

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study and the formulation of the research question. It is also followed by the purpose of the study, significant of the study, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Research

Learning in higher education continues to evolve, particularly with the integration of digital technology into the academic sphere. In the current era of rapid technological development, digital tools have become an inseparable part of the academic experience for students and educators alike. Among these technological advancements, one of the most prominent innovations in recent years is the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support students' learning processes. The integration of AI into education, especially in the domain of writing, marks a significant shift in how students approach scholarly tasks and how instructors guide the learning process.

AI applications such as Grammarly, Turnitin, and ChatGPT have become increasingly popular, especially in assisting students with academic writing tasks. These tools are widely accessed due to their user-friendly interfaces and real-time feedback features. They offer multiple functionalities that include grammar correction, citation suggestions, and paraphrasing assistance that help improve the quality of students' writing in both form and content. As AI tools become more embedded in academic routines, they serve not only as assistants in editing

but also as platforms for developing and enhancing writing skills in higher education.

At UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, particularly in the *"Academic Writing for Scholarly Publication"* course, the integration of AI tools has become a relevant issue that deserves closer academic attention. This course is designed to train English Master students in developing publishable academic manuscripts that adhere to international standards, which demand originality, academic rigor, and clear scholarly communication. As the students aim to submit their work to peer-reviewed journals, their writing must meet stringent criteria of coherence, accuracy, and methodological soundness. Within this demanding academic landscape, the use of AI tools becomes both a support system and a potential challenge.

Based on preliminary observations and informal interviews with master's students in the English Education Department for the academic years 2023/2024, it was found that more than 80% had used AI tools during the course. This percentage was derived from 15 respondents who filled out the questionnaire and participated in informal interviews, out of a total of 21 students. Due to time constraints, not all students could be involved, so the researcher maximized the available responses and calculated the average based on the data collected. These students came from diverse academic backgrounds but shared a common experience of relying on AI at various stages of their writing process. While many of them benefited from increased writing confidence and improved technical aspects such as grammar refinement, better word choice, and enhanced

cohesion, concerns were also raised regarding originality, dependence on AI, and the risk of academic dishonesty. Some students expressed unease about the possibility that their authentic voice could be diluted or overly shaped by machine suggestions. Others feared that excessive reliance on AI tools might reduce their ability to think critically and independently in academic writing contexts.

From a theoretical standpoint, AI in academic writing is not merely a technical aid but also functions as a cognitive and social tool (Dodigovic, 2007; Russell & Norvig, 2010). Its role intersects with academic literacy and the ethical dimensions of authorship, emphasizing the need for critical engagement and reflective practice when using technology. When students engage with AI, they are not just interacting with software but also participating in a broader discourse surrounding knowledge production, intellectual agency, and digital ethics. Therefore, the integration of AI must be examined not only in terms of its immediate utility but also with regard to its long-term impact on learning autonomy, academic identity, and scholarly responsibility.

Several previous studies support the dual effects of AI in writing. For instance, Nazari et al. (2021) and Kumar and Raman (2022) confirmed that AI enhances clarity and organization in student writing. These findings reinforce the notion that AI has the potential to elevate the structural quality of academic texts and assist students in presenting their arguments more coherently.

In contrast, Garrote Jurado et al. (2023) and Cotton et al. (2023) emphasized that the use of AI may increase the risk of plagiarism and compromise academic

integrity. Their research suggests that, without proper guidance and critical literacy, students might unintentionally misuse AI-generated content, thereby blurring the lines between technological assistance and academic misconduct.

Locally, research by Zulfa (2023), Rahadatul (2023), and Shidiq (2023) explored students' attitudes and general usage of AI tools but did not deeply address publication-level writing or ethical implications. These studies primarily focused on students' functional or emotional responses to AI, rather than examining its academic and cognitive impact in high-stakes writing contexts. While these findings are valuable for understanding user perceptions, they underscore the need for further research into the academic consequences and ethical considerations that arise from AI-assisted scholarly practices.

Most of these previous studies focus on undergraduate students, basic writing tasks, or specific tools like Grammarly. They lack attention to the lived experiences of graduate students striving to publish research and the pedagogical shifts required in Islamic university settings. In the context of graduate study, academic writing is not merely a means of completing assignments but a critical avenue for contributing to disciplinary knowledge. Hence, the stakes are higher, and the expectations are more rigorous. Very few studies explore how students' critical thinking, originality, and ethical reasoning are affected by AI, especially in the context of publication-focused courses that demand high levels of academic integrity and scholarly voice.

Based on this gap, this study investigates how English Master students at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung use AI in their academic writing, the

challenges they face, and their perceptions regarding the impact of AI on the quality and integrity of their work. The study is grounded in a real-world academic setting where students are expected to meet global scholarly standards while also navigating localized institutional and cultural expectations. This research used a phenomenological approach to explore students' real experiences, allowing for a deeper understanding of how AI tools intersect with the learning process, academic identity formation, and ethical awareness.

By documenting these experiences, the study aims to contribute insights into responsible AI integration in writing instruction and offer practical implications for curriculum design and institutional policy. This research not only expand the theoretical discourse on AI as a learning companion but also help educators develop pedagogical strategies that balance technological support with critical thinking and academic authenticity. Furthermore, this study hopes to inspire Islamic higher education institutions to take proactive roles in guiding ethical digital literacy, ensuring that the adoption of AI enriches rather than undermines the scholarly development of students.

B. Formulation Research Questions

1. How do master students at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah utilize AI as a media in writing for academic publication?
2. What challenges do master students encounter when they using AI as a media in writing for academic publication?

3. How do master students perceive the impact of AI on the quality and integrity of their academic works?

C. Purpose of The Research

1. To find out the master students at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah utilize AI as a media in writing for academic publication;
2. To find out the benefits that master students experience from using AI as a media in writing for academic publication;
3. To find out the master students perceive the impact of AI on the quality and integrity of their academic work.

D. Significance of the Research

1. For Students

The results of this study can help students to harness the potential of AI to improve their writing for their academic publication process. By integrating AI, students can streamline their research workflow, improve the quality of their writing, and gain access to advanced features such as grammar checking, content suggestions, and citation management. These tool not only facilitate a more efficient writing process, but also empower students to engage deeply with their subject matter, encouraging critical thinking and creativity. Furthermore, the use of AI can help students navigate the complexities of academic publishing, ensuring that their work meets the necessary standards of quality and integrity. Overall, this research

underscores the importance of AI in equipping students with the skills and resources needed to succeed in today's competitive academic landscape.

2. For Teachers

The results of this study can help teachers because of the role of AI in improving instructional practices and supporting student learning. By integrating AI tool, educators can simplify administrative tasks such as assessment and lesson planning, allowing them to focus more on personalized instruction and student engagement. AI can provide valuable insights into student performance, allowing teachers to customize their teaching strategies to effectively meet individual needs. In addition, AI-based platforms can facilitate the creation of dynamic and interactive learning materials, thus fostering a more engaging classroom environment. This research highlights the potential of AI to not only improve teaching efficiency, but also enhance the overall educational experience, equipping teachers with innovative resources to better support students' academic journeys.

3. For Researcher

This study offers insights into the real-world applications and limitations of AI in academia, providing evidence on AI's effectiveness in academic publishing. This understanding helps researchers evaluate AI's role in scholarly communication, identify ethical concerns, and develop best practices for AI integration in educational settings. Ultimately, this research

can drive forward policies on ethical AI use and foster innovation in academic writing support tools, creating a more supportive environment for both teaching and research.

E. The Definition of Key Term

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the context of education refers to the application of computer-based systems that simulate human cognitive processes such as learning, reasoning, language processing, and self-correction to support academic tasks. These intelligent systems are designed to assist students in acquiring knowledge, organizing ideas, generating text, revising written work, and ensuring academic integrity through tools like grammar checkers, paraphrasers, content generators, and plagiarism detectors. In the context of academic publishing, AI is increasingly utilized to enhance various aspects of writing and research, such as grammar checking, plagiarism detection, and content generation. As noted in a systematic review, AI tools significantly improve productivity in academic writing by providing assistance in areas like structure optimization and citation management, thereby transforming traditional methodologies in scholarly work (Rabbianty et al., 2023).

2. Media Tool

A media tool refers to any technology or platform used to create, distribute, or display content. In academic publishing, media tools

encompass software applications that assist in the writing, editing, and dissemination of research outputs. These tools can range from word processors with advanced editing features to specialized platforms for managing citations and peer reviews. The integration of AI as a media tool in academic publishing allows for automation of routine tasks, thus enabling researchers to focus on more complex analytical tasks. According to recent studies, AI-driven media tools facilitate efficient data management and improve the overall quality of academic publications by streamlining the writing process (Lamba et al., 2024).

3. Academic Publication

Academic publication refers to the process of disseminating scholarly work through various formats such as journals, books, or conference proceedings. This process is crucial for sharing research findings with the broader academic community and contributing to the advancement of knowledge across disciplines. The traditional academic publishing landscape is characterized by rigorous peer review processes and editorial oversight; however, AI is beginning to reshape this landscape by enhancing efficiency and accessibility. Research indicates that AI can automate initial checks for formatting and plagiarism, thereby relieving editors of mundane tasks and allowing them to concentrate on more substantive evaluations of research quality (Riaz, 2024).