# THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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**DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21155302**

*Abstract. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become an important part of higher education, changing how students study, complete assignments, and interact with learning materials. This paper examines the influence of AI on students’ academic performance by reviewing recent studies published between 2020 and 2025. The review focuses on AI tools such as intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive learning platforms, and generative AI applications, including ChatGPT. Findings show that AI can improve academic achievement by supporting personalized learning, increasing motivation, and helping students develop self-regulated learning skills. However, the benefits of AI depend on how students and teachers use these technologies. Excessive dependence on AI may reduce critical thinking skills and create concerns related to academic honesty, data privacy, and unequal access to technology. The study concludes that AI is most effective when used as a supportive educational tool rather than a replacement for teachers or independent learning. Recommendations are provided for students, educators, and institutions to encourage responsible and ethical AI integration in higher education.*

*Keywords: artificial intelligence, academic performance, higher education, learning outcomes, educational technology, self-regulated learning*

*Аннотация. Искусственный интеллект (ИИ) стал важной частью высшего образования, изменяя способы обучения студентов, выполнения заданий и взаимодействия с учебными материалами. В данной статье рассматривается влияние ИИ на академическую успеваемость студентов посредством обзора современных исследований, опубликованных в период с 2020 по 2025 год. Основное внимание уделяется таким инструментам ИИ, как интеллектуальные обучающие системы, адаптивные образовательные платформы и приложения генеративного искусственного интеллекта, включая ChatGPT.*

*Результаты показывают, что ИИ способен повышать академические достижения за счёт поддержки персонализированного обучения, повышения мотивации и развития навыков саморегулируемого обучения. Однако преимущества использования ИИ во многом зависят от того, каким образом студенты и преподаватели применяют данные технологии. Чрезмерная зависимость от ИИ может привести к снижению навыков критического мышления, а также вызвать проблемы, связанные с академической честностью, конфиденциальностью данных и неравным доступом к технологиям. В заключение отмечается, что искусственный интеллект наиболее эффективен тогда, когда используется как вспомогательный образовательный инструмент, а не как замена преподавателям или самостоятельному обучению. В статье представлены рекомендации для студентов, преподавателей и образовательных учреждений по ответственному и этичному внедрению ИИ в систему высшего образования.*

*Ключевые слова: искусственный интеллект, академическая успеваемость, высшее образование, результаты обучения, образовательные технологии, саморегулируемое обучение.*

*Annotatsiya. Sun’iy intellekt (SI) oliy ta’limning muhim qismiga aylanib, talabalarning o‘qish usullari, topshiriqlarni bajarishi va o‘quv materiallari bilan o‘zaro aloqasini o‘zgartirmoqda. Ushbu maqolada 2020–2025-yillarda chop etilgan zamonaviy tadqiqotlar asosida sun’iy intellektning talabalarning akademik ko‘rsatkichlariga ta’siri tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda intellektual o‘qitish tizimlari, moslashuvchan ta’lim platformalari hamda ChatGPT kabi generativ sun’iy intellekt vositalariga alohida e’tibor qaratilgan. Natijalar shuni ko‘rsatadiki, sun’iy intellekt shaxsiylashtirilgan ta’limni qo‘llab-quvvatlash, motivatsiyani oshirish va o‘z-o‘zini boshqarib o‘rganish ko‘nikmalarini rivojlantirish orqali akademik yutuqlarni yaxshilashi mumkin. Biroq, uning afzalliklari talabalar va o‘qituvchilar ushbu texnologiyalardan qanday foydalanishiga bog‘liq. Sun’iy intellektga haddan tashqari tayanish tanqidiy fikrlash ko‘nikmalarining pasayishiga, akademik halollik, ma’lumotlar maxfiyligi va texnologiyalardan foydalanishdagi tengsizlik bilan bog‘liq muammolarga olib kelishi mumkin. Maqola xulosasiga ko‘ra, sun’iy intellekt o‘qituvchilar yoki mustaqil ta’lim o‘rnini bosuvchi vosita emas, balki ta’lim jarayonini qo‘llab-quvvatlovchi yordamchi vosita sifatida qo‘llanilganda eng samarali natija beradi. Tadqiqotda talabalar, o‘qituvchilar va ta’lim muassasalari uchun sun’iy intellektni oliy ta’limga mas’uliyatli va axloqiy jihatdan to‘g‘ri integratsiya qilish bo‘yicha tavsiyalar berilgan.*

*Kalit so‘zlar: sun’iy intellekt, akademik ko‘rsatkichlar, oliy ta’lim, ta’lim natijalari, ta’lim texnologiyalari, o‘z-o‘zini boshqarib o‘rganish.*

Artificial intelligence has become an important part of modern higher education and is now closely connected to the way students learn and complete academic work. In many universities, AI-based tools are gradually being integrated into teaching, assessment, and communication processes, which has changed the traditional learning environment. Students today are no longer limited to textbooks and classroom explanations since they can access AI systems that help them understand complex topics, generate ideas, and receive immediate academic support. The impact of this change became especially visible after the COVID-19 pandemic, when education systems around the world shifted towards online learning. Since that time, digital tools powered by artificial intelligence have become a normal part of student life. Many learners now use systems such as intelligent tutoring platforms and generative AI tools to assist with writing, studying languages, preparing assignments, and organizing their academic schedules. This development is often seen as beneficial because it allows learning to become more flexible and personalized. Artificial intelligence can adjust to individual learning needs, provide quick feedback, and offer support at any time, which can improve student engagement and understanding. However, at the same time, this increasing reliance on AI raises important concerns. Issues such as academic integrity, the development of independent thinking skills, and the risk of overdependence on technology are becoming central discussions in higher education.

Although artificial intelligence technologies are becoming increasingly common in higher education, there is still an ongoing debate about how they truly affect students’ academic performance. On one hand, several studies suggest that AI can enhance learning outcomes by providing personalized support and adaptive learning experiences, which aligns with ideas discussed in modern educational technology literature, such as Teaching in a Digital Age by Bates (2022) and Artificial Intelligence in Education by Holmes, Bialik and Fadel (2019). These works emphasize that technology can improve learning when it is used to support teaching rather than replace it. On the other hand, some scholars argue that excessive reliance on AI may reduce students’ ability to think critically and solve problems

independently. Concerns have also been raised about academic dishonesty and the possibility that students may rely too heavily on automated tools rather than developing their own understanding. These concerns are consistent with discussions in Artificial Intelligence: A Modern Approach by Russell and Norvig (2021), which highlights both the power and limitations of intelligent systems, and Human Compatible by Russell (2019), which warns about the risks of overdependence on autonomous technologies. Therefore, there is a clear need for a balanced academic review that carefully examines both the advantages and limitations of artificial intelligence in education. Such a review is necessary to understand not only how AI improves academic performance, but also how it may reshape students’ cognitive development and learning behavior in the long term.

This study aims to examine the impact of artificial intelligence tools on students’ academic performance in higher education, with particular attention to how these technologies influence learning outcomes and overall academic achievement. It also seeks to identify the different ways in which AI supports the learning process, including its role in providing personalized guidance, improving understanding, and enhancing student engagement, as discussed in educational technology research such as Bates (2022) and Holmes, Bialik, and Fadel (2019). In addition, the study analyzes the main challenges and risks associated with the use of AI in higher education. These include concerns related to academic integrity, overreliance on technology, and the development of independent thinking skills, which are also highlighted in works such as Russell and Norvig (2021) and Russell (2019), where both the benefits and limitations of intelligent systems are critically discussed. Finally, the study aims to provide practical recommendations for the responsible integration of artificial intelligence in educational settings. These recommendations focus on ensuring that AI is used as a supportive learning tool rather than a replacement for human instruction, in line with the broader perspective of Human Compatible by Russell (2019) and Teaching in a Digital Age by Bates (2022).

This study is important because artificial intelligence is becoming an unavoidable part of modern higher education and is increasingly influencing how students learn, think, and perform academically. As highlighted in Teaching in a Digital Age by Bates (2022), the integration of technology into education is not just a technical change but a pedagogical shift that affects the entire learning process. Understanding the impact of AI is essential for students because it helps them use these tools more responsibly and effectively, avoiding overdependence while still benefiting from personalized support and faster access to information. For teachers, this understanding is equally important as it supports the development of more effective and balanced teaching strategies that combine traditional instruction with AI-assisted learning, a perspective also supported in Artificial Intelligence in Education by Holmes, Bialik and Fadel (2019). For universities and policymakers, the findings of this study can contribute to the development of ethical guidelines and institutional policies that regulate the use of AI in academic environments. These policies are necessary to ensure academic integrity, protect student data, and promote equal access to educational technologies. So, the study aims to support a more responsible and informed approach to the integration of artificial intelligence in higher education.

This study adopts a systematic literature review approach in order to explore and synthesize existing research on the relationship between artificial intelligence and students’ academic performance in higher education. A systematic review is considered appropriate for

this topic because it allows for a structured and transparent analysis of multiple studies, helping to identify common findings, differences, and overall trends in the literature. The review focuses on academic studies published between 2020 and 2025, a period that reflects the rapid growth of artificial intelligence tools in education, including intelligent tutoring systems and generative AI applications. This timeframe is particularly important because it captures both the expansion of digital learning after the COVID-19 pandemic and the more recent integration of advanced AI technologies into everyday academic practice. The overall purpose of this research design is to provide a clear and balanced understanding of how AI influences academic performance by combining evidence from different educational contexts and study designs, rather than relying on a single source or experiment.

Relevant studies were collected from well-established academic databases, including Scopus, ERIC, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, to ensure that the review is based on credible, peer-reviewed, and academically reliable sources. These databases were selected because they index a wide range of journals and conference proceedings in education, psychology, and technology-related fields, which are directly relevant to the topic of artificial intelligence in higher education. The search process was guided by a structured set of keywords reflecting different dimensions of the research topic. These included artificial intelligence, academic achievement, higher education, AI in education, learning outcomes, intelligent tutoring systems, generative AI, and student performance. Boolean operators such as AND and OR were used to refine the search results and ensure that only studies closely aligned with the research objectives were included. In addition, reference lists of selected articles were manually reviewed to identify further relevant studies that might not have appeared in the initial database search. This technique helped to broaden the scope of the review and reduce the risk of missing important contributions in the field. Only studies that directly examined the relationship between artificial intelligence tools and academic performance in higher education were considered relevant. Priority was given to recent publications to reflect the rapid development of AI technologies and their increasing use in educational contexts. This systematic and carefully filtered approach ensured that the collected data were both comprehensive and relevant to the aims of the study.

The studies included in this review were selected based on clearly defined criteria to ensure relevance, quality, and consistency with the objectives of the research. First, only studies that focused on university or college students were considered, as the aim of this paper is to examine the impact of artificial intelligence within higher education settings. Second, the selected studies had to investigate the use of artificial intelligence tools in educational environments. This includes technologies such as intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive learning platforms, and generative AI applications that are directly used to support teaching and learning processes. Third, the studies were required to include measurable academic outcomes. This means that the research had to provide clear indicators of academic performance, such as grades, test scores, learning achievement, or other quantifiable learning results, in order to allow for meaningful comparison and analysis. Finally, only studies published in English between 2020 and 2025 were included. This time frame was chosen to reflect the most recent developments in artificial intelligence and its growing application in education, ensuring that the review remains up to date and relevant to current academic practice.

The analysis of the selected studies was done using a thematic approach, which means the findings were organized into key ideas instead of being treated separately. This method

was chosen because it makes it easier to understand patterns across different studies and combine both numerical results and written explanations clearly. After reviewing the literature, the findings were grouped into several main themes, including academic achievement, student motivation, self-regulated learning, personalized education, and ethical issues related to artificial intelligence in higher education. These themes appeared repeatedly across many studies, showing that they are central to understanding how AI affects learning. To make the analysis stronger, the discussion of findings was also linked to well-known academic books in the field. For example, ideas about personalized learning were connected to Teaching in a Digital Age by Bates (2022) and Artificial Intelligence in Education by Holmes, Bialik and Fadel (2019), which both explain how technology can support individual learning needs. In a similar way, Machine Learning by Mitchell (1997) and Artificial Intelligence: A Modern Approach by Russell and Norvig (2021) helped explain how AI systems learn from data and adapt to users over time. Issues such as student independence and responsible use of AI were also interpreted using ideas from Human Compatible by Russell (2019) and Life 3.0 by Tegmark (2017), which discuss how intelligent systems can influence human thinking and decision making. At the same time, ethical concerns like academic honesty and overreliance on technology were considered in relation to The Fourth Education Revolution by Seldon and Abidoye (2018), which explores how AI is changing education in both positive and challenging ways. Overall, this approach helped combine research findings with established academic ideas, making the analysis more balanced and easier to understand. Instead of looking at each study separately, the results were connected into a bigger picture of how artificial intelligence is shaping academic performance in higher education.

The findings from the reviewed literature generally show that artificial intelligence has a positive impact on students’ academic achievement when it is used in a meaningful and structured way within education. Many studies suggest that AI-based tutoring systems and adaptive learning platforms can make difficult topics easier to understand by offering clear explanations that are adjusted to the learner’s level, along with instant feedback that helps students correct mistakes quickly. Across several meta-analytic studies, students who use AI-supported learning tools tend to achieve better academic results compared to those who rely only on traditional learning methods. This improvement is often explained by the fact that AI allows learning to become more personalized, which means students are not forced to follow a single pace or style of teaching. Instead, learners can move through material at a speed that matches their own understanding, repeat challenging sections when needed, and receive targeted support in areas where they struggle. As a result, learning becomes more flexible, less stressful, and more accessible, especially for students who may need additional academic support outside the classroom.
The evidence suggests that AI can contribute positively to academic achievement, but its effectiveness depends strongly on how it is integrated into the learning process and whether it is used as a support tool rather than a replacement for active student engagement.

One of the most important contributions of artificial intelligence in education is its ability to create learning experiences that are tailored to individual students rather than treating all learners in the same way. Unlike traditional classroom teaching, where one pace and one method are applied to everyone, AI-based systems can adjust content according to each student’s performance, progress, and learning style. These systems continuously collect and analyze data from student interactions, such as quiz results, time spent on tasks, and

types of errors made. Based on this information, the system identifies strengths and weaknesses and then adapts the learning material accordingly. Students who struggle with specific topics are given additional explanations, simpler examples, and extra practice tasks, while more advanced learners are able to move ahead without unnecessary repetition. Another important benefit of this approach is flexibility. Students are not restricted to classroom timing or teacher availability, since AI tools can provide support at any time of day. This is especially useful for independent learning outside the classroom, where students may need guidance while studying alone. In many cases, this reduces frustration and helps learners feel more in control of their academic progress.

In addition, personalized learning often improves confidence. When students receive support that matches their level of understanding, they are less likely to feel overwhelmed or left behind. Over time, this can lead to stronger academic performance and better long-term retention of knowledge, since learning becomes more structured around individual needs rather than general expectations.

Artificial intelligence also has a noticeable impact on student motivation and engagement. One of the main reasons for this is the interactive nature of AI tools, which makes learning feel more dynamic compared to traditional methods. Chatbots and virtual assistants, for example, provide immediate responses to questions, which helps students avoid confusion and maintain their focus during study sessions.

This instant feedback creates a smoother learning experience because students do not have to wait for teachers or classmates to clarify doubts. As a result, they are more likely to continue studying instead of losing interest or feeling stuck. In many cases, this also encourages students to ask more questions, since AI systems do not create fear of judgment or embarrassment.

Gamified learning systems further increase engagement by turning academic tasks into more interactive experiences. Features such as rewards, progress bars, levels, and achievement badges make learning feel more structured and goal-oriented. Students often find this type of system more motivating because they can clearly see their progress and feel a sense of accomplishment after completing tasks.

Personalized feedback also plays a key role in sustaining motivation. Instead of receiving general comments, students get specific guidance on what they did well and what needs improvement. This makes learning feel more supportive and less discouraging, especially for students who struggle academically.

Overall, AI creates a more responsive and engaging learning environment where students feel supported, involved, and motivated to continue learning consistently over time.

Several studies suggest that artificial intelligence plays an important role in developing students’ self-regulated learning skills. In many cases, students who regularly use AI-based learning tools show improvement in how they manage their time, organize their academic tasks, and structure their study routines. This is mainly because AI systems often guide learners step by step, helping them plan what to study, identify priorities, and track their progress over time. Another important factor is accessibility. AI tools are available at any time, which means students are not limited by classroom schedules or teacher availability. They can review materials, ask questions, and receive explanations whenever they need support. This flexibility makes learning more adaptable to individual lifestyles and personal study patterns.

As a result, students gradually become more independent in their learning process. Instead of relying only on teachers for direction, they start taking more responsibility for their own academic progress. Over time, this can strengthen essential skills such as discipline, consistency, and goal setting, which are important not only for academic success but also for lifelong learning.
Although artificial intelligence brings clear benefits to education, its integration into higher education also creates a number of serious academic, ethical, and technological challenges that cannot be ignored.

One of the main concerns raised by educators is the risk of academic dishonesty. With the help of generative AI tools, students can now produce essays, summaries, and answers within seconds. While this can be useful for learning support, it also increases the temptation to submit work that is not their own. As a result, some students may complete assignments without fully understanding the content, which can weaken real learning and reduce the development of critical thinking skills.

Another important issue is data privacy. AI-based educational systems often collect and process large amounts of personal information, including students’ learning behavior, performance history, and interaction patterns. If this data is not properly protected, there is a risk that it could be misused, accessed without permission, or shared with third parties. This raises concerns about how securely student information is stored and how transparently it is being used by educational platforms.

Overdependence on Technology
Overreliance on artificial intelligence is another challenge that may affect students in the long term. While AI can provide quick answers and useful guidance, excessive dependence on these tools may reduce students’ ability to think independently and solve problems on their own. In some cases, students may start to rely on AI for every task, which can limit the development of essential academic skills such as analysis, reasoning, and effective communication.

Educational Inequality
Finally, there is the issue of unequal access to technology. Not all students have the same level of access to devices, high-speed internet, or advanced AI tools. This creates a gap between students who can fully benefit from AI-supported learning and those who cannot. As a result, instead of reducing educational inequality, AI may unintentionally make it worse if access is not distributed fairly across different social and economic groups.

The findings of this review suggest that artificial intelligence can improve students’ academic performance when it is integrated responsibly and supported by effective teaching practices. Not only does AI contribute through personalized learning and instant feedback, but it also helps increase student motivation, which together leads to better overall learning outcomes. However, the effectiveness of AI is not guaranteed. The results show that it depends heavily on how it is used in real educational settings. Once AI is treated as a learning support tool rather than a replacement for thinking, it can genuinely enhance understanding. But the thing is, when students start relying on it as a shortcut to complete assignments, the development of critical thinking and deeper learning may be weakened. Teachers still play an essential role in this process. No wonder educators remain central in higher education, because human teachers provide emotional support, ethical direction, creativity, and personal understanding that AI cannot fully replace. While AI can explain, generate, and assist, it cannot truly replace the human connection that often shapes meaningful learning

experiences. This is why the future of education is likely to be built on cooperation between teachers and AI rather than competition. AI can handle repetition and information delivery, while teachers focus on guidance, interpretation, and intellectual development.

At the same time, universities need to take responsibility for how AI is introduced into academic environments. Students must be trained in AI literacy so they can evaluate information critically and use these tools in a responsible way. But the challenge is not only technical; it is also ethical. Without clear guidelines, the use of AI may create confusion about academic honesty and acceptable learning practices. Once proper policies and educational support systems are in place, AI has the potential to become a powerful academic tool. However, without them, their benefits may be reduced by misuse and misunderstanding. Artificial intelligence is transforming higher education and reshaping the way students learn, study, and perform academically. The evidence reviewed in this paper shows that AI can support academic achievement positively, especially through personalized learning, increased motivation, and the development of self-regulated learning skills. Students benefit from flexible systems that provide instant feedback and continuous academic support, which helps them learn more efficiently and independently. At the same time, it is no wonder that these benefits come with important challenges that need careful consideration. Issues such as academic integrity, data privacy, and overdependence on technology remain central concerns in modern education. Once students begin to rely too heavily on AI, there is a risk that independent thinking and deeper understanding may gradually weaken. The thing is, the effectiveness of AI in education depends heavily on how it is used. Unlike traditional learning tools, AI systems can either enhance learning or reduce student effort depending on the way they are integrated. This is why it is important to treat AI as a supportive tool rather than a complete replacement for human teaching and learning processes. This is why the future success of artificial intelligence in education depends on balanced and ethical integration. Students, educators, and institutions must work together to ensure that AI enhances learning while still preserving critical thinking, creativity, and academic honesty. When this balance is achieved, AI can become a powerful and sustainable part of modern education rather than a disruptive force.

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