Towards the Use of Artificial Intelligence (ChatGPT) in Higher Education: Students' Perspective

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Abstract

The paper deals with the issue of AI, in particular ChatGPT used for various purposes during the academic process, in higher education from the standpoint of students' perception of the phenomenon in question. Nowadays, we live in the era of internet technologies which interfere with all aspects of human life; education is no exception. Today the use of technology is greatly supported to improve and support innovative teaching and learning, and it is undeniable that AI is bringing changes to the teaching and learning process. However, the question is whether those technological advances, in particular, ChatGPT will bring positive changes and enhance students' learning skills. Besides, when discussing the intensive use of technologies in different spheres of human life, usually, ethical issues usually come into the spotlight. Therefore, the paper aimed to identify the frequency and intensity of addressing ChatGPT for different purposes by the undergraduate students at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, their perception of the tool in terms of academic honesty and integrity, and the university's role in raising awareness about the possible implications of breaching academic ethics through the survey questionnaire circulated among the target audiences. The obtained results demonstrated students' considerable reliance on AI (Chat GPT) -assisted learning in Higher Education despite admitting its potential for Academic Dishonesty. The study also revealed the practical necessity for more informed discussion and refocus on the concepts of Academic Ethics among the stakeholders of the University to regulate the use of ChatGPT-generated content in education.

Keywords: ChatGPT, education, academic honesty, AI ethics, educational technology.

1. Introduction

The 21st century can be considered as the era of technological progress. Over the last decade, an array of technological advancements, such as artificial intelligence (AI), has emerged, resulting in an unprecedented boom in AI-powered technologies that have become easily available to a wide spectrum of people. AI has been intensively used in all spheres, and education has been no exception. AI claims to offer great assistance to both learners and educators in facilitating them with grading, essay writing, completing assignments, and many other tasks. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to consider its impact on the education system, in particular, how it can help or prevent people from gaining knowledge and developing necessary study skills. One thing is obvious, the introduction of AI is on its way to interfering with the whole learning process.

On November 30, 2022, the Artificial Intelligence agency – Open AI launched an AI chatbot – ChatGPT (Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer). Ever since its introduction, the tool has rapidly gathered media attention and become the most popular

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tool all around the world. The popularity can be attributed to its ability to mimic human-like communication with the end-user and its versatility, the wide range of functions that it offers, ranging from email writing to essay composition. The AI tool has demonstrated unparalleled potential to write full texts of various genres like a human, based only on a straightforward prompt (Crcek & Patekar, 2023; Schonberger, 2023). According to a survey study conducted by BestColleges (United States), 43% of students reported having used ChatGPT or other AI chatbots before and half of them admitted to having used AI to assist them with schoolwork or exams (Farhi et al., 2023). As stated by Sam Altman, OpenAI CEO, this company is currently working on a new software upgrade ChatGPT5 which will bring it to the point when the tool will be indistinguishable from a human (Shah, 2023).

Not surprisingly, the use of AI-generated content for multiple purposes mostly through ChatGPT has already become popular among the students of many countries, and Georgia is no exception. Having taught English for academic purposes at Tbilisi State University, Georgia for over a decade, we have just recently witnessed some students using ChatGPT in their writing classes, specifically for composing different types of essays. Within these classes, one of the primary objectives for us, instructors, is to teach our students as effectively as possible and develop their productive skills, such as speaking and writing through triggering creativity and critical thinking. The use of ChatGPT, however, makes us ponder about the whole teaching process and to what extent this AI tool (ChatGPT) will impact students' ultimate performance, their pragmatic fluency, and their ability to comply with academic ethics.

2. Literature Review

2.1. What is ChatGPT and How to Use it in Higher Education

Chat GPT - Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer can be defined as an artificial intelligence-driven chatbot tool that produces information per the user's request in an interactive chat interface (UNESCO, 2023). It is a powerful and extremely diverse tool that can perform a wide range of functions like writing emails, stories, papers, and much more. Though it was launched only recently, it gained 100 million users by January 2023 thanks to its versatility and simplicity to use (Farhi et al., 2023). As stated by Shahriar and Hayawi (2024), ChatGPT remains the top AI chatbot despite Google and Meta having also introduced their language models.

The tool can be accessed by visiting chat.openai.com and creating an Open AI account by using a mail address or a Google or Microsoft account. It is free. After successful registration, you will sign in. Before you can chat with the AI chatbot there may appear a few disclaimers that need to be read and accepted to enter the chat. You can obtain a response to any question; in other words, the possibilities are endless. One can simply type in any ChatGPT prompts in the text bar at the bottom of the page and click on the submit button. AI chatbot will generate a response quickly as ChatGPT is trained to provide detailed responses to instructions in a prompt (Singh, et al., 2023). The answer can be something as complex as a whole essay.

It is a fact well acknowledged that mastering productive skills, such as speaking and writing, within an academic context, remains one of the most challenging aspects for students while acquiring a language. Therefore, to seek assistance, students worldwide are increasingly using AI technologies to simplify and facilitate their learning processes, as these tools can offer support in various aspects.

Even though AI use in language education has emerged only recently, some scholars have already provided comprehensive studies on its application in education for various purposes. Initially, it should be highlighted that AI tools offer language learners cost-effective resources. Moreover, students can learn a language with the assistance of AI tools without limitations in time and place (Juanda, 2024). In addition, AI can be considered as a tool with the potential to assist language learners in processing language in a more structured way (Gonzalez-Lloret, 2023).

Furthermore, research has shown that AI can provide meaningful conversations (Lu, 2018), enhance speaking performance, and reading comprehension (El Shazly, 2020; Yin et al., 2021), and increase students' motivation (Bailey et al., 2021). According to Kemelbekova et al., (2024), artificial intelligence tools contribute to the development of oral communication skills and can engage students in interactive speaking practice as well as evaluate their pronunciation.

It is noteworthy that artificial intelligence can offer customized learning to both students and instructors by personalizing instructions, which may be handy for grasping the content faster and more effectively (Baker et al., 2019). As noted in the article by Kemelbekova et al., (2024), John McCarthy, a famous scientist in artificial intelligence, believes the tool can create a friendly and relaxed learning environment and offer individualized attention to each student. Furthermore, AI assists people with disabilities to learn languages with voice and text-based tools, thus offering more inclusive educational opportunities (Juanda, 2024).

Eventually, AI tools are quite commonly used as writing assistants. They can act as teachers and engage in conversation with students, thus assisting them in the process of writing (Frazier et al., 2020). The AI tool can boost students' self-confidence in writing by offering them grammar and spelling corrections and translations. Furthermore, students can use it to generate ideas or search for suggestions on how to further refine and improve their writing style (Cotton et al., 2023).

2.2. Challenges Facing Use of ChatGPT

However, even though the tool can perform a wide variety of tasks, there are still some limitations as well as potential harms and certain implications of academic dishonesty. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for everyone within the educational system to be aware of the possible cons and shortcomings that might ultimately hinder the implementation of student learning outcomes adequately. There have been several studies focusing on ChatGPT usage in higher education, emphasizing the main ethical concerns about its use in different fields (Kasneci et al., 2023). In addition, Lund et al. (2023) discuss the possible impact of AI on higher educational institutions and people engaged in the academic process. However, most of the studies emphasize specific regions and institutions.

Furthermore, considering the urgency of the topic, little is known about the impact that the use of ChatGPT will have on students in the long term. On the one hand, ChatGPT can be considered a mighty tool that can assist students in successfully performing assigned tasks at any time upon request. On the other hand, there is a rising concern that both teachers and students will eventually become overly dependent on AI-driven technology (Bailey, 2023). As a result, blind reliance on AI tools can limit critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Rahman & Watanobe, 2023). ChatGPT would rob them not only of critical thinking, but motivation and creativity as well and eventually lead to academic dishonesty.

As previously mentioned, even though ChatGPT seems to simplify various tasks and assist human beings, it can also pose certain risks. Therefore, the governments of several countries (Russia, China, North Korea, Cuba, Iran, Syria, and Italy) have blocked ChatGPT based on privacy concerns, while others have claimed that the US would use it to spread misinformation (Martindale, 2023). In addition to country-wide blockage, some universities all over the world have autonomously banned it due to their noncompliance with academic ethics. Some scholars (Qadir, 2022) are concerned with the ethical issues of ChatGPT usage. The major concerns expressed towards ChatGPT in higher education have been the increased risk of plagiarism and cheating if students make ChatGPT perform different tasks for them (Cotton et al, 2023; Eysenbach, 2023). What complicates the issue even more is the fact that there is not a single tool that can detect plagiarism effectively (UNESCO, 2023).

Another concern being addressed by the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI (2023) is the fact that the use of ChatGPT is not currently regulated. Neither is it governed by moral principles which means that it is unable to distinguish between what is

right and wrong, to identify whether something is true or false. ChatGPT can only collect all the existing information from various databases and texts. Correspondingly, it is vital to be aware of the procedure and critically analyze the obtained information (UNESCO, 2023).

2.3. UNESCO Recommendations for Creative and Effective Use of ChatGPT

After having a look at the disadvantages of ChatGPT, it can be seen that the usage of ChatGPT requires care and creativity to ensure its ethical and appropriate use. There exist challenges concerning AI literacy in education and language learning in terms of inadequacies in curriculum design and a shortage of established teaching guidelines (Su et al., 2023). Currently, there is an attempt to thoroughly investigate potential risks and elaborate a protocol (UNESCO, 2023); however, already suggested recommendations by UNESCO (2023) listed below, can also be landscape-changing if considered and applied:

1. The higher educational institution faculty, staff, and students should be encouraged to discuss the impact of ChatGPT on higher educational institutions and work together to construct strategies to adapt and adopt to ChatGPT;

2. Clear guidelines have to be introduced for students and instructors about how to use ChatGPT. The guidelines should be negotiated;

3. It is important to review and update policies related to academic honesty/plagiarism and cheating concerning ChatGPT;

4. According to Perkins (2023), higher educational institutions should update academic integrity policies accordingly and consider the usage of AI tools;

5. Connect the use of ChatGPT to course learning outcomes;

6. Review the forms of assessment and evaluation by taking into consideration the use of ChatGPT and its impact on grading components (Office of Educational Technology, 2023);

7. Teach students and instructors how to better formulate their queries to get the most from ChatGPT.

2.4. Research Gap and Objectives

Through the review of the above studies, we can observe that nowadays, the use of artificial intelligence and, in particular ChatGPT, for educational purposes in higher educational institutions (HEIs) has become a topic of debate and concern. Despite the abundance of studies on AI technology in higher education, all these studies are based on and highlight specific regions. Currently, there is little research done on the application of ChatGPT in higher educational institutions in Georgia which would provide a revealing insight into the ethical frontiers of using AI for different purposes. Thus, the current study attempts to fill this gap and examine the use of ChatGPT in HEIs in Georgia from the students' perspective initially.

Accordingly, the purpose of this paper is to investigate and observe the frequency of using ChatGPT for different purposes by Georgian students, their opinion of the tool within the context of academic honesty, and the teachers' role in this process.
We reckon that the findings of the study that was conducted among the undergraduate students of Tbilisi State University will be especially meaningful for the higher education community in Georgia (students, lecturers, and university policymakers) as ChatGPT most likely is not going anywhere; on the opposite, it promises to create the tools that will have the capability to think and function like real human beings. Therefore, our society needs to be aware of its impact on students' learning objectives and outcomes and the ways to effectively and appropriately handle it.

3. Methodology

3.1. Methods

At the initial stage, the empirical data for the present study were collected by applying quantitative research methodology, specifically, survey questionnaires; however, at the data analysis stage, qualitative research was also embedded as the study aims to provide not only the numerical data but also accentuate the hypothesized relations between different variables and patterns. A convenience sampling method was used to select respondents based on their willingness and availability to participate. The sample consisted of 72 participants selected from a targeted population of about 681. They were students of Tbilisi State University who had enrolled in different undergraduate programs at the state university based on the unified NAEC (National Assessment and Examination Centre) exam within the years 2020-2023.

To describe the teaching-learning background of the Undergraduate Programs at Tbilisi State University, EFL students have to take either General English with a focus on the four conventional language skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing or English for academic purposes specifically for students majoring in English Philology including such aspects of English as phonetics, analytical reading, grammar, text Interpretation, speaking, legal English, business English, language of newspaper, FCE, and writing. Most of those courses are focused on practical aspects, where students have to show weekly engagement in class activities, critically analyze and synthesize written arguments or literary pieces, prepare presentations, participate in class discussions, and debates, and write different types of essays (comparative, analytical, explanatory, argumentative etc.,) as assignments, etc.; in other words, they have to produce a certain kind of written or verbal assignment in various forms. So, through the survey, the students were asked to think about using the ChatGPT tool at any stage during those classes.

3.2. Research Design and Procedure

This study was conducted based on an adopted survey research design. The survey consisted of 12 questions most of them being multiple choice, the options for which had carefully been determined according to the research needs. Alongside the questions meant to obtain a general profile of the survey participants, such as their year of study, specialty, and GPA, there were 2 open-ended questions included too, mostly to collect additional details about the students' perspectives and rationale. The questions were focused on identifying whether students have ever heard about the ChatGPT to estimate the awareness level among TSU students, how intensively/rarely they use the tool, and how helpful it is for their academic success. Besides, several questions were focused on ChatGPT's ethical implications, i.e. whether they consider it to be ethical/unethical, if yes, to what extent and for what reasons. In this regard, there were two more questions oriented on the instructors' role in educating the students about the possible ethical issues with using ChatGPT in the learning process: first, if the instructors had ever mentioned this point during their classes and would the students still use it if the instructor did not allow them to do so.

The survey questionnaire was prepared in Google Forms to circulate among the target groups. The respondents were told in advance that this was an anonymous survey in which their privacy would be preserved, so they were asked to provide honest answers. The survey was distributed among the groups of students online from January through February 2024.

3.3. Limitation

It is noteworthy that using a questionnaire as a data-collection instrument means that we exclusively relied on students' answers. Even though the survey was anonymous and they had been informed in advance about its anonymity, there was still a certain

probability that students might not have been honest in their answers because of not feeling safe while giving answers. Other limitations of the study can be considered the sampling technique and the relatively small number of participants. The sample size, consisting of 72 student respondents, might not represent the opinion of all TSU students since students were free to choose whether to participate or not in the given survey which might increase the research bias. Additionally, we reckon that to make specific policy changes in the Higher education system, more large-scale research is needed which is not feasible for individual researchers to conduct due to several reasons. Yet, despite the mentioned limitations, we do believe that our study provides valuable findings in determining general tendencies and landscape which would lead to a more systematic study in the future.

3.4. Results and Analysis

The Google form questionnaire was distributed via social media groups and messenger chats among TSU students. It was filled in with a total of 72 students. The data in Tables 1, 2, and 3 below show the demographic characteristics (year of study, major, and GPA) of the participants.

The students who participated in the survey represented all four academic years more or less evenly. Out of 72 students engaged in the survey, 14.9% (n=10) were freshmen, 26.4% (n=19) sophomores, 34.7% (n=25) juniors and 25% (n=18) seniors (Table 1). In addition, the respondents engaged in the survey had different majors: English Philology (58.3%, n=42), Georgian Philology (1.3%, n=1), American Studies (8.3%, n=6), Arabic Studies (1.3%, n=1), Psychology (4.2%, n=3), Philosophy (1.3%, n=1), Chemistry (12.5%, n=9), History (1.3%, n=1), Visual Arts (2.7%, n=2), Law (5.6%, n=4), Economics (1.3%, n=1) and there was only one student who had not specified the major (Table 2). The questionnaire also asked them to reflect on their academic performance. The majority of the respondents (47.2%, n-34) had a good GPA (above 3), 40.2% (n=29) had an average and only a very small number (2.8%, n=2) had GPA below 2. Seven respondents (9.8) have not answered this question.

Table 1. Participants' year of study

Year of Study	Number	Percentage %
First-year	10	14.9
Second year	19	26.4
Third year	25	34.7
Fourth-year	18	25

Table 2. Students' major

Major	Number	Percentage %
English Philology	42	58.3
Georgian Philology	1	1.3
American Studies	6	8.3
Arabic Studies	1	1.3
Psychology	3	4.2
Philosophy	1	1.3
Chemistry	9	12.5
History	1	1.3
Visual Arts	2	2.7
Law	4	5.6
Economics	1	1.3
Has not specified	1	1.3

Table 3. Participants' GPA

| GPA	Number	Percentage %
Above 3	34	47.2
2-3	29	40.2
Below 2	2	2.8
Has not specified	7	9.8

To better understand the participants' awareness of ChatGPT, they were asked if they had ever heard about ChatGPT. As can be observed from the pie chart below, the majority of the students (95.8%, n=69) have provided a positive answer to the question of whether they have ever heard of ChatGPT (Figure 1). Only 3 (4.2%) students were not familiar with the word and had encountered it for the first time.

**Figure 1. Familiarity with ChatGPT**
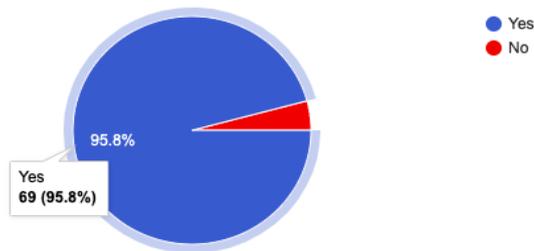
Furthermore, the research participants were asked whether they have used ChatGPT, and again the majority of the respondents (70.8%, n=51) admitted to having used ChatGPT, 23.6% (n=17) stated not to have used the AI tool, and for a minor part (5.6%, n=4) the question was not applicable (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Having used ChatGPT
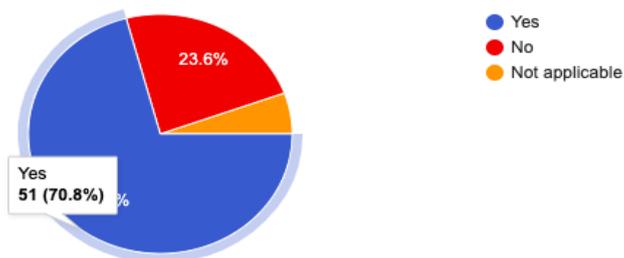
In addition, the students had to reflect on the frequency of ChatGPT usage. As it turned out, most of the students (50%, n-36) have used ChatGPT sometimes, 22.2% (n=16) claim to have used ChatGPT rarely, another 22.2% (n=16) state that they have never attempted to use ChatGPT for any reason and only 4 respondents (5.6 %) confessed having used ChatGPT almost always (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Frequency of ChatGPT usage
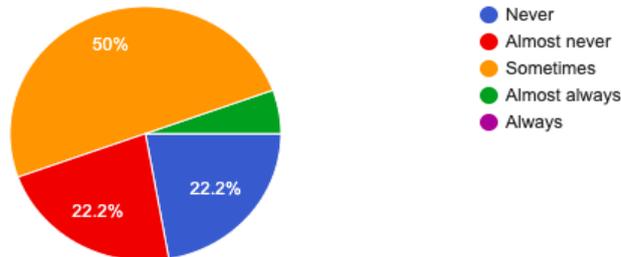
The second part of the survey scrutinizes students' perceptions of the usefulness of the AI tool and the ethicality of its usage. Most of the participants (43.1%, n=31) consider ChatGPT a useful tool assisting them in the teaching process. 22.2% (n=16) cannot provide an answer to this question, 19.4% (n=14) consider it neither helpful nor unhelpful and 15.3% (n=11) consider it very helpful (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Helpfulness of ChatGPT
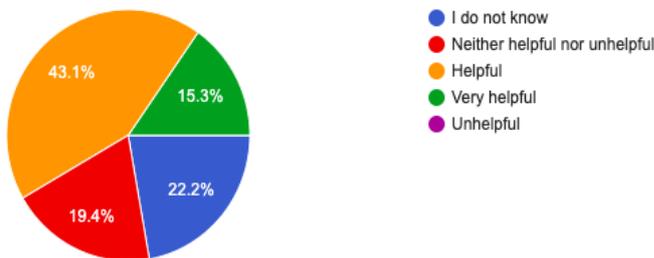
Moreover, the survey tried to identify whether the instructors emphasized the use of ChatGPT while discussing academic dishonesty at any stage of the class. The major part, 32 students (44. 4%) do not remember such a case, 21 students (29.2%) admitted that their instructors have not mentioned it and 19 students (26.4%) remember the issue being discussed (Figure 5).

**Figure 5. Instructors highlighting ChatGPT usage while discussing academic dishonesty**
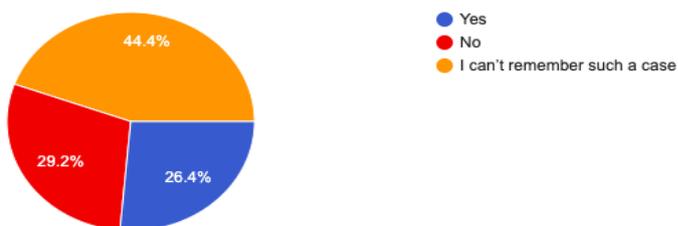
Even though the students are not reluctant to use ChatGPT for various tasks, the survey showed that most of them consider the action as some form of academic dishonesty. The data in the pie chart below (Figure 6) illustrates the obtained results. The majority of the respondents (41.7%, n=31) have not decided yet whether to consider the use of ChatGPT as academic dishonesty or not, for 37.5% (n=27) it is academic dishonesty, 15.3 % (n=10) disagree with the statement. Eventually, only a minor part (2.7, n=2) strongly agree and strongly disagree with the statement.

Figure 6. Using ChatGPT is academic dishonesty
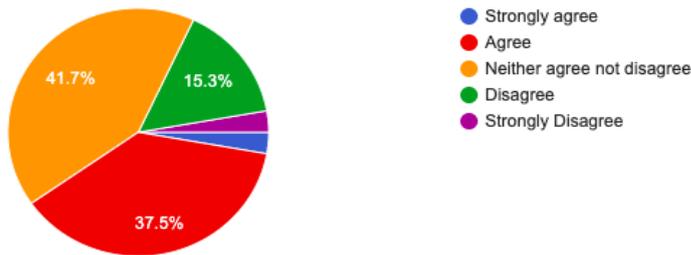
The respondents also reflected on how ethical the use of chatGPT in education is. 28 students (38.9%) do not know the answer to the given question, whereas 26 students (36.1%) claim it to be ethical and 18 students (25%) consider it unethical to use ChatGPT in education (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Is it ethical to use ChatGPT?
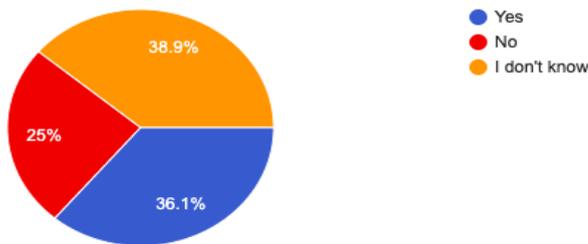
The survey has revealed that the respondents' concerns about the ethical issue of using ChatGPT mainly emphasize four main directions: cheating and plagiarism; overdependence; inaccuracy; and hindering personal development (Table 4).

Table 4. Ethical issues with using ChatGPT

Cheating and plagiarism	Overdependence;	Inaccuracy	Hindering personal development
Plagiarism, I think it is very unethical;	Person's dependence on it;	It may generate information that is inaccurate or outdated, which could	People can stop working on themselves and even stop thinking;

		contribute to the spread of misinformation;	
Lie and give someone's (ChatGBT) work as yours; Some students use ChatGPT and still get credit; Makes our work more dishonest; Probably plagiarism; Privacy violations, copyright infringement, cheating; Dishonesty and lying to oneself; Unfair to receive good feedback from the teacher or professor when half of your work is not done by you;	It could be addictive for most of the students.	It does not provide all the information.	No one will study and use it to do their homework.

Finally, they had to reflect on whether they would use ChatGPT if it was banned by the instructor, a vast number of students (62.5%, n=45) stated that they would not. 13 students (18.1%) do not know how they will act, 10 students (13.9%) imply that it depends on the strictness of the penalty and only 4 students out of the surveyed 72 (5.6%) think that they will still use it no matter what the penalty is (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Using ChatGPT despite it being banned
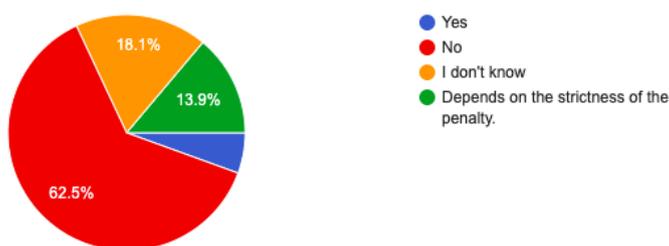
3.5. Discussion

The results of the study provide valuable insight into students' use of AI chatbot and their attitude towards ChatGPT. With this research, initially, we aimed to identify the prevalence of ChatGPT usage by TSU undergraduate students of various years of study, majors, and academic performance. The demographic characteristics of the respondents showed that the target group more or less equally represented all four academic years (Table 1). We also attempted to include students of different majors (table 2). As for the academic performance of the respondents being engaged in the survey, most of them had either high (above 3- 47.2%) or average GPA (2-3- 40%). When we compared the answers provided by the students of different demographic backgrounds

(year of study, major, and GPA), we did not find any significant difference between the way they answered questions. The data analysis has revealed that almost all respondents (95.8%, n=69) (students of various demographic characteristics) were familiar with ChatGPT and have attempted to use it (70.8%, n=51). This suggests that irrespective of their background they know and attempt to use technological advancement. Moreover, we assume that the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in moving from face-to-face to online learning (mainly via Zoom) increased students' over-reliance on digital tools during the teaching process. Correspondingly, the AI chatbot which appeared shortly after the pandemic surely grabbed the students' attention and they were and are open to using it.

Furthermore, the conducted survey revealed that ChatGPT has been used with different levels of frequency (sometimes, almost always and almost never) by the vast majority (70.8%) of students irrespective of their year of study. This indicates that they are not only familiar with ChatGPT, but also use it for different purposes. In addition, it should be noted that most of the students engaged in the study had either a high or average GPA (87.4%, n=63). This can be attributed to the fact that the use of AI technologies in education might increase GPA as students use AI tools (ChatGPT) to assist them in various homework assignments and tasks. It is noteworthy that a higher GPA, in this case, cannot be considered a direct indication that ChatGPT boosts students' knowledge and skills, but rather, they might have managed to trick their instructors and the grading system. In this regard, another significant finding should be taken into consideration as well; specifically, the obtained data also demonstrated the students' tendency to enthusiastically and openly address ChatGPT while accomplishing a variety of tasks and their perception of its usefulness in assisting their learning. As the results conveyed, the majority (58.4 %, n=42) of students find the tool either helpful (43.1%, n=31) or very helpful (15.3%, n=11) whereas none of the participants consider it unhelpful (Figure 4). This information suggests that students have mostly had positive experiences with ChatGPT use so far, which, in turn, indicates the high probability of confidently reusing the tool and relying on its productivity in the future too. However, certain points are still unclear and invite further research: what exactly they mean by the word "helpful" and how the semantics of the word is related to students' successful completion of a specific course; in other words, to what extent the use of ChatGPT can "help" them pass the course.

Moreover, the survey provided interesting findings concerning whether the students consider the usage of ChatGPT as academic dishonesty. Even though the majority of the students considered ChatGPT to be a useful tool, the conducted study has revealed that out of the surveyed 72 students, 29 respondents (39.7%) consider the use of ChatGPT as academic dishonesty and 31 respondents (42.5%) neither agree nor disagree. The significant finding is the correlation between their attitude towards ChatGPT and the usage of the AI tool. From 29 respondents who considered the use of ChatGPT as academic dishonesty, 19 students (65.5%) still use ChatGPT, and only 10 students (34.5%) stated that they are not using it. As for the students who neither agree nor disagree, the vast majority, 24 respondents (77.4%) claim to use chatGPT with various frequencies and only 7 students (22.6%) have not used it. The data analysis might suggest that students' understanding of the notion of academic dishonesty is not consistent enough and more discussions are needed to foster their awareness about the clear meaning of it.

The data analysis also showed another major supposition that there might be a link between a systematic use of ChatGPT by the students and their educators' role in preventing or at least reducing its use. As the data suggest, out of 44 participants who regularly use ChatGPT to boost their performance, 33(75%) students claim that their instructors either have not mentioned ChatGPT's noncompliance with the ethical standards of academia or have not accentuated the point properly. This is an important finding since we can argue that some kind of emphasis on the strong connection between AI use in higher education and academic dishonesty can reduce such cases.

On the other hand, the data also suggests that in 55 (76%) cases, the instructors have not even mentioned or highlighted any ethical implications of using such a tool for different purposes which prompts us to speculate about the necessity of researching instructors' perspectives and awareness of the topic, especially when in many leading universities around the world one of the recommendations for reducing the increasing misuse of AI in education is suggested to have open and active discussions with students about the matter (UNESCO (2023).

In this regard, the study also revealed another significant finding about students' readiness and desire to comply with the academic standards and obey the universities' hypothesized initiatives to formally consider the use of ChatGPT as a form of plagiarism. As the data in Figure 7 shows, the majority of students (62.5%, n=45) are ready to stop using it if the university formally bans its use. This finding can logically justify the supposition discussed in the previous paragraph; however, with one noteworthy condition: considering that 18.1% (n=13) of students do not know how they would act in this scenario, and 13.9 % (n=10) might still be using it if the penalty would not be decently strict, the following conclusion can be drawn: the use of ChatGPT has been prevalent within TSU students to such an extent that only verbal communication about its potential risks might not be enough and the university policymakers should consider adding the note under the section of Academic Ethics on different program syllabi.

4.   Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, as the purpose of this study was to research the frequency of using ChatGPT by Georgian students, find out their perspective on the tool within the context of academics, and identify the teachers' role in this process, the substantial study of the TSU students' opinions, allows us to make the following inferences:

1. There might be a link between a student's higher GPA and his/her intensive use of ChatGPT for different purposes in Higher Education which could be the subject of further research.

2. The data also contributes to our predictions about the high probability of using ChatGPT in higher education even more extensively and confidently in the future, which might be a good reason for conducting more systematic and expanded research on different aspects of the educational discourse.

3. The findings also indicate that more effort is needed to foster students' awareness of the principles and notions beyond academic honesty and integrity because their answers to the survey questions have demonstrated inconsistent and contradictory nuances in their understanding of the concept.

4. Furthermore, as the study revealed, the instructors of specific courses can have a decisive role in discouraging the students from dishonestly using ChatGPT to assist their learning process which, in turn, highlights the need to further research instructors' perspectives and awareness of the topic. Finally, as the study showed, the use of ChatGPT has been prevalent among TSU students to such an extent that only verbalizing its implied risks with academic ethics, specifically, academic honesty and plagiarism might not be enough and the university policymakers should consider including it in the curriculum in any form.

The study also attempted to take a look into the potential reasons affecting the increasing use of AI in education; however, as it was not our primary research objective, further studies could add up to the information substantially. So far, as the research has shown, the factors conditioning the students' increasing use and over-reliance on applying digital tools, specifically ChatGPT in higher education can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic which, alongside many other aspects of human life significantly altered the specificities of the learning-teaching process in Higher Educational Institutions in general.

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