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THE STUDY OF THE ETHICAL AND PRACTICAL BARRIERS TO USING CHATGPT FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the ethical and practical barriers to using ChatGPT for academic writing from students' perspective. This study used a qualitative research design to examine the ethical and practical challenges that university students face when using ChatGPT for academic writing. Fifteen participants were randomly selected from undergraduate and master's programs at ten universities in West and Central Java who used ChatGPT for their academic writing. The result showed ChatGPT's use in academic writing presents both ethical and practical challenges. Ethical issues include the risk of plagiarism, undermining critical thinking, and maintaining research authenticity, along with concerns about unreliable information and unclear institutional policies. Practical barriers involve limitations like the need for a professional version (ChatGPT-Pro), difficulty in verifying accuracy, formatting issues, lack of depth in analysis, and repetition of content. To ensure responsible use, these barriers require clear institutional guidelines and ethical standards.

Keywords: Academic Writing, Ethical and Practical Barriers, ChatGPT.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the development of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, especially large language models like ChatGPT, has caused a major change in how academic writing is conducted. As students, researchers, and teachers are using these tools more and more, there are questions about whether they are used the right way. ChatGPT can quickly and easily produce well-written, well-organized text, making it a useful tool for academic work, from coming up with ideas to writing entire papers. Its capability in generating coherent and relevant text offers substantial assistance to students grappling with the complexities of academic writing, enhancing their productivity and engagement with the writing process (Herda et al., 2024; Imran & Almusharraf, 2023a). But this growing use has happened faster than new rules and protections have been created. This has created an urgent need to carefully look at the good and bad parts of using these tools in academic settings. If academics failed to pay attention on this, they might be doing a bad job. With the increasing adoption of AI tools like ChatGPT, there is a pressing need for clear guidelines and ethical standards to navigate the integration of these technologies responsibly while enhancing academic writing outcomes (Bozkurt, 2024; Gao et al., 2025; Hryciw et al., 2023).

Due to the absence of precise criteria on the application of AI in educational institutions. One key concern is the need for clear ethical guidelines to govern the development and deployment of AI systems in academic settings (Ossa et al., 2024;

Prakash et al., 2022). Despite the increasing dependence on AI tools such as ChatGPT, educational institutions have yet to establish complete regulations delineating permissible behaviors, resulting in uncertainty among students and teachers over the responsible integration of these technologies into their work. The ethical concerns related to AI utilization, such as ensuring originality, preventing reliance, and upholding academic integrity, require urgent consideration. Challenges such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the transparency of AI-based inferences must be addressed to ensure the trustworthiness and fairness of AI applications in academic settings (Ojo & Kiobel, 2024). Investigating the problems and potential obstacles associated with utilizing ChatGPT in academic writing, aiming to enhance the discourse on the ethical and effective application of AI in academia, so maximizing its advantages and minimizing its hazards.

A primary issue is the capacity of ChatGPT to facilitate academic dishonesty and undermine the integrity of scholarly work (Teel et al., 2023; Williams, 2024). Researchers highlight that ChatGPT's capacity to produce human-like language may result in increased plagiarism, the fabrication of false references, and the dissemination of concealed biases (Williams, 2024). This presents significant concerns regarding the credibility and dependability of research results that may include AI-generated information (Imran & Almusharraf, 2023). To tackle these challenges, research has urged universities to cultivate an atmosphere that prioritizes academic integrity by employing sophisticated plagiarism detection software and reevaluating assessment strategies to deter unethical behavior (Williams, 2024; Imran & Almusharraf, 2023; Hua et al., 2023). The incorporation of AI chatbots in educational environments prompts apprehensions over their possible effects on student learning and engagement (Klarin et al., 2024; Nguyen et al., 2024). Although these technologies may provide opportunities to improve personalized learning and assist with academic tasks, they also pose a risk of prompting students to falsely claim AI-generated outputs as their own, thereby undermining the cultivation of critical thinking and writing skills (Nguyen et al., 2024; Klarin et al., 2024). The literature highlights the necessity for interdisciplinary collaboration, ongoing monitoring, and the integration of ethical reasoning within AI systems to address these difficulties (Williams, 2024).

In academic writing, it is essential to overcome practical and ethical challenges to uphold honesty and credibility. Practical obstacles, such time limitations, insufficient resource access, or inadequate abilities, can be surmounted by employing efficient time management techniques, pursuing supplementary training, and leveraging accessible academic tools and resources. Researchers must be transparent about their funding sources, affiliations, and any personal or professional interests that could influence their findings (Kiili et al., 2023; Kumpasoğlu et al., 2024) Conversely, ethical impediments, including plagiarism, data fabrication, or bias, necessitate stringent compliance with ethical principles and standards. Researchers and authors must ensure accurate citation of sources, maintain transparency in data presentation, and pursue objectivity in their analysis. Furthermore, fostering a culture of peer review and criticism might facilitate the early identification of ethical transgressions. By proactively confronting both practical and ethical obstacles, academic writing can maintain its rigor, reliability, and significance as a medium for knowledge dissemination. This includes clearly documenting their research methods, data sources, and analytical procedures, as well as acknowledging the limitations and potential biases of their study (Atad & Cohen, 2023). Additionally,

researchers should engage in peer review and seek feedback from colleagues to ensure the quality and credibility of their work (Paunović et al., 2020; Wertgen & Richter, 2020).

In recent research on the use of ChatGPT for academic purposes, several studies have addressed the practical and ethical barriers associated with its implementation. The study conducted by Wan Khairul Aiman Wan Mokhtar et al. (2024), in Malaysia explored the ethical risks posed by ChatGPT in higher education. Using quantitative research design, the study surveyed 406 participants, including students, staff, and lecturers from three public universities. The results highlighted concerns about academic integrity, particularly the potential for AI to compromise educational quality by promoting plagiarism and reducing the need for critical thinking. The authors recommended that higher education institutions implement strict ethical guidelines and frameworks to govern AI usage. Another study by Guleria et al., (2023), examined the reliability and ethical implications of using ChatGPT in scientific writing. The researchers conducted experiments to test the accuracy of the content generated by ChatGPT and found that the AI often provided false references and generated text with critical inaccuracies.

This raised concerns about the use of AI tools in fields like medical science, where the spread of inaccurate information could have serious consequences. The study concluded that AI-generated content should not replace human-generated research due to its potential to mislead and compromise academic integrity. Similarly, Rodriguez-Saavedra et al. (Rodriguez-Saavedra et al., 2025), investigated the biases inherent in ChatGPT, particularly how its use in academic research might reinforce stereotypes and hinder objectivity. Through a survey of over 5,000 participants, they found that while ChatGPT was perceived as useful for improving productivity, its lack of transparency and tendency to reflect biases in its training data raised significant ethical concerns. The study stressed the importance of establishing clear ethical guidelines for using AI tools in academic research to ensure fairness and inclusivity. These studies underscore the need for responsible integration of AI technologies in academia, addressing both practical challenges and ethical dilemmas.

In recent years, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in education has increased significantly, especially since the emergence of large language models such as ChatGPT developed by OpenAI. ChatGPT has the ability to automatically generate text based on user requests, including in the form of essays, summaries, analyses, and complete academic writing. This phenomenon has become a concern among academics because although ChatGPT offers various technical conveniences in the writing process, its use also raises ethical and practical issues that cannot be ignored. On the one hand, this tool helps students and researchers overcome obstacles in writing, such as difficulty in constructing sentences or constructing academic arguments. However, on the other hand, many parties are concerned that the presence of ChatGPT can damage academic integrity if used without adequate understanding and without clear regulations from educational institutions.

Several studies have shown that ChatGPT has a positive impact in the context of academic writing, especially for students who are not yet accustomed to scientific writing styles or experience language barriers. Gao et al. (2025) in their study stated that this tool can increase the confidence of novice writers because it is able to provide examples of writing structures, provide vocabulary suggestions, and even help improve sentences. This capability is certainly very useful, especially in situations when students are under time pressure or feel unsure about their writing skills. Klarin et al. (2024) even showed

that the use of ChatGPT in a targeted manner can increase the productivity and efficiency of academic work because users are no longer hampered in the early stages of writing, which often takes time and energy. In other words, ChatGPT can function as a companion that supports the process of thinking and writing more smoothly, not just a text-copying tool.

However, behind these benefits, there are various warnings about the negative impacts that may arise if ChatGPT is used unethically or excessively. One major concern is that this tool can encourage plagiarism or intellectual theft, especially if users simply copy the AI output without further modification or analysis. Guleria et al. (2023) highlighted that in some cases, ChatGPT produced unreal references or mixed sources of information inaccurately. This not only reduces the quality of the writing but can also mislead readers and damage the academic credibility of the author. In this context, students need to be equipped with digital literacy and high ethical awareness so that they are able to distinguish when and how to use ChatGPT responsibly. The use of AI in academic writing does not mean relinquishing intellectual responsibility entirely to machines, but must still involve critical thinking processes, fact-checking, and in-depth analytical skills.

In addition, there are also concerns about the potential for students' dependence on ChatGPT to hinder the development of their natural writing skills. Williams (2024) warns that in the long term, if students rely too much on AI to compose academic assignments, they will lose the opportunity to practice critical and argumentative thinking skills independently. In fact, the writing process is not only about composing grammatically correct sentences, but also reflects the ability to think logically, reflectively, and analytically which is the core of higher education. If this process is completely replaced by an automated system, the purpose of education will shift from developing intellectual potential to simply producing content. Therefore, it is important for educational institutions to prioritize a pedagogical approach that not only regulates the use of AI but also encourages students to remain actively involved in the entire academic process.

Another important issue is the bias and lack of transparency in the ChatGPT working system. This model is trained with data from the vast internet, which means that it carries with it various tendencies or biases from the data it uses. Rodriguez-Saavedra et al. (2025) in their research revealed that the content generated by ChatGPT could represent certain stereotypes or display biased information, depending on the training data. This problem is complicated because AI systems like ChatGPT do not provide transparent explanations about where certain information is taken from, making it difficult for users to trace and verify the validity of the source. When used in an academic context, this limitation can have serious implications for the validity and scientific honesty of a work. Therefore, the ability of users to evaluate the output of AI is crucial and should not be replaced by blind trust in the results generated automatically.

In this regard, there is a growing push for higher education institutions to immediately design clear guidelines and policies regarding the use of ChatGPT and other AI technologies. A study by Wan Mokhtar et al. (2024) shows that most students and lecturers are still confused about the limits of AI use, because there are no official rules governing the extent to which this technology can be used in an academic context. This ambiguity can lead to doubt or even misuse, either intentionally or unintentionally. Therefore, it is important for institutions to not only issue prohibition or restriction

policies, but also provide comprehensive education on digital literacy, academic ethics, and critical thinking skills in the AI era. Only with this comprehensive approach can the use of AI be directed towards positive goals, namely supporting the learning process, not destroying it.

Overall, the existing literature suggests that the use of ChatGPT in academic writing is an innovation that cannot be avoided but also should not be allowed to develop unchecked. This technology offers great potential in accelerating and facilitating the writing process, but at the same time, it also carries serious risks related to integrity, objectivity, and quality of scientific writing. Therefore, a balance is needed between the use of technology and the enforcement of academic values. ChatGPT should be positioned as a tool that strengthens the thinking and writing process, not as a substitute for the role of humans in creating and conveying ideas. With a wise and responsible approach, AI technology can be a partner in education, not a threat to the academic world. Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in investigating the ethical and practical barriers to using ChatGPT for academic writing from students' perspective coming from ten universities in West and Central Java.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the ethical and practical barriers encountered by university students in using ChatGPT for academic writing. Qualitative methods are particularly effective for gaining deep insights into personal experiences, especially in complex, evolving contexts such as AI usage in education (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Respondents

A total of fifteen participants from ten universities in West and Central Java were randomly selected. They are undergraduate and master's programs students, representing a diverse range of academic disciplines and levels of familiarity with AI tools.

Instruments

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews which allowed for in-depth exploration of ethical and practical barriers encountered by participants while using ChatGPT. Semi-structured interviews provide flexibility while ensuring coverage of key themes (Kallio et al., 2016).

Procedures and Data Analysis

The interviews were conducted either in person or via video conferencing platforms, audio-recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis. Thematic analysis was used to identify recurring patterns, ethical concerns, and perceived obstacles related to accessibility, academic integrity, and institutional guidelines. Thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), enables researchers to systematically code and interpret data across participants. The analysis was conducted in four stages: open coding, axial coding, selective coding, and theory alignment. To ensure trustworthiness, member checking and peer debriefing were employed during the coding process, two techniques widely recommended to enhance credibility and confirmability in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of a thematic analysis of interview data collected from fifteen university students concerning their experiences, perceptions, and concerns related to the use of ChatGPT in academic writing. The emergent themes reflect the students' real-world challenges in navigating the affordances and limitations of ChatGPT, as shown in Table 1, particularly in relation to academic expectations, ethical uncertainties, and institutional policies.

Each theme is illustrated through representative quotations drawn directly from the participants and interpreted through the lens of the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989), and Academic Integrity frameworks (Levine, McCabe, & Tribble, 2001). The use of ChatGPT in academic writing presents several barriers that are categorized into ethical and practical challenges. Ethical concerns primarily revolve around the potential for plagiarism, the risk of undermining critical thinking, and the difficulty of maintaining research authenticity. Practical barriers include limitations of the tool itself, such as the need for a professional version (ChatGPT-Pro), challenges in verifying the accuracy of generated content, issues with formatting and style, and a lack of depth in analysis. These barriers suggest that while ChatGPT can be a helpful tool, its application in academic writing requires careful consideration and adaptation to avoid compromising research integrity. These findings will be further elaborated in the discussion section of this paper.

Table 1. Ethical and Practical Barriers of Using ChatGPT for Academic Writing

No	Barriers of Using ChatGPT for Academic Writing	
1	Ethical Barriers	The potential for plagiarism
		Undermining the development of critical thinking
		Maintaining the authenticity of the research
		Unreliable information
		Cheating or plagiarism
		The unclear institutional policies
2	Practical Barriers	Limited (Should be upgraded to ChatGPT-Pro)
		Verifying the accuracy of ChatGPT's answers is difficult
		Formatting and Style Issues
		Not providing depth of analysis
		Repetition information

Ethical Barriers in Using ChatGPT for Academic Writing

Using ChatGPT for academic writing raises several ethical concerns that must be addressed to maintain the integrity of scholarly work. A primary concern is the potential for plagiarism and overreliance on AI-generated content, both of which can diminish the

authenticity of individual contributions. The ethical barrier to using ChatGPT for academic writing primarily concerns the issues of authenticity and intellectual honesty. In academic contexts, the creation of knowledge requires original thought, rigorous research, and a personal intellectual contribution. Relying on AI to generate substantial portions of academic work can blur the lines between human authorship and machine-generated content. This raises concerns about whether the work genuinely reflects the scholar's thinking and understanding. Using AI in this manner creates ethical dilemmas surrounding academic integrity because it could misrepresent one's academic capabilities and undermine the core principles of independent research and scholarship.

Notably, students held different standards for acceptable use. Some felt that citation was necessary when ChatGPT significantly contributed to their work, while others did not consider acknowledgement essential unless prompted. These responses reflect *Plagiarism Perception* and *Citation Behavior*, highlighting inconsistencies in how students interpret AI-assisted authorship.

Participants were divided about ethical risks. Some feared overreliance and plagiarism:

Participant *4* : *" Bisa disebut plagiat bila tidak diparaprase dan tidak mencantumkan sumber."*
[It can be called plagiarism if it is not paraphrased and the source is not stated.]

Participant *6* : *"Salah satu kekhawatirannya adalah potensi menyalahgunakan ChatGPT untuk menyontek "*
[One of the concerns is the potential for abusing ChatGPT to cheat.]

Others emphasized citation as a way to maintain academic integrity:

Participant *6* : *"Saya memastikan untuk mengutip jika ChatGPT membantu dalam merangkum atau membuat draft*"
[I made sure to cite if ChatGPT helped in summarizing or drafting.]

Participant *15* : *"*I usually use it during assignment season to check grammar or simplify complex texts*"*

Many students expressed confusion about what constitutes acceptable use and whether using ChatGPT qualifies as plagiarism. It blurs the line between helping and cheating, especially in academic contexts.

Participant *6* : *" Saya ragu menggunakan ChatGPT untuk tugas menulis, karena khawatir itu akan dianggap sebagai pelanggaran akademis."*
[I am hesitant to use ChatGPT for writing assignments, for fear that it will be considered academic misconduct.]

Participant *12* : *" People might misuse it for plagiarism, and it becomes difficult to evaluate actual abilities."*

Participant *15* : *"Yes. When I first used it, I wasn't sure how much was 'too much'."*

Students also had differing perceptions of plagiarism:

Participant *6* : *" Itu tidak dianggap plagiarisme selama kontennya digunakan sebagai alat bantu dan bukan sebagai sumber utama informasi."*

[It is not considered plagiarism as long as the content is used as an aid and not as the primary source of information.]

Participant *11* : *"It can be if you copy the output and claim it as your own."*

The issue of originality and authorship emerged frequently. Participant 7 reflected, “Saya nggak yakin ini plagiat atau bukan kalau pakai ChatGPT,” (I'm not sure if this is plagiarism or not if I use ChatGPT) , highlighting uncertainty in ethical boundaries. Participant 10 elaborated, “Kadang saya ragu, ini ide saya atau ide dia? Takutnya nggak murni.” (Sometimes I doubt, is this my idea or his idea? I'm afraid it's not pure). This theme, Ethical Dilemma and Plagiarism Perception, indicates that students often experience tension between productivity and integrity, a hallmark of ethical ambiguity in academic AI use. Academic integrity remains central to student reflections. The concern voiced by Participants 6 and 4, that using ChatGPT without paraphrasing or citation equates to plagiarism, mirrors Bretag’s (2016) emphasis on attribution and honesty. Students' varying judgments on what counts as ethical use illustrate a lack of standardized norms, underscoring the need for policy clarification.

Ajzen’s Theory of Planned Behavior (1991), henceforward TPB, posits that behavior is shaped by perceived norms and control. The absence of clear AI-use policies limits students’ perceived behavioral control, leaving them reliant on informal sources or peer influence. As Gray & Suri (2019) argue, ethical AI use in education must be supported by transparent governance and actionable guidelines to prevent normalization of academic dishonesty.

A significant number of participants were unaware of specific campus policies. Participant *6* said, “*Belum pernah dijelaskan secara resmi, saya taunya dari teman.*” (It has never been explained officially, I only found out from a friend.). Similarly, Participant *15* noted, “*Saya malah baru tahu kalau ada aturan soal ChatGPT.*” (I just found out that there are rules about ChatGPT). This confusion underscores a Policy Literacy Gap, pointing to a lack of formal orientation, policy access, or examples from instructors. The absence of clear institutional norms contributes to inconsistent behavior and ethical uncertainty.

Many participants felt their institutions had not provided adequate guidance on ethical AI use. Responses ranged from vague policy recollection to complete unawareness of any rules. The *Policy Literacy* and *Institutional Policy Awareness* themes illustrate how unclear institutional messaging fuels confusion and individual interpretation, which may increase the risk of academic misconduct. When asked how they navigated ethical grey areas, students described relying on instinct, asking friends or lecturers, or avoiding AI altogether. These strategies reflect the *Coping and Control* aspect of TPB, indicating an urgent need for structured support systems. Most respondents, including participant 5, noted the lack or vagueness of AI-use guidelines:

"Saya belum pernah tidak yakin [soal batas etika], tapi saya merasa tidak ada aturan jelas." (I've never been unsure [about ethical boundaries], but I feel like there are no clear rules.)

This confusion limited their confidence in decision-making:

Participant *11* : *“Tidak ada panduan formal, jadi kami membuat keputusan sendiri."*

[There are no formal guidelines, so we make our own decisions.].

A major barrier to ethical AI use was a lack of clear institutional policy. Several students mentioned that no official rules or guidance had been provided.

Participant 12 : "No formal rules so far. I think they're still figuring it out."

Participant 14 : "Nothing official. We're left to decide for ourselves."

That many respondents could not clearly articulate institutional rules align with the TPB's concept of perceived behavioral control; if rules are ambiguous, behavior becomes inconsistent. Without clear standards, students are left to rely on personal judgment or peer advice, introducing the risk of unintentional misconduct. This confirms the findings by Eyal and Cohen (2021), who argue that AI ethics education must become a formal curricular concern, AI literacy and policy clarity are essential to guide ethical decision-making in academic settings.

Despite the ambiguity, students demonstrate agency through self-imposed checks and ethical caution. This reflects the coping and self-monitoring mechanisms described by Fishbein & Ajzen (2010), suggesting that fostering internalized ethics, through reflection and discussion, can temper misuse even in the absence of rules. Students who recognized ethical risks tended to self-regulate by checking their use of ChatGPT.

Participant *11* : *"Kalau ragu, saya edit ulang semuanya."*
[If in doubt, I re-edit everything]

Participant *9* : *"Biasanya saya tanyakan dulu ke dosen, boleh atau nggak."*
[Usually, I ask the lecturer first whether it is allowed or not.]

These responses show internal ethical filtering, where students adopt protective strategies to reduce risk, aligning with Perceived Behavioral Control and coping mechanisms under TPB. Students' revision strategies, such as paraphrasing and combining AI output with their own ideas, indicate a form of ethical coping. This reflects both ethical filtering and an internalization of academic values, a sign of developing integrity even in the absence of strict rules. As Zawacki-Richter et al. (2019) noted, the success of AI tools in education depends not only on technical features but also on how well users are prepared to engage critically with them. On a more hopeful note, students' revision and filtering practices suggest emergent ethical coping strategies. As shown in Knowledge of Inquiry frameworks (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2006), these students are not passive consumers but active editors, applying reflective judgment to AI outputs.

This study found that the ethical barriers to using ChatGPT for academic writing are multifaceted and raise significant concerns about the integrity of scholarly work. One primary concern is plagiarism, as ChatGPT generates content based on patterns from its training data that may resemble existing works. Using this generated text without proper attribution can lead to unintentional academic misconduct. Moreover, overreliance on AI-generated content prevents the development of critical thinking and independent analysis, which are essential components of academic rigor. Using ChatGPT also makes it challenging to maintain the authenticity of the researcher's voice because the text produced by the AI may lack the nuanced understanding and personal perspective required for scholarly writing. Additionally, since ChatGPT cannot assess the factual accuracy of its outputs, incorporating incorrect or biased information into academic work may cause its credibility to be compromised. These concerns emphasize the importance of exercising caution when using AI tools in academic writing to maintain the integrity of the research process.

Consistent with Davis (1989), students embrace ChatGPT for its perceived usefulness, particularly in helping initiate and organize writing. However, the ethical dimension complicates this utility, as reflected in Eret & Gokmenoglu's (2010) findings on students' blurred understanding of plagiarism when using digital tools. This cognitive dissonance, valuing efficiency but fearing misconduct, highlights the urgent need for institutional literacy and ethical training. A dominant theme was ethical uncertainty regarding when and how to use ChatGPT responsibly. While students appreciated its utility, they expressed discomfort using it for major content creation. Concerns included plagiarism, erosion of original thought, and misinformation. Several admitted hesitating when the tool seemed to cross ethical boundaries, reflecting ethical dilemma constructs from the Academic Integrity framework.

Practical Barriers in Using ChatGPT for Academic Writing

One of the practical barriers to using ChatGPT for academic writing is its limitation in features and performance with the standard version, which often leads to the recommendation of upgrading to ChatGPT-Pro. The standard version may not provide the level of accuracy or depth needed for complex academic writing tasks. ChatGPT-Pro offers enhanced capabilities, such as faster response times, more reliable outputs, and access to advanced features that improve the quality of content generation. Without upgrading, users may face challenges with the quality and consistency of the content, limiting the tool's effectiveness for in-depth academic research or critical analysis. Therefore, to fully leverage ChatGPT's potential in academic writing, upgrading to the professional version is often necessary to meet the standards of academic rigor and ensure high-quality, accurate outputs.

The practical barrier of limited access to ChatGPT is especially pronounced for students, who typically rely on the free version and thus cannot access the tool's full capabilities. The standard version may not offer the level of accuracy, depth, or nuance required for high-level academic writing. Consequently, students may have difficulty generating high-quality content, especially for complex or intensive research tasks. The ChatGPT Pro version offers advanced features, such as more reliable outputs, faster response times, and better handling of detailed requests. It is often necessary to meet academic standards. However, the cost of upgrading can be a significant barrier for students with limited resources. This limitation prevents them from using the tool to its fullest potential for academic purposes, especially when they need it most for in-depth analysis, precise formatting, and generating credible, well-rounded academic content. Therefore, students face the unique challenge of balancing academic rigor with limited access to advanced AI tools.

Moreover, it is difficult to verify the accuracy of its answers. Although ChatGPT can quickly generate coherent text, the information it provides is based on patterns in its training data, which may not always be accurate or up to date. For students, this makes it challenging to ensure that the content they use is reliable and valid, especially when dealing with complex academic topics that require precise facts, figures, and sources. Without the ability to cross-check or validate ChatGPT's output, students may unintentionally incorporate incorrect or biased information into their work, which could compromise the quality and credibility of their academic writing. The difficulty of verifying the accuracy of AI-generated content underscores the importance of students

carefully assessing and fact-checking information from ChatGPT before incorporating it into their research.

In addition to the challenge of making sure ChatGPT gives the right answers, students also have a hard time with formatting and style issues when using the tool for academic writing. ChatGPT often generates text that doesn't follow the specific rules for formatting academic papers. For example, it might not cite sources correctly using the required style, like APA, MLA, or Chicago. It might also lack the structure needed for research papers, essays, and reports. This inconsistency can lead to time-consuming revisions, as students may need to manually adjust the content to meet their institution's guidelines. Also, the writing produced by ChatGPT might not always meet academic standards. It might not have the appropriate tone, complexity, or rigor expected in scholarly work. When students use ChatGPT to write or generate large parts of their work, these formatting and style problems make it harder for them to produce polished, high-quality academic content. This combination of accuracy, formatting, and style issues makes it hard for students to meet academic standards. They have to put in extra time and effort to make sure their work is good enough.

Most participants used ChatGPT selectively and modified the content. participants affirmed this:

Participant *6* : *"Saya memodifikasi agar sesuai dengan gaya saya dan menambahkan argumen saya sendiri."*
[I modified it to suit my style and added my own arguments.]
Participant *5* : *"50% konten yang diambil dari ChatGPT dimodifikasi sebelum dikirimkan."*
[50% of content taken from ChatGPT is modified before being sent]

Students who used ChatGPT described modifying, paraphrasing, or filtering AI-generated content to match academic expectations and personal voice.

Participant *6* : *"Saya selalu memodifikasinya untuk memastikan bahwa itu selaras dengan suara dan gaya menulis saya."*
[I'm always modifying it to make sure it fits my voice and writing style."]
Participant 14 : "I usually paraphrase the whole thing just to be safe."

In addition to the challenges of making sure the information is correct and dealing with formatting and style issues, students also have to deal with the fact that ChatGPT does not always provide the level of analysis required for academic writing. While the tool can generate text quickly, it often lacks critical depth, nuanced understanding, and sophisticated analysis that are essential for higher-level academic work. This can result in content that is too simple or too general, missing the critical insights and original thinking that academic papers require. Students may need to combine ChatGPT-generated content with their own research and analysis to meet academic requirements.

Also, ChatGPT sometimes repeats information in its responses, which can make the text repetitive. Repetition makes the content less interesting and takes away from the clarity and brevity needed in academic writing. Repetitive content can make it hard for students to keep their arguments organized and may make their work worse. As a result, students may need to carefully review and edit the text to remove phrases that are not needed and ensure that the content is organized and easy to understand. This will require

more time and effort. These limitations show that students should use ChatGPT to help with their academic writing tasks, not as a complete solution.

Participants articulated a need for clearer training, resources, and examples, echoing Venkatesh et al.'s (2003) emphasis on facilitating conditions as a determinant of responsible technology use. Instructor modeling, (Fadillah et. al., 2025), ethics workshops, and contextualized examples could bridge the gap between responsible use and misuse. Respondents consistently called for structured institutional support in the form of clear guidelines, workshops, and access to AI ethics education.

Participant *6* : *"Pedoman dan kebijakan yang jelas dari institusi saya akan sangat membantu untuk memastikan saya menggunakan ChatGPT secara etis."*
[Clear guidelines and policies from my institution would be helpful in ensuring I use ChatGPT ethically.]
Participant *7* : *"Saya berharap ada workshop tentang etika penggunaan AI."*
[I wish there was a workshop on the ethics of using AI.]
Participant 14 : "A course module explaining the boundaries of AI use."

Lastly, the high demand for training, workshops, and concrete examples of responsible AI use reflect students' desire for institutional scaffolding. TAM's *facilitating conditions* emphasizes the role of organizational support in promoting positive attitudes toward new technologies (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

CONCLUSION

Using ChatGPT for academic writing raises ethical and practical concerns. Ethical concerns include the potential for plagiarism, undermining critical thinking, and maintaining research authenticity. These issues are exacerbated by unreliable information, cheating, and unclear institutional policies, all of which complicate the responsible use of ChatGPT. Practical limitations include the need for the professional version (ChatGPT-Pro) to ensure reliable results, difficulty verifying the accuracy of generated content, formatting and style issues, and shallow analysis. Additionally, ChatGPT's tendency to repeat information can detract from the quality of academic work. In conclusion, although ChatGPT offers helpful resources for academic writing, these barriers must be carefully addressed through clear institutional policies and ethical guidelines to ensure its responsible and effective use. The absence of clear institutional policies on AI usage exacerbates this uncertainty, forcing students to rely on peer advice and personal judgment instead of formal guidance.

This gap in policy clarity aligns with Ajzen's (1991) assertion that perceived behavioral control is critical for consistent behavior, as an absence of clear rules contributes to inconsistent adoption practices and ethical decision-making. Despite these challenges, students demonstrated self-regulation and ethical restraint by modifying AI-generated content to align with academic standards and personal integrity. This proactive approach suggests an emerging ethical framework that could be fostered with the right institutional support. Students' demand for clear guidelines, ethics workshops, and structured support reflects their desire for better infrastructure to navigate the evolving landscape of AI-assisted learning. In conclusion, the study underscores the necessity of a comprehensive approach to AI adoption in academic settings, encompassing clearer

policies, ethical training, and institutional support. Addressing these gaps will ensure that students can use ChatGPT and similar tools responsibly, thereby fostering technological literacy and academic integrity.

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