

Ameliorating University Students' Academic Productivity through Artificial Intelligence Tools

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Abstract



Artificial Intelligence (AI) is creating a new normal in the social and academic landscape very rapidly. Use of artificial intelligence tools are becoming very common in Pakistani youth generally, and in university students particularly. As the use of artificial intelligence tools in higher education rises, students are turning towards artificial intelligence tools such as Grammarly, ChatGPT, QuillBot and Notion AI to meet their academic requirements. The question addressed through this study was, how these tools effect the capability of the students for time management, completion of task efficiently, and increasing performance tremendously. To achieve this purpose the study examined the relationship between AI tool usage and academic productivity among university students in Pakistan. A quantitative, correlational research design was used by selecting a sample of 300 students through stratified random sampling technique from various disciplines. The data were collected by using validated tools: University Students Productivity Scale (USPS), and the Artificial Intelligence Practices Scale (AIPS). The regression analysis and structural equation modelling found that high AI usage was seen as an effective means of improving academic productivity in three areas: Time management, accomplishment of tasks and academic performance. Nevertheless, research results also indicate some issues connected to excessive reliance on AI-created materials. There are practical implications of the study to an educators, educational institutions, and technology developers with recommendations on cultivating balanced and ethical integration of AI in higher education.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Academic Productivity, Digital Tooling, Time Management, Students at University, Importance of Self-Regulated Learning

Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is changing the landscape of higher education in a profound way as it invades academic life. The use of AI tools in classrooms, libraries, and even in the personal study setting is firmly established as a part of student writing, researching, scheduling, and project collaboration processes. Grammarly, ChatGPT, QuillBot, and Notion AI are applications that will automate work, make learning, and writing more efficient and less tasking, and offer quality work in the academic field. Such tools are even used to edit papers, create ideas, summarize texts, proofread grammar, create schedules and even draft complete essays, which were traditionally done manually (Ramadugu, 2025).

With the mainstreaming of these tools, students do not have to look up only to their instructors, textbooks and even study groups of peers to get academic help. They resort instead to AI-enabled services that can provide writing prompts, immediate clarification, reference tracking and productivity tips. The transition demonstrates an even more comprehensive change in education that involves personalization, technology-enriched learning, and the use of data (Luckin et al., 2016). AI gets increasingly integrated into the academic workflow; crucial pedagogical and ethical concerns emerge.

Among the most urgent questions, one should put: What is the effect of AI tools in terms of academic productivity on university students? This is an essential question since productivity is, in fact, not a process of doing things fast but rather effective, the time management, in-depth learning,

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and brain involvement (Gerlich, 2025). Academic productivity is a variable that reflects how a student is able to organize his or her time well, undertake academic assignments as well as do well in projects and assignments. It also includes planning, focus, flexibility, and the use of the tools effectively on the part of the students so as to accomplish the academic purposes.

The efficiency advantages of AI can be easily traced, though: the writing process will take less time, as well as the time to create the content; and the tasks schedules will be smoother. The psychological and behavioural outcomes are much more obscure (Afzal et al. 2025). Such as, is cognitive offloading caused by the use of AI and inhibits critical thinking and creativity? Does an academic dependence on AI change academic integrity, discipline, or motivation? And do students who use AI do better due to better support, or due to them utilizing technology to finish tasks they would otherwise also have trouble doing without it?

Studies present preliminary findings but do not offer extensive and empirical evidences on these subtle effects. Sharma et al. (2023) indicated the enhanced quality of writing and efficiency of the tasks with the use of AI, whereas Dehouche (2021) warns against the possible academic misconduct and excessive reliance. Such inconclusive results identify the importance of context-specific research that considers the frequency and the purpose of AI application, the learning strategies, and also the differences across disciplines.

With the spread of higher education and difficulties accessing technology in the country, the application of AI tools and tools creates specific opportunities and challenges in Pakistan. Although the use of AI was not widely mentioned in institutional metrics, students are taking it upon themselves to get acquainted with these technologies in the course of academic pressure management. However, productive little research has investigated the alignment between the use of AI and employee productivity in this regard pro-systematically.

This paper fills that gap by conducting an empirical examination of the association between the use of AI and academic effectiveness in university students in Pakistan. Fuelling both validated scales to be used to measure the AI practices and productivity outcomes and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to analyse data, this research provides evidence-based knowledge. The insights will be useful to educators, administrators and developers on how they can incorporate AI in higher education in a manner that promotes rather than replaces student learning and development.

Literature Review

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged to play a revolutionary role in education sector world over. Examples of AI in higher education are personalised learning environments, intelligent tutoring, automated feedback, virtual assistants, and content recommendation systems (Luckin et al., 2016). The technologies are finding their way into Learning Management Systems (LMS), library databases, and even mobile apps, transforming the manner of the student-knowledge interaction.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools are increasingly integrated into higher education, offering students support in areas such as writing, organization, idea generation, and time management. This study focuses on four commonly used AI tools among university students: Grammarly (for grammar correction and writing enhancement), ChatGPT (for idea generation, summarization, and academic dialogue), QuillBot (for paraphrasing and rewriting text), and Notion AI (for scheduling, planning, and knowledge organization). These tools represent a diverse spectrum of AI applications—from language models to productivity enhancers—each aimed at streamlining academic tasks. Globally, the adoption of AI in higher education is accelerating (Mazari, 2025). Universities are incorporating AI into learning management systems, virtual tutoring platforms, and assessment tools (Zou et al., 2022). In many developing countries, however, AI integration remains uneven due to infrastructure limitations, lack of training, and unclear academic policies (Abinaya et al., 2024).

Holmes et al. (2021) suggested that AI may allow personalized training, tracking student progress, and contributing to formative evaluation. With the rise of AI, students at most universities are getting more dependent on tools that assist in the writing, research, problem-solving, and productivity. Grammatical and syntactical correction tools such as Grammarly, ChatGPT that can generate ideas and synthesis of contents in natural language, and Notion AI which can assist with study schedules and collaborative work, are all examples of their creation. These tools move the boundaries of support and automation in research.

The availability of these tools begs the question concerning the use of these tools in promoting equality in education. Although AI can provide support to the students with learning

disabilities or language barriers (Cope et al., 2020), it can increase the digital divide in which the students with low technological access are disadvantaged. This is why the question of why and how students utilize AI tools and what the consequences of such habits are becomes an important question.

Academic productivity has been variously conceptualised, yet in most cases it revolves around the capacity of a student to get academic work done productively and responsibly as well as to work around time schedule and produce the kind of results required (Zimmerman, 2002). Time management, efficiency, and school performance are some of the main signs of productivity. Productivity means also managing information flow and digital tools in digital learning environments.

Russell (2001), in research showed that self-regulation tends to produce good learners who plan their time, establish goals, track progress, and analyse results. The mentioned skills could be developed in case the students have received constructive and timely feedback. Productivity can be directly facilitated by AI tools that provide real-time feedback (e.g., writing improvement suggestions, warnings about deadlines, performance dashboard), which leads to task accomplishment and decreased cognitive load (Hind, 2024; Schraw, Crippen, & Hartley, 2006).

Moreover, academic productivity can be affected by internal (motivation, self-efficacy) as well as external (resources, tools) support. AI tools may be utilized as tools of scaffolding and also enabling since they may assist students to organize learning activities and also assist them to effectively manage academic expectations (Kitsantas & Zimmerman, 2009).

Recent researches have proven the impact of AI on the study patterns and the learning behaviour of students. As an example, Sharma et al. (2023) discovered that Grammarly and ChatGPT allow students to complete assignments quicker and with a reduced number of mistakes. Equally, Weller (2022) claimed that students who followed Notion AI received higher grades and were more organized with at least four fewer missed deadlines.

Yet, the application of AI tools evokes some pedagogical and ethical questions as well. The danger of academic dishonesty was mentioned by Dehouche (2021), who noted that students could copy AI-generated answers without adequate elaboration or reference. A concern has also been raised that AI can suppress significant intervention to the content by providing too easy answers (Selwyn, 2019). Conversely, other researchers believe that well-used AI tools enhance a deeper learning process. When students are motivated to edit, compare and contemplate AI recommendations, they become more consciously metacognitive and dynamic in the process of learning (Azevedo et al., 2010).

Time management is among the pillars of academic success an AI tool can increasingly assist with this operation. Programs, such as Notion AI and Todoist with AI extensions, and learning dashboards implemented into LMS, allow students to view what is coming up and plan priorities and study schedules. The improvements in academic productivity are measurable as a result of such affordances (Siemens & Long, 2011).

Native Q&A ChatGPT and other massive language models help provide real-time Q&A, brainstorming, and content development. The abilities assist students to avoid writer block and lessen the amount of time required to start working on assignments. Instant feedback provided by Grammarly decreases the revision times and, consequently, results in the high working efficiency and better time allocation towards the academic tasks (Shermis & Burstein, 2013). The benefits are not however universal. Student users with no prior knowledge of prompt engineering or knowledge of the constraints of generative AI can misuse or misinterpret outputs resulting in misinformation or shallow learning (Diloy et al., 2023). Therefore, it is necessary to teach students to apply strategic use of these tools.

Whether AI negatively or positively affects critical thinking is one of the key arguments about its place in education. though there might be some AI aids in automating the task and writing, deeper thinking and cognition like analysis, synthesis and evaluation are still indirectly addressed by AI. According to Holstein et al. (2019), there is a risk that students will get into the over-reliance trap, especially with generative aids. This has the consequence of eroding genuine problem-solving and self-thinking. On the other hand, according to studies by Gierl & Lai (2022), with additional requirements to explain their decisions and comment on AI products, AI tools may trigger metacognitive reflection in students.

Within Self-Regulated Learning (SRL), AI tools may be used as co-regulators to create prompts, cues, and feedback. However, the given role will only work with students who do

understand the potential of AI and are proactive about controlling their learning practises (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011).

This study is pedestaled on these two theories:

1. **Self-Regulated Learning Theory (Zimmerman, 2000):** According to this theory, Self-Regulated Learning is an active participant of the same education, accomplishing this with the use of approaches such as goal setting, planning, self-monitoring, and reflection. These strategies can be digital scaffolded through the use of AI tools.
2. **Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989):** This model posits that the perceived usefulness and ease of use defines the way users accept technology. Those students who appreciate such AI tools and find them convenient to use are more inclined to incorporate them into their study habits, thus increasing the possibility of their enhanced productivity.

Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional quantitative design using structured questionnaires. Positivist research paradigm was used in this study A correlational approach was applied to explore the relationship between AI usage and productivity.

The sample comprised 300 out of 12073 full-time students enrolled in undergraduate programs of six public-sector universities in Punjab, Pakistan. Stratified random sampling ensured representation across disciplines: Social Sciences (25%), Engineering (25%), Arts & Humanities (25%), and Other Sciences (25%).

Instrumentation

Two instruments were used for collection of data:

1. **Artificial Intelligence Practices Scale (AIPS):** Measured frequency and purpose of AI tool usage. Categories included writing assistance, scheduling, summarizing, content generation, and peer collaboration.
2. **University Students’ Productivity Scale (USPS):** Assessed three sub-domains:
 - a. Time Management (e.g., meeting deadlines, planning)
 - b. Task Completion (e.g., consistency, efficiency)
 - c. Academic Performance (e.g., self-perceived grades, learning satisfaction)

Both scales demonstrated strong reliability (Cronbach’s alpha > .82) and construct validity through Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

Data were collected via online and offline methods. Prior ethical approvals were obtained. Participants were briefed on the purpose of the study and their anonymity was guaranteed. Data were collected, cleaned and then analyzed applying both descriptive and inferential statistics using computer software. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, multiple regression, and path analysis were employed.

Results

Following results were drawn from the data analysis.

Table 1: Summary of AI Tool Usage

<i>AI Tool Used</i>	<i>of Participants Using AI Tools</i>	<i>% of Participants Using AI Tools</i>
<i>Grammarly</i>	225	75%
<i>ChatGPT</i>	192	64%
<i>QuillBot</i>	174	58%
<i>Notion AI</i>	144	48%
<i>At least one tool</i>	246	82%

The majority of students (82%) responded that they are using at least one AI tool, with Grammarly and ChatGPT being the most frequently used tools by the students. This shows that writing and paraphrasing tools are central to students' academic practices. Notion AI, while less widely used, still supported nearly half the sample in organization and planning. These results reflect a high degree of integration of AI tools into academic activities.

Table 2: Relationship among AI usage and Academic Activities performed (N=300, p<.01 (2-tailed))

<i>Variables</i>	<i>AI Usage</i>	<i>Time Management</i>	<i>Task Completion</i>	<i>Academic Performance</i>
<i>AI Usage</i>	—	.47**	.41**	.39**
<i>Time Management</i>	.47**	—	.59**	.52**
<i>Task Completion</i>	.41**	.59**	—	.57**
<i>Academic Performance</i>	.39**	.52**	.57**	—

Table 2 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients among the study variables: AI Usage, Time Management, Task Completion, and Academic Performance. All correlations are statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level (two-tailed), indicating meaningful relationships among the constructs. AI Usage was found to have a moderate positive correlation with Time Management ($r = .47, p < .01$), Task Completion ($r = .41, p < .01$), and Academic Performance ($r = .39, p < .01$). These results suggest that students who more frequently engage with AI tools tend to manage their time more effectively, complete more tasks, and exhibit higher academic performance, although the strength of association with academic performance is comparatively weaker. Time Management showed the strongest correlation with Task Completion ($r = .59, p < .01$), indicating that students who effectively manage their time are more likely to complete assigned tasks efficiently. Additionally, Time Management was moderately to strongly correlated with Academic Performance ($r = .52, p < .01$), highlighting its crucial role in students' academic success. Task Completion was also strongly associated with Academic Performance ($r = .57, p < .01$), reflecting that students who consistently complete their academic tasks tend to achieve better academic outcomes. These findings suggest a possible sequential pattern; AI Usage may positively influence Time Management, which in turn enhances Task Completion, ultimately leading to improved Academic Performance. While AI appears to be a supportive factor, the central roles of time management and consistent task completion stand out as stronger predictors of academic success.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Predicting Academic Productivity from AI Usage

Outcome Variable	β (Standardized)	p-value
Time Management	0.39	< .001
Task Completion	0.35	< .001
Academic Performance	0.31	< .01

Model Summary:

AI usage significantly ($R^2 = 0.33, F(3, 296) = 28.45, p < .001$) predicts academic productivity, accounting for 33% of the variance. The strongest effect was on time management, followed by task completion and academic performance. This supports the idea that AI tools help students manage study time and complete work efficiently.

Table 4: Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value	Acceptable Range	Interpretation
χ^2/df	2.05	< 3.0	Good fit
CFI	0.954	> 0.90	Excellent fit
TLI	0.942	> 0.90	Excellent fit
RMSEA	0.038	< 0.05 (good)	Excellent fit

Table 5: Standardized Path Coefficients from Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

Predictor → Outcome	β Coefficient	p-value
AI Usage → Time Management	0.47	< .001
AI Usage → Task Completion	0.42	< .001
AI Usage → Academic Performance	0.39	< .001

The SEM model confirms that AI usage has a significant and positive effect on all three productivity sub-domains. The fit indices indicate that the proposed model is a strong representation of the data. These results reinforce findings from the regression analysis.

Discussion

The role of artificial intelligence devices in academic productivity may be additionally framed in the larger context of an educational digital evolution. The implementation of AI in the academic life of students demonstrates a shift in the perception of educational independence. Instead of using conventional sources (textbooks or teachers) only, nowadays, students are developing into independent navigators in knowledge, using intelligent systems to plan, carry out and update their educational activities. It is the same as discussed by Chauke et al., (2024). However, this independence has to be cultivated by training in critical digital literacy skills to ensure a reluctant acceptance of AI outputs.

These findings align with and extend the growing body of literature on AI integration in higher education. For example, Ma'amor et al. (2024) found that students using a combination of content generation (ChatGPT) and paraphrasing tools (QuillBot) reported higher satisfaction with their academic performance and greater writing efficiency. Similarly, Dahri et al. (2024) concluded

that Grammarly and QuillBot not only improved grammatical quality but also reduced the time needed for writing revisions, which supports the observed relationship in the current study between AI use and time management. Nurtayeva (2023) emphasized that tools like Notion AI enhanced students' ability to plan, organize, and reflect on tasks, which directly connects with the high correlation observed in this study between AI usage and task completion. In addition, Ma'amor et al. (2024) highlighted that diverse AI tool adoption improved students' perceived academic confidence and reduced stress—paralleling our findings that AI users scored higher on self-reported academic performance.

The results also indicate the even closer interrelation of student behavior and digital infrastructure. Universities cannot be discussed merely as physical learning places but are turning themselves into hybrid ecosystems where AI-enhanced environments will co-exist with human training. The task of teachers and administrators is to develop the systems that enhance human teaching with machine intelligence without undermining the learning integrity.

Lastly, ethical issues are paved by this study. Academic dishonesty, data security, and intellectual property become complicated issues when students turn to AI-generated work. These concerns demonstrate a policy response among the higher education institutions, which integrate technological integration with academic principles. This result is supported by the findings of the study titled “Exploring the impact of integrating AI tools in higher education using the Zone of Proximal Development” by Cai et al. (2024). Future studies ought to explore the moral aspects of the utilization of AI and suggest models supporting innovation and integrity at the same time.

The results of the research have a significant relevance in the real-world applications across the stakeholders in education: These findings help the institutions to improve curriculum by incorporating AI-aided learning modules. An example is that writing-intensive classes can motivate students to use AI tools such as Grammarly to benefit iterative feedback processes, and project-based classes can utilize Notion AI to assign duties and track schedules whereas Afzal et al. (2025) stated that students also use ChatGPT to get help for their Time Management and scheduling the tasks. The research facilitates the design of adaptive learning environments where the content and productivity recommendations can be made based on the unique preferences of the individual students. Institutions can even work along with AI developers to develop systems that would dynamically adapt assignments, reminders and resource recommendation based on the productivity styles of the learners (Chauke et al., 2024). Academic advisors can be trained to interpret AI interaction data (e.g., frequency and type of tool usage) to better support students facing academic performance issues. Early warning systems could be developed to flag students with low productivity scores who may benefit from guided AI-assisted interventions.

While AI offers promising advantages—such as increased efficiency, personalized learning, and cognitive support—it is not without challenges. A primary concern is over-reliance on AI tools, which may hinder the development of students' critical thinking and original expression. There is also the risk of plagiarism, especially when students copy AI-generated content without sufficient understanding or attribution. Moreover, not all students have equal access to AI resources, raising concerns about equity and the digital divide. Another limitation lies in the accuracy and bias of AI-generated outputs; models like ChatGPT are trained on vast datasets that may include misinformation or culturally biased language. Therefore, while AI tools have potential to enhance academic productivity, their use must be critically examined and accompanied by ethical guidelines and digital literacy training to maximize benefits and minimize risks.

Conclusion

In this study, it has been found out that artificial intelligence tools have significant contribution towards academic productivity of students in universities. In the spheres of time management, task completion, and academic performance, the presence of AI is associated with better results. Nevertheless, a moderate front is critical as a measure to curb the dangers of over-reliance and passive learning. The ethical conduct, student learning, and pedagogical models that support independence and reflective learning should inform the incorporation of AI.

Recommendations

The study has recommendation for experts of different disciplines. The educators may integrate reflective tasks requiring students to evaluate AI output and they may design assessments that combine AI-enhanced work with critical thinking rubrics. The educational institutions may develop

digital literacy programs covering ethical AI use and further these institutions can provide training for faculty to incorporate AI tools constructively. The technical experts (developers) who are developing and building AI tools may build AI tools with embedded metacognitive prompts and feedback loops. They may create dashboards that help students in tracking AI interaction and learning growth. The Policymakers may take the responsibility to formulate policies for AI usage in higher education focused on equity, data privacy, and skill development. The policy may ensure access to AI tools across socio-economic backgrounds to reduce digital inequality. Students may be given further trainings are awareness for proper and ethical use of AI tools for the day to day classroom activities.

Limitations and Future Research

The study was restricted to one area (Punjab, Pakistan), and cross-sectional design. It is suggested that longitudinal studies be conducted to study the long-term impacts of AI usage on productivity and mental evolution. Comparative studies in other institutions, countries and educational levels could also be developed in the future. In future the studies may also target the application of qualitative methods (e.g. interviews, focus groups) to elicit the relational richness of the way students feel emotionally and ethically about their use of AI tools, including feelings of relief over anxiety and feeling of confidence, and the fear of authorship and reliance. Moreover, discipline-based research may explore the differences and nuances of AI tools uptake and the way they influence learning processes in engineering, humanities, and business domains, contributing to the creation of differentiated teaching methods. The studies about more AI tools may be conducted. Specific experimental studies may be conducted for specific classroom situations to meet the diverse needs of learners.

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