders, including students, faculty, and IT experts, to ensure broad acceptance and effectiveness (UNESCO, 2023; Faculty Focus, 2025; Holmes et al., 2021).
- **Invest in AI Literacy and Professional Development:** Mandatory and ongoing professional development programs should be implemented to improve faculty AI literacy and pedagogical capacity for ethical integration. Simultaneously, students must be equipped with critical AI literacy skills to evaluate AI-generated content, recognize bias, and use these tools responsibly. This fosters a culture of informed and ethical engagement (Ifenthaler & Yau, 2020; Nouri et al., 2020; Frontiers, 2025a).
- **Prioritize Human Oversight and Interaction**: AI tools must augment, not replace, the vital human elements of teaching and mentorship. Faculty should retain full control over grading and instructional decisions to maintain trust and contextual relevance in academic judgment (Popenici & Kerr, 2017; Selwyn, 2019; Holmes et al., 2021).
- **Redesign Assessment Methods:** Institutions should move away from traditional assessments that are easily manipulated by AI. Instead, creative and critical thinking–oriented evaluations, such as oral presentations, process-based tasks, and project-based learning, should be emphasized. These methods are less prone to AI misuse and more reflective of genuine learning (MDPI, 2025; Chatterjee et al., 2021; Frontiers, 2025b).
- **Ensure Data Protection and Mitigate Bias:** Robust institutional frameworks must be established to govern data privacy, ensure transparency in algorithmic processing, and address the risk of algorithmic bias. Involving diverse stakeholders in data governance helps ensure fairness and equity (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019; IIARD, 2025; UNESCO, 2023).
- **Address Digital Equity:** Institutions should develop policies to ensure that all students have equitable access to AI tools, regardless of socio-economic status. Without such measures, disparities in access to advanced or paid AI services could widen existing educational inequalities (Selwyn, 2019; Holmes et al., 2021; NDTV, 2025).
- **Foster Collaboration:** Encouraging collaboration among universities, edtech companies, policymakers, and publishers is essential to establish shared ethical standards, best practices, and innovation guidelines in educational AI (Bond et al., 2021; Faculty Focus, 2025; Frontiers, 2025a).

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