

Study of Academics' Perception of Using Artificial Intelligence Tools in Academic Writing: Special Reference to Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has introduced transformative tools in academic writing, raising questions about their implications for academic integrity, authorship, and scholarly practices. Despite growing interest, a notable research gap remains in understanding how academics perceive and respond to these technologies across behavioural, ethical, motivational, and social dimensions. This study aims to explore the nuanced perceptions, attitudes, and concerns of academics regarding the use of AI tools in academic writing. By addressing this gap, the research seeks to inform evidence-based decision-making and guide policy development within the academic sector to ensure responsible and effective integration of AI. This study adopts a descriptive qualitative research method, and the data were collected using structured questionnaires by conducting in-depth interviews with fifteen academics from the Faculty of Management Studies at Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. Thematic analysis was employed to examine the data, a method widely used in qualitative research to identify, analyse, and interpret recurring themes and patterns. The findings revealed a range of perceptions among academics on the use of AI tools in academic writing. Key themes included behavioural perception-the usage habits and dependency, ethical perception- concerns about plagiarism and academic integrity, subjective perception- personal judgments and acceptance, motivational perception - interest driven by efficiency and innovation, and social perception- influence of peer opinions and institutional norms. In conclusion, this study highlights the diverse perceptions of academics toward AI tools in academic writing, emphasising the importance of clear guidelines and regulatory frameworks. The results suggest the need to balance technological adoption with ethical considerations, while also fostering motivation and awareness to ensure responsible and quality-driven academic output.

Keywords: AI tools, ethical perception, motivated perception, social perception, subjective perception