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Awareness and Familiarity with AI Writing Tools Among Media Students

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the level of awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools among students in the Department of Media at Maharishi University of Information Technology. A mixed-methods approach, combining a descriptive survey and semi-structured interviews, was used to gather quantitative and qualitative data from 200 students. The survey results revealed that 72% of students were aware of AI writing tools like Grammarly, Quillbot, and ChatGPT, but their familiarity and usage varied. While 61% of students had used these tools at least once. only 15% reported frequent use, and 39% had never used them. Most students perceived AI writing tools as beneficial for improving writing skills and saving time, yet 42% expressed concerns about over-reliance, potentially hindering independent learning. Qualitative insights from interviews highlighted that peer influence and coursework were primary sources of awareness, and while students valued these tools for enhancing grammar and clarity, they also raised ethical concerns about excessive dependency. The findings suggest a need for educational institutions to provide clear guidelines and training on the ethical use of AI writing tools to enhance digital literacy without compromising academic integrity. The study's limitations include its focus on a single department, which may affect generalizability. Future research could explore the impact of AI writing tools across various disciplines and assess the long-term effects on students' writing proficiency and critical thinking. This research underscores the importance of a balanced approach to integrating AI tools in education, promoting both technological engagement and foundational skills development.

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Introduction

The rapid evolution of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed various sectors, including education, where AI writing tools have become increasingly prevalent. These tools, such as Grammarly, Quillbot, and ChatGPT, assist users by enhancing their writing quality, correcting grammatical errors, suggesting stylistic improvements, and even generating content (Marzuki et al., 2023). In the context of higher education, AI writing tools have gained attention for their potential to improve students' academic writing skills and productivity (Hosseini et al., 2023). However, while these tools

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How to Cite in APA Style: Narayan, S. (2024). Awareness and Familiarity with AI Writing Tools Among Media Students. LinguaEducare: Journal of English and Linguistic Studies, 1(1), 39-50. https://doi.org/10.63324/le promise to enhance the writing process, there is a growing debate about their impact on learning outcomes and the originality of students' work. The adoption of AI writing tools, particularly in disciplines like media studies, requires an understanding of how familiar students are with these technologies and their perceived usefulness in academic settings (Amyatun & Kholis, 2023). This study aims to investigate the level of awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools among students of the Department of Media at Maharishi University of Information Technology.

AI writing tools are designed to aid users in producing clearer, more concise, and grammatically accurate text. They leverage natural language processing (NLP) techniques to analyze and improve written content, thereby serving as valuable assets in both academic and professional settings (Lalwani et al., 2018). These tools are particularly beneficial for students in fields that require substantial writing, such as media studies, where the ability to communicate effectively is crucial (Toboula, 2023). Media students, who are often required to produce various forms of content, including news articles, scripts, and reports, may find AI writing tools helpful in enhancing their writing clarity, coherence, and style (Burger et al., 2023). However, the extent to which these students are aware of and familiar with such tools remains underexplored, particularly in the context of Indian universities.

Previous research has highlighted both the advantages and potential drawbacks of using AI writing tools in educational settings. On the one hand, these tools can provide immediate feedback, which can help students learn from their mistakes and develop better writing habits over time (Hastomo et al., 2024). On the other hand, some educators have expressed concerns that over-reliance on AI tools may hinder students' development of critical thinking and originality (Wulyani et al., 2024). Understanding students' awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools is therefore crucial for educators to determine how these tools can be effectively integrated into the curriculum without compromising the learning experience (Cardon et al., 2023).

Studies conducted in Western contexts have indicated a high level of awareness and usage of AI writing tools among university students, particularly in disciplines that require extensive writing (Elkhatat et al., 2023). However, there is limited research on how these tools are perceived and used in non-Western settings, such as in Indian universities. A study by Srivastava and Agarwal (2024) found that while there is growing interest in AI-based educational tools in India, there is still a significant gap in awareness and familiarity, particularly outside major metropolitan areas. In smaller cities, where access to technology and digital literacy may be limited, students may not be as exposed to the full range of AI tools available to them (Sumakul & Hamied, 2023). This study aims to fill this gap by focusing on students of the Department of Media at Maharishi University of Information Technology, located in a less urbanized area.

The Department of Media at Maharishi University of Information Technology represents a unique context for studying the awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools among students. Media studies students often engage in creative and critical writing, requiring a balance of technical proficiency and innovative thinking (Mageira et al., 2022). Therefore, the awareness and familiarity of these students with AI writing tools may significantly impact their academic performance and professional preparedness. Moreover, understanding the level of familiarity with these tools could help educators develop more effective teaching strategies that incorporate AI writing tools in ways that enhance learning outcomes without promoting dependency (Marzuki et al., 2023).

Several factors influence students' awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools, including digital literacy, access to technology, and institutional support (Deiniatur & Cahyono, 2024). Digital literacy, defined as the ability to effectively use digital tools and resources, plays a critical role in determining how well students can navigate and utilize AI writing tools (Istiara & Hastomo, 2023). A recent survey by Hsiao and Chang (2023) revealed that students with higher levels of digital literacy are more likely to be aware of AI tools and use them regularly for academic purposes. In contrast, students who lack digital skills or have limited access to technology are less likely to engage with these tools, thereby missing out on potential benefits.

Institutional support, such as training programs and workshops, can also enhance students' familiarity with AI writing tools (Oktarin & Hastomo, 2024). Universities that proactively introduce students to these tools and provide guidance on their effective use can help bridge the gap in awareness and utilization. For instance, a study conducted by Algaraady and Mahyoob (2023)found that students who received formal training on AI writing tools reported higher satisfaction and confidence in using them for academic writing tasks. In contrast, institutions that do not provide such support may inadvertently contribute to a digital divide, where only tech-savvy students benefit from these advancements.

The rapid adoption of AI writing tools in educational contexts has also raised ethical concerns regarding academic integrity and originality. While these tools can help students produce polished and error-free texts, there is a risk that they may be used to circumvent genuine learning and writing efforts (Alkaissi & McFarlane, 2023). Some studies suggest that students who rely heavily on AI tools may become overly dependent on them, potentially undermining their ability to write independently and critically (Casal & Kessler, 2023). Therefore, understanding students' familiarity with AI writing tools is not only about gauging their usage but also about assessing their attitudes towards the ethical implications of using these technologies.

Given these considerations, the present study seeks to explore the level of awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools among students of the Department of Media at Maharishi University of Information Technology. By focusing on this specific group, the study aims to provide insights into how well students are acquainted with these tools and their perceived usefulness in academic writing tasks. The findings of this study will contribute to a better understanding of the digital readiness of media students and the factors that influence their adoption of AI writing tools . Furthermore, the study will offer valuable implications for educators and policymakers on integrating AI tools into the curriculum to enhance learning outcomes while addressing ethical considerations.

In conclusion, the integration of AI writing tools into academic environments represents both an opportunity and a challenge. For students of the Department of Media at Maharishi University of Information Technology, understanding the level of awareness and familiarity with these tools is essential for maximizing their benefits while mitigating potential drawbacks. This study, therefore, aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of students' perceptions, which will inform future educational practices and policies in the context of digital learning.

Method

This study aims to explore the level of awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools among students in the Department of Media at Maharishi University of Information Technology. To address this research question, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions, ensuring that both measurable data and in-depth insights are captured. A descriptive survey design was employed to collect information on the current state of awareness and familiarity among students (Creswell, 2012). This design enables researchers to gather quantitative data to describe the characteristics of a population, in this case, the Media Department students. The choice of this design is justified by the study's objective to assess students' awareness levels and familiarity with AI writing tools without manipulating any variables. Additionally, the study incorporated semi-structured interviews to obtain qualitative data that would complement the quantitative findings, offering deeper insights into students' experiences and attitudes toward AI writing tools.

The participants of this study were undergraduate and postgraduate students from the Department of Media at Maharishi University of Information Technology. A total of 200 students were selected to participate in the survey using a stratified random sampling technique. This method was chosen to ensure representation across different academic years, including first-year, second-year, third-year, and final-year students, as well as levels (undergraduate and postgraduate). Stratified random sampling allows for a more balanced representation, reducing sampling bias and ensuring that findings are reflective of the diverse student body (Dörnyei, 2007). To ensure a rich qualitative dataset, a purposive sampling technique was used to select 20 students from the survey participants for follow-up semi-structured interviews. These students were chosen based on their responses in the survey, particularly those who indicated varying levels of awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools. This selection criterion enabled the researchers to gather a wide range of perspectives and experiences, providing a more nuanced understanding of the findings.

Data collection was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, a structured questionnaire was administered to the 200 selected students to gather quantitative data on their level of awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools. The questionnaire was developed based on a thorough review of existing literature on AI tools in education (Marzuki et al., 2023; Wulyani et al., 2024). It consisted of three sections: demographic information, awareness of AI writing tools, and familiarity and usage. The demographic section collected basic details such as age, gender, academic year, and program level (undergraduate or postgraduate). The awareness section included questions designed to assess students' awareness of AI writing tools like Grammarly, Quillbot, and ChatGPT.

Questions were framed on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Not at all aware, 5 = Extremely aware) to gauge the level of awareness. The familiarity and usage section focused on students' familiarity with these tools and their frequency of use, including questions on the type of AI writing tools they have used, how often they use them, and for what purposes, such as grammar correction, content creation, and paraphrasing. The questions in this section were also framed on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Never used, 5 = Frequently used).

The second phase involved conducting semi-structured interviews with 20 students to gain deeper insights into their experiences and attitudes toward AI writing tools. The interviews were conducted face-to-face and lasted approximately 30 minutes each. An interview guide was prepared with open-ended questions, such as "How did you first learn about AI writing tools?" and "Can you describe your experience using these tools in academic work?" The semi-structured format allowed for flexibility in exploring new themes that emerged during the conversations, ensuring a rich qualitative dataset (Oktarin & Hastomo, 2023).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the survey instrument, a pilot study was conducted with 30 students from a different department at the same university. The pilot study helped in refining the questionnaire by identifying ambiguous questions and ensuring that the language was clear and understandable for participants. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire, resulting in a score of 0.82, which indicates a high level of reliability. The semi-structured interview guide was reviewed by two experts in educational research to ensure content validity. Their feedback was incorporated to refine the questions and improve the overall quality of the interviews.

The quantitative data collected from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. These statistics provided an overview of the levels of awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools among the Media Department students. The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics software (version 26), which allowed for an accurate and efficient analysis process. For the qualitative data, the interviews were transcribed verbatim, and thematic analysis was conducted to identify common themes and patterns related to students' awareness, familiarity, and attitudes toward AI writing tools. Thematic analysis is a flexible and effective method for analyzing qualitative data, allowing researchers to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis followed a six-phase process: familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up the findings.

The study adhered to ethical guidelines to ensure the rights and well-being of all participants. Before data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). All participants were informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights, including the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before they took part in the survey and interviews. Additionally, confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process by assigning unique codes to participants

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and securely storing the data.

Results and Discussion

The study explored the level of awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools among students in the Department of Media at Maharishi University of Information Technology. The findings are drawn from both quantitative data collected through surveys and qualitative insights gathered from semi-structured interviews. The results provide a comprehensive overview of the students' awareness, usage patterns, and attitudes toward AI writing tools. This section presents the findings and discusses them in relation to existing literature, highlighting implications for educational practice and future research.

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Awareness of AI Writing Tools		
Not at all aware	20	10%
Slightly aware	36	18%
Moderately aware	76	38%
Highly aware	42	21%
Extremely aware	26	13%
Familiarity and Usage of AI Writing Tools		
Never used	78	39%
Rarely used	32	16%
Occasionally used	60	30%
Frequently used	30	15%
Most Commonly Used AI Writing Tools		
Grammarly	98	49%
Quillbot	46	23%
ChatGPT	36	18%
Other AI tools (e.g., Hemingway, ProWritingAid)	20	10%
Perceived Benefits of AI Writing Tools		
Improved writing skills	130	65%
Saved time in writing	114	57%
Concern about over-dependence	84	42%

Quantitative Results

Table 1: Awareness and Familiarity with AI Writing Tools Among Media Department Students

The quantitative data from the survey revealed varying levels of awareness among the 200 Media Department students regarding AI writing tools. As shown in Table 1, 72% of the students reported being aware of at least one AI writing tool, such as Grammarly, Quillbot, or ChatGPT. Within this group, 38% indicated they were "moderately aware," and 21% considered themselves "highly aware." Meanwhile, 28% of students were either "slightly aware" or "not at all aware" of these tools. These results suggest a general but uneven awareness of AI writing tools among students, reflecting a gap in exposure or education about these technologies within the university setting.

Regarding familiarity and usage, the survey data indicated that 61% of the students had used AI writing tools at least once, whereas 39% had never used any AI

writing tools. Of those who had used these tools, 30% reported using them "occasionally," 15% used them "frequently," and 16% used them "rarely." The most commonly used AI writing tool was Grammarly, reported by 49% of the respondents, followed by Quillbot (23%) and ChatGPT (18%). The preference for Grammarly is likely due to its user-friendly interface and focus on grammar and style corrections, which are directly beneficial for academic writing tasks. These findings are consistent with studies by Utami and Mahardika (2023), which indicate that students often prefer AI tools that provide immediate, actionable feedback on their writing.

Students were also asked about their perceptions of the benefits and challenges of using AI writing tools. A significant majority, 65%, agreed that these tools helped improve their writing skills by providing instant feedback and suggestions, while 57% felt that AI tools saved time during the writing process, particularly for grammar checking and paraphrasing. However, 42% expressed concerns about over-reliance on these tools, fearing it might hinder their ability to learn and apply grammar rules independently. This concern about dependency is echoed in the work of Fahmi and Cahyono (2021), who argue that while AI tools can enhance writing efficiency, they may also reduce students' motivation to develop core writing skills.

Qualitative Results

The qualitative data collected from semi-structured interviews with 20 students provided deeper insights into their experiences with and attitudes toward AI writing tools. Thematic analysis of the interviews revealed three primary themes: awareness and initial exposure to AI tools, perceived benefits and challenges, and ethical considerations and future usage.

The first theme, awareness and initial exposure to AI tools, revealed that most students were introduced to AI writing tools through peers, social media, or coursework. Many students learned about Grammarly or Quillbot when looking for ways to enhance their writing for assignments or research papers. One student shared, "I first heard about Grammarly from a friend who used it to check grammar in his essays. I thought it might be useful for me as well, especially since I struggle with grammar." This finding supports previous research indicating that peer recommendations and social networks significantly influence the adoption of educational technologies (Amyatun & Kholis, 2023). It also highlights the informal channels through which students often become aware of new technological tools.

The second theme, perceived benefits and challenges, highlighted that students generally found AI writing tools helpful for enhancing grammar, spelling, and sentence structure, particularly for non-native English speakers. One interviewee noted, "Using Quillbot has really helped me rephrase my sentences to make them clearer and more concise." However, some students raised concerns about becoming overly dependent on these tools. A recurring sentiment was that while AI tools are convenient, they could potentially lead to a "laziness" in learning proper writing techniques. This concern is consistent with the findings of Cardon et al. (2023), who noted that excessive reliance on AI tools might hinder the development of critical thinking and original writing skills. This points to a potential paradox where the tools intended to aid learning might, in

some cases, undermine the learning process itself.

The third theme, ethical considerations and future usage, revealed mixed feelings about the ethical implications of using AI writing tools. Some students viewed these tools as legitimate aids for improving their writing, while others felt that excessive use could lead to academic dishonesty. One student commented, "If you're using AI to write half of your essay, are you really learning? It feels like it might cross a line." This reflects a broader ethical debate about the role of AI in education, as discussed by Elkhatat et al. (2023), who argue for a balanced approach to integrating AI tools into academic environments to avoid misuse or overdependence. It suggests that while AI tools can be valuable, there is a need for clear guidelines and educational strategies to help students use them responsibly.

The findings from this study highlight the complexity of students' awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools, indicating both opportunities and challenges in integrating these tools into academic practice. The high level of awareness but varying degrees of familiarity and usage suggest that while students are generally knowledgeable about AI tools, their engagement with these tools is influenced by factors such as perceived ease of use, accessibility, and perceived benefits versus potential drawbacks. This aligns with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which suggests that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are critical determinants of technology adoption (Davis, 1989).

The concern about over-reliance on AI tools and the ethical implications of their use also emerged as significant findings. These concerns indicate a need for educational institutions to develop clear policies and training programs that promote the responsible use of AI writing tools. Institutions could provide workshops or courses on digital literacy that cover both the advantages of AI tools and the importance of maintaining academic integrity and developing core writing skills. As Rosselló-Geli (2023) suggest, structured training on using AI tools can enhance students' confidence in using these tools ethically and effectively.

Moreover, the mixed attitudes toward the ethicality of AI writing tools underscore the need for ongoing discussions about the role of AI in education. While these tools offer substantial benefits in terms of improving writing quality and efficiency, there is a risk of undermining the educational process if students become too dependent on them. Educators and policymakers must strike a balance between leveraging AI's potential to enhance learning and ensuring that it does not replace fundamental learning processes.

Conclusion

This study explored the level of awareness and familiarity with AI writing tools among students in the Department of Media at Maharishi University of Information Technology, revealing both widespread awareness and varied levels of familiarity and usage. The findings showed that while 72% of students were aware of AI writing tools, their actual usage varied significantly, with many expressing concerns about overreliance and ethical implications. These results suggest that while AI tools like Grammarly, Quillbot, and ChatGPT are seen as beneficial for enhancing writing skills and efficiency, there are also apprehensions about their potential to undermine students' independent learning and writing development. The implications of this study highlight the need for educational institutions to provide structured guidance and training on the ethical and effective use of AI writing tools, promoting digital literacy while safeguarding academic integrity. However, the study has limitations, including a focus on a single department within one university, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could address these limitations by expanding the study to multiple departments or institutions and exploring the long-term effects of AI tool usage on students' writing proficiency and critical thinking skills. It would also be valuable to examine the impact of tailored educational interventions that balance the benefits of AI tools with the development of core writing competencies.

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