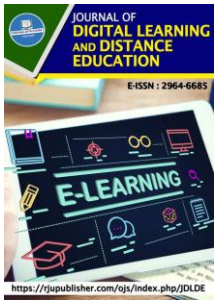

JOURNAL OF DIGITAL LEARNING AND DISTANCE EDUCATION (JDLDE)

ISSN: 2964-6685

https://www.rjupublisher.com/ojs/index.php/JDLDE

BSEd-English Students' Acceptance of ChatGPT in Language Education Research course: A Literature Review

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Abstract

Generative artificial intelligence, such as ChatGPT, is increasingly used in higher education, yet its implications for research pedagogy in the Philippine context remain underexplored. This literature review synthesizes empirical and theoretical studies on ChatGPT's application in academic writing, student engagement, ethical considerations, and higher-order research tasks, including qualitative data analysis. The evidence indicates that ChatGPT enhances idea generation, drafting, revision, engagement, and metacognitive skills, with benefits amplified when embedded in structured pedagogical design. However, research predominantly addresses general writing tasks, offering limited insight into how students critically engage with AI outputs, navigate ethical challenges, or operationalize higher-order research processes. Institutional policies, digital literacy, and unequal access further shape student experiences, and longitudinal impacts on research competence, critical thinking, and ethical behavior remain largely unexamined. These findings highlight the necessity of context-sensitive pedagogical frameworks that support responsible AI use, maintain academic integrity, and foster sustainable research competence. Treating ChatGPT as a research-pedagogical priority rather than a mere technical tool enables Philippine higher education institutions to leverage AI as a catalyst for transformative learning and capability development, mitigating the risk of superficial or inequitable implementation.

Keywords**:** ChatGPT, Language Education Research, Research Pedagogy Framework

Acknowledgments: The researchers would like to acknowledge everyone who supported in this research endeavor—from their institutional support community up to the peer reviewers and journal editor of this publication.

For citation:
Valenzuela, C. L. & Balon, W. J. (2026). Students' Acceptance of ChatGPT in Language Education Research course: A Literature Review. *Journal of Digital Learning and Distance Education, 4*(10), 1950-1960. https://doi.org/10.56778/jdlde.v4i10.670

Introduction

The rapid emergence of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), particularly ChatGPT, has begun to reconfigure research practices across higher education by supporting tasks such as data gathering, drafting, and qualitative data analysis (UNESCO, 2023). While these tools can streamline idea generation and enhance writing productivity, unguided use creates academic and ethical risks, including hallucinated content, superficial interpretation, and declining analytical rigor (Rahman et al., 2023). This reality underscores a critical operational requirement: users must demonstrate competence when deploying AI in highly interpretive processes such as qualitative data analysis (QDA). In the Philippine context, however, AI adoption continues to outpace governance and capability-building efforts. Structural constraints—including weak digital infrastructure, fragmented coordination, and underinvestment in research capacity—have resulted in a decentralized and uneven regulatory environment, prompting national agencies such as the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) to call for coordinated policy reform and system-level AI strategy development. In response, leading higher education institutions such as the University of the Philippines (2023), Far Eastern University (2024), and De La Salle University (2025) have implemented policies mandating transparency of AI use and empowering instructors to set task-specific parameters, with a shared emphasis that AI must augment rather than replace core academic and research competencies (Abdelhafiz et al., 2024).

Despite these sector-wide developments, institutional implementation remains inconsistent. In some local colleges, there is currently no formal policy framework or structured training governing the academic use of ChatGPT among faculty and students. Students are already using ChatGPT to support QDA activities without systematic pedagogical scaffolding or ethical guidance. This institutional gap creates execution risk for academic quality: qualitative research requires disciplined interpretation, analytic depth, and research-based communicative competence—capabilities that can be diluted when AI tools are deployed without structured oversight. The absence of operational policy alignment and instructional support not only weakens research skill formation but also reflects a broader failure to translate national guidance into classroom-level practice. This gap defines the central problem addressed in this study (Yusuf, 2023).

Against this backdrop, the literature on ChatGPT in education highlights its potential to enhance personalized learning, academic writing, engagement, and self-directed study across diverse student populations (Purnamasari, 2023). Studies document benefits such as improved writing quality, idea generation, confidence, and efficiency, while also emphasizing the importance of guided use, scaffolded activities, and faculty support to foster ethical and productive adoption. Research consistently raises ethical concerns—including plagiarism, bias, privacy, and overreliance—and points to the need for institutional policies, digital literacy training, and culturally sensitive integration. Despite these insights, gaps remain regarding students' actual experiences, acceptance, and interaction patterns with ChatGPT in research-specific tasks like qualitative data analysis, as well as the longitudinal and context-specific implications of AI integration in Philippine higher education. These unresolved questions directly motivate the literature review article, which seeks to explore student acceptance and usage of ChatGPT for QDA, ultimately informing the design of a locally relevant Research Pedagogy Framework.

Methodology

This study adopts a literature review design, which is a systematic approach to synthesizing and critically analyzing existing research to provide a coherent understanding of a topic, identify trends and gaps, and inform future research directions. A literature review, unlike empirical research, does not generate new primary data but contributes to knowledge development by interpreting and integrating prior studies to support theoretical and practical advancements (Synder, 2023). This

design is appropriate for the current study because it allows a comprehensive examination of the integration of ChatGPT in higher education, particularly its implications for academic writing, ethical use, student acceptance, and communicative competence, providing a structured basis for proposing a research pedagogy framework.

In constructing this review, the researchers applied inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the relevance, quality, and applicability of the selected studies. Included studies were published between 2020 and 2025, peer-reviewed or published in credible academic journals, and focused on ChatGPT or AI-supported learning in higher education contexts. Studies were required to address at least one of the following dimensions: academic writing, research processes (including qualitative data analysis), ethical considerations in AI use, or student acceptance and engagement. Excluded studies comprised opinion pieces without empirical or systematic evidence, publications prior to 2020, non-English language papers, and studies unrelated to higher education or student learning contexts. This approach ensured that the review captured recent, contextually relevant, and methodologically robust research to inform the synthesis.

The aim of this literature review is to consolidate existing knowledge on ChatGPT's application in higher education, highlighting pedagogical benefits, ethical challenges, and gaps in student engagement and research integration. By systematically analyzing and synthesizing these studies, the review establishes a foundational understanding that can guide the design of a Research Pedagogy Framework for higher education students, aligning AI integration with academic rigor, ethical responsibility, and local educational contexts.

Results and Discussion

ChatGPT in Language Learning

ChatGPT has rapidly become a disruptive force in language education, fundamentally reshaping how students read, write, and conduct academic research. Rather than functioning simply as a writing tool, it operates as an interactive cognitive partner that supports ideation, organization, revision, and reflection. International and Southeast Asian research consistently demonstrates that students experience enhanced engagement, academic confidence, and self-directed learning when ChatGPT is integrated meaningfully into instructional practice. In the Philippine context, these benefits translate directly into improved academic writing quality, research support, and deeper motivation to participate in learning tasks. Educators likewise recognize its utility in scaffolding complex thinking, modeling academic discourse, and optimizing instructional efficiency. Together, these findings indicate that ChatGPT is no longer peripheral technology—it is now an integral component of modern language and research pedagogy. The Philippine higher education landscape illustrates this shift with particular clarity. Quantitative evidence reveals that AI-enabled learning explains up to 88.5% of variance in student academic outcomes, surpassing the influence of demographic factors such as school type or socioeconomic background. This demonstrates that the most powerful learning differentiator is not who students are, but the extent to which AI-supported tools are embedded in their academic environment (Javier & Moorhouse, 2024). Filipino learners report using ChatGPT to brainstorm arguments, analyze readings, clarify concepts, and refine completed drafts. As a result, AI is increasingly treated not as a shortcut, but as a structured thinking companion. Yet this acceleration also introduces substantial challenges (Goli-Cruz, 2024). Unequal technological access, diverse digital literacy levels, and uncertainties surrounding academic integrity shape how different groups of students and teachers encounter AI in practice (Cabato, 2025). Without coherent institutional direction, AI integration risks becoming fragmented, inequitable, and dependent on individual initiative rather than systemic policy (Cabuquin et al., 2024).

The literature also reveals that acceptance of ChatGPT is not monolithic. Filipino students and teachers negotiate AI use through multiple value positions and belief systems. Studies categorizing stakeholder profiles consistently identify groups who emphasize ethical stewardship,

balanced pedagogy, or pragmatic efficiency, demonstrating that AI adoption is situated in local cultures, professional identities, and educational histories rather than neutral technological environment. Students value ChatGPT's role in ideation, research support, and writing fluency, while simultaneously expressing persistent concerns about plagiarism, accuracy, and authenticity. Teachers, meanwhile, stress that responsible AI use requires institutional frameworks, ethical codes, and clear operational guidelines. These varying attitudes point to a sector still calibrating the appropriate balance between innovation and academic rigor. Global research strengthens these conclusions. ChatGPT has proven effective in supporting adaptive feedback processes, strengthening academic writing competence, improving pragmatic language skills, and fostering learner autonomy when applied within intentional pedagogy. However, these same studies repeatedly caution that unguided AI exposure risks promoting cognitive dependence and shallow critical thinking (Acena, 2024). Philippine scholarship mirrors these concerns. Students demonstrate meaningful learning gains when AI use is scaffolded, contextualized, and ethically mediated, reporting improvements in engagement, writing quality, and research performance when appropriate guidance is present. Faculty assume a decisive role here, as teacher mediation ensures that AI serves as a catalyst—not a substitute—for analytical reasoning and critical judgment. Still, teacher readiness remains uneven, and sustained professional development is essential to institutionalize responsible AI use.

This discussion becomes more complex when ChatGPT is deployed not merely for writing assistance but for structured research practice, particularly qualitative data analysis (QDA). While prior research confirms that AI can support research-related tasks such as organizing ideas, refining language, or conceptual clarification (Mati Polytechnic College Inc. & Agbong-Coates, 2024), there remains limited empirical understanding of how students integrate ChatGPT into interpretive, methodological, and meaning-making stages of qualitative inquiry. Most existing literature focuses on perceived usefulness, academic satisfaction, and general acceptance. Far fewer studies interrogate how AI shapes epistemic agency, reflexivity, analytical rigor, or ethical reasoning during qualitative research processes. This constitutes a clear and pressing knowledge gap in the Philippine setting. Without structured research pedagogy and governance mechanisms, students risk drifting toward efficiency-driven approaches, superficial thematic coding, or uncritical acceptance of AI-generated interpretations. Such patterns weaken research integrity and undermine methodological rigor. Conversely, when AI use is grounded in ethical frameworks, methodological literacy, and reflective practice, it can function as a powerful catalyst for scholarly inquiry. Guided engagement supports deeper analysis, promotes metacognitive awareness, and encourages sustained critical reflection on meaning, language, and interpretation. Institutional readiness will determine which of these trajectories prevails.

For this reason, a localized qualitative examination of Filipino students' acceptance, experiences, and sense-making processes when using ChatGPT for qualitative research tasks is both timely and necessary. Such inquiry provides the empirical foundation needed to build a Research Pedagogy Framework suited to Philippine higher education conditions. This framework must be culturally grounded, equity-driven, ethically robust, and aligned with actual classroom realities rather than theoretical assumptions. It must operationalize AI as a disciplined partner in inquiry rather than a replacement for human interpretation. Ultimately, the literature confirms that while ChatGPT significantly enhances language learning and research-writing competence, sustainable integration requires intentional pedagogy, ethical alignment, and contextual sensitivity. Philippine higher education now stands at a strategic juncture. The development of a structured, research-informed pedagogy for AI-mediated inquiry is not simply beneficial—it is imperative to protecting academic integrity while harnessing AI's transformative potential for scholarly growth.

ChatGPT in Academic Writing

ChatGPT has rapidly emerged as a powerful enabler in academic writing, supporting students and researchers across a wide spectrum of scholarly activities. Beyond simple text generation, it now

functions as an intelligent assistant capable of drafting, structuring, synthesizing, and polishing academic work. Studies consistently show that ChatGPT streamlines mechanical writing tasks, enhances clarity, and increases overall productivity, allowing learners to allocate more cognitive resources to higher-order analytical thinking (Herda et al., 2024). Pre-service teachers, for example, report improved confidence and competence when using ChatGPT to support lesson planning and academic writing, demonstrating that AI-supported writing can scaffold professional readiness and engagement. These findings reinforce the emerging view that ChatGPT is not merely a convenience tool, but an influential partner in shaping academic discourse practices. At the same time, the literature makes it clear that the value of ChatGPT lies not simply in the generation of content, but in how students learn to interact critically with its outputs. Filipino and international studies alike indicate that students benefit from AI-assisted idea generation, conceptual clarification, and organizational support; however, they also emphasize that meaningful learning depends on reflective engagement rather than passive acceptance of machine-generated text. When students use ChatGPT as a thinking companion, writing becomes an iterative, dialogic process in which they refine their arguments, clarify reasoning, and revise their interpretations. Conversely, unguided use introduces significant risks: dependence, erosion of originality, ethical lapses, and superficial engagement with scholarship. These tensions foreground a critical point—ChatGPT can either deepen or dilute academic rigor depending on the pedagogical structures surrounding its use.

Global scholarship reinforces this dual-edged reality. Researchers report that ChatGPT fosters autonomy, clarity, and efficiency in academic writing and research synthesis, but also warn against shallow processing and uncritical reliance. Ethical discussions highlight unresolved concerns surrounding privacy, authorship, originality, and academic honesty, calling for clear policy frameworks and institutional governance. Studies also show that while AI-generated texts are often coherent and linguistically sophisticated, they may lack nuance, contextual awareness, and interpretive depth—reinforcing the need for human verification and scholarly judgment. Even when research productivity increases, skepticism regarding the reliability and epistemic legitimacy of AI-assisted scholarship persists. This reflects a growing consensus: AI's contribution to academic writing is significant, but sustainable only when paired with critical literacy and ethical awareness. In the Philippine context, these insights take on heightened importance. Teacher mediation, ethical orientation, and structured guidance are repeatedly identified as decisive factors in ensuring that AI strengthens rather than weakens academic integrity. Local studies confirm that guided integration promotes engagement, confidence, and writing quality, while unstructured use risks dependency and cognitive shortcutting. Recent research further demonstrates that ChatGPT can meaningfully support grammar development, language accuracy, and disciplinary writing when used interactively and with clear learning objectives (Rodriguez & Langam, 2025). However, these same studies reveal uneven digital literacy, varied institutional policy environments, and inconsistent awareness of AI's ethical limits—conditions that make structured research pedagogy even more necessary.

Moreover, scholarly discussions increasingly emphasize that ChatGPT's influence extends beyond routine writing exercises into the domain of academic research itself. Graduate students and language researchers now rely on AI to support theoretical framing, literature synthesis, and analytical interpretation. Yet, concerns persist that AI may unintentionally oversimplify complex constructs, normalize generic phrasing, or obscure the interpretive nature of scholarly inquiry. These risks are amplified when students engage in research-intensive writing such as qualitative data analysis, where meaning-making requires reflexivity, contextual judgment, and epistemic responsibility—capacities that cannot be outsourced to AI. Current research offers only limited insight into how students critically evaluate AI outputs, integrate them with their own interpretations, and negotiate ethical dilemmas in real academic contexts. This represents a strategic blind spot in the literature. For Philippine higher education institutions, this gap has direct implications. Variations in policy guidance, instructor readiness, and digital literacy mean that students are often left to develop their own informal strategies for AI-supported writing. Some succeed; others drift toward dependency or

mechanical output reproduction. What is missing is a pedagogically grounded, culturally responsive framework that equips students to use ChatGPT responsibly, analytically, and ethically in research-oriented writing tasks. Localized qualitative inquiry is therefore essential to understand how students actually experience AI-mediated writing, how they negotiate accuracy and authorship, and how acceptance and trust shape their engagement with AI tools. These insights will form the empirical foundation needed to design a Research Pedagogy Framework that aligns AI integration with academic rigor, ethical responsibility, and Philippine educational realities. In sum, the literature confirms that ChatGPT has transformed academic writing by enhancing productivity, confidence, and scholarly engagement across disciplines. However, it also exposes systemic vulnerabilities related to ethical practice, critical literacy, and institutional readiness. The unresolved question is not whether AI will influence academic writing—it already has—but how higher education institutions will shape that influence. Addressing this challenge requires pedagogical innovation rooted in actual student experience, which is the core agenda of the present study.

Ethical Concerns and Limitations

The expanding adoption of ChatGPT in higher education has intensified debate around its ethical, academic, and institutional implications. While AI-assisted tools demonstrably streamline research, drafting, and learning processes, the conversation can no longer focus solely on technical capability or instructional convenience. The strategic issue is risk governance. Scholars increasingly argue that academic integrity, authorship, authenticity, equity of access, and data security now sit at the center of AI-enabled learning—issues that demand deliberate policy responses rather than ad-hoc classroom decisions. At the same time, global discussions often overlook the contextual realities of resource-constrained and policy-fragmented environments such as the Philippines. This lack of localized evidence leaves institutions exposed to academic, ethical, and reputational risks. The literature therefore signals an urgent need to interrogate how ethical risks operate within specific educational ecosystems, so that AI can be deployed as a learning enabler rather than a liability. A consistent thread across the scholarship is that ChatGPT outputs cannot be assumed to be neutral, objective, or fully accurate. AI hallucinations, bias, and content unreliability are recurring risks that require structured human oversight and critical literacy (Guleria et al., 2023). These concerns are amplified in systems where institutional safeguards, professional development, and student digital literacy are uneven or underdeveloped. (Evangelista, 2025) highlights that ChatGPT disrupts traditional markers of academic authorship and originality, forcing institutions to rethink assessment design, ethics training, and policy enforcement mechanisms. The message is clear: AI does not remove the need for human judgment—it escalates it.

Theoretical and philosophical perspectives deepen this critique by cautioning against unreflective dependence on AI. (Andreas & Samosir, 2025) argue that habitual reliance on ChatGPT risks weakening student autonomy and intellectual agency, creating conditions where convenience overtakes authentic engagement. Parallel concerns around privacy, authorship, and academic misconduct also emerge strongly who call for governance structures that institutionalize accountability rather than merely encourage ethical behavior. English and applied linguistics must adopt a proactive stance—experimenting critically, embedding ethical reflection, and developing policy frameworks that evolve in tandem with technology. These discussions converge on one point: AI ethics is not a technical problem but a pedagogical and institutional leadership challenge. Evidence from empirical contexts further demonstrates that awareness, preparedness, and governance differ significantly across institutions and regions. Low awareness of AI ethics among Yemeni lecturers and students, largely because institutional policies and capacity-building initiatives lag behind technological uptake. Philippine research reflects a similar risk pattern. Studies identify plagiarism, accuracy concerns, academic dishonesty, and overreliance as prevailing barriers to effective AI use. Stakeholders generally acknowledge ChatGPT's value for productivity and language enhancement, yet they also emphasize the need for structured institutional direction, digital literacy training, and

clear rules of engagement. (Arman & Lamiyar, 2023) extend this logic beyond education, demonstrating that AI benefits are optimized only when strategic integration and policy clarity exist. These realities shape the contours of responsible pedagogy. Current scholarship stresses that AI use should be deliberately structured, transparently acknowledged, and situated within guided learning environments. Scaffolded activities, educator-led oversight, and explicit ethics training are repeatedly identified as key controls that protect academic integrity while still enabling innovation. Parallel to this, ongoing awareness of hallucination risks, embedded bias, and intellectual property concerns remains essential for both educators and students. Institutions that take these risks seriously design policies, training programs, and assessment models that treat AI as a tool to be governed—not a shortcut to replace scholarly thinking. This direction becomes even more critical in developing educational systems where unequal access and digital capacity gaps risk creating academic stratification.

However, despite increasing attention to AI ethics, there is still a striking gap in research that captures how Filipino students themselves interpret, negotiate, and operationalize ethical decision-making when using ChatGPT for structured academic tasks—particularly those involving qualitative data analysis. Much of the existing scholarship examines generalized writing support, language learning assistance, or broad institutional perspectives. What remains underexplored are the real, situated practices students adopt when balancing productivity, ethics, and scholarly rigor in research-intensive work. These missing insights limit policy relevance and weaken the alignment between institutional expectations and student realities. This gap signals a critical strategic opportunity. Localized qualitative research is needed to document how students perceive risk, navigate gray areas, and integrate AI into their academic practices. Understanding these lived experiences is essential to designing a Research Pedagogy Framework that does not simply import global ethical rhetoric but operationalizes responsible AI use within Philippine higher education realities. Such a framework must integrate ethical literacy, critical AI engagement, and pedagogical structure—ensuring that AI strengthens research capability rather than eroding scholarly integrity.

Student Acceptance and Communicative Competence

Student acceptance of ChatGPT has emerged as a pivotal factor in determining how effectively AI tools contribute to the development of communicative competence in higher education. While the technology clearly supports a wide range of academic tasks, the core issue is not simply access, but the degree to which students willingly and strategically engage with AI to enhance their linguistic, discourse, sociocultural, and strategic abilities. Acceptance is shaped by perceived usefulness, usability, ethical awareness, and institutional culture. Yet existing research rarely dissects how these variables operate within structured research environments—particularly in tasks such as qualitative data analysis (QDA), where higher-order reasoning and interpretive judgment are central. This lack of context-specific evidence leaves a gap in the strategic alignment between AI adoption and learning outcomes. Understanding student acceptance therefore becomes critical, not only as a measure of adoption but as a lever for strengthening academic capability and communicative competence in Philippine higher education. The literature consistently shows that acceptance grows when students perceive ChatGPT as materially improving academic performance. Pre-service teachers and higher education learners increasingly frame ChatGPT as an intelligent assistant that supports brainstorming, drafting, lesson planning, and research writing, leading to heightened confidence and engagement when AI use is scaffolded within instruction (Ramos & Baylon, 2025). Teachers also highlight ChatGPT's potential to cultivate metacognitive behaviors such as goal-setting, planning, and reflective self-monitoring, provided that its use remains intentional and ethically grounded. These insights position student acceptance not as passive approval but as a strategic decision grounded in perceived value creation.

However, acceptance is uneven and mediated by capability, exposure, and context. Students with higher digital literacy and prior AI experience are more likely to integrate ChatGPT

meaningfully into research workflows. (Lo et al., 2024) demonstrate that structured AI use can strengthen research competence, though limited awareness of AI constraints weakens critical engagement. (Buriak et al., 2023) reinforce that acceptance becomes productive only when accompanied by training in ethical practice, bias detection, and verification of AI-generated content. Where guidance is lacking, two risks emerge: superficial use that limits learning value, or unchecked reliance that undermines originality and critical thinking. In short, acceptance without scaffolding does not guarantee competence. Philippine-based research confirms that acceptance is inherently contextual. Students frequently position ChatGPT as a guide rather than a substitute for cognitive effort, signaling a willingness to partner with AI while maintaining personal accountability. At the same time, Filipino learners express persistent concerns around plagiarism, reliability, and privacy, placing ethical awareness at the center of acceptance decisions. Broader local findings suggest that institutional policies, teacher mediation, and digital literacy programs play decisive roles in shaping how students judge AI's legitimacy and appropriateness in academic work. This pattern underscores a simple truth: acceptance is not merely psychological but structurally conditioned.

These dynamics intersect directly with communicative competence. AI-supported tasks can enhance linguistic precision, discourse organization, and clarity of expression when used critically and reflectively. At the same time, gaps in contextual nuance, cultural sensitivity, and ethical reasoning require active human mediation to safeguard sociocultural and strategic competence. Evidence shows that AI-assisted interventions are most effective when they deliberately cultivate not only accuracy, but also critical evaluation, contextual awareness, and purposeful communication. This reinforces the strategic link between instructional design and competence development: acceptance becomes meaningful when AI use is aligned with communicative objectives rather than treated as a generic writing aid (Cheng et al., 2025). Despite these insights, there remains limited empirical research focusing specifically on how students accept and operationalize ChatGPT within qualitative research processes such as QDA. Much of the existing literature operates at the level of general academic writing or language learning, without interrogating how students negotiate meaning, ethics, authorship, and analytical judgment in research-intensive settings. This represents a knowledge gap with direct implications for curriculum design, academic policy, and professional formation. Addressing this gap requires qualitative inquiry into how students experience, evaluate, and strategically deploy ChatGPT in real research practice. Such evidence is essential for developing a Research Pedagogy Framework that goes beyond technical adoption and embeds AI within a competence-driven, ethical, and context-responsive learning architecture. By grounding AI use in communicative competence and structured pedagogy, Philippine higher education institutions can move from reactive adoption toward intentional, capability-building integration.

Conclusion

Across the body of literature, one conclusion is unequivocal: ChatGPT is now a structural feature of contemporary learning and research rather than a temporary trend. The evidence base consistently shows that the tool accelerates idea generation, strengthens drafting and revision processes, enhances metacognitive engagement, and supports self-directed learning across Philippine and international contexts. When embedded within intentional pedagogical design, AI use does more than streamline writing—it catalyzes confidence, participation, and critical engagement. This outcome is particularly pronounced when teachers provide structured scaffolding, alignment with learning objectives, and explicit expectations for responsible academic behavior. Faculty recognize the upside: AI integration drives productivity, personalization, and instructional efficiency. Yet the consensus is also clear—unguided exposure risks dependency and surface-level thinking, reinforcing the need for strategic oversight. However, the current research ecosystem remains fragmented and overly focused on basic literacy, general academic writing, and classroom output. There is a significant blind spot around how students operationalize ChatGPT within higher-order research

processes, particularly qualitative data analysis (QDA). Existing studies provide little visibility into how learners interrogate textual data, construct analytical categories, evaluate AI outputs, or exercise judgment when engaging with qualitative meaning-making. Core decision-points—such as when to trust, revise, override, or reject AI responses—are rarely examined. Likewise, risk factors such as hallucination, bias, misinterpretation, and creeping overreliance remain acknowledged but insufficiently mapped in practice. Ethical concerns—particularly plagiarism, authorship ambiguity, data sensitivity, and validation of claims—are widely cited but weakly evidenced in localized learner behavior. In short, ethical discourse is robust; ethical practice is under-researched. Contextual realities in the Philippines further complicate the picture. Student engagement with ChatGPT is not occurring in a vacuum—it is mediated by digital infrastructure, institutional readiness, teacher capability, and socio-cultural norms.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

Funding

This research received no external funding.

Author contribution

Christian Loid Valenzuela: Conceptualization; Methodology; Software. **Wilma J. Balon**: Data curation; Writing-Original draft preparation. **Wilma J. Balon**: Visualization; Investigation. **Christian Loid Valenzuela** and **Wilma J. Balon**: Supervision. **Wilma J. Balon**: Software; **Validation. Christian Loid Valenzuela**: Writing -Reviewing and Editing. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Declaration of generative AI in scientific writing

The authors acknowledge having used the Generative AI tool ChatGPT-5 for grammar/language improvement only. The authors are solely responsible for all published content and has verified the accuracy and authenticity of the AI output.

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