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# Welcoming or banning ChatGPT in Higher Education: Insights from Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines

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## ABSTRACT

The advent of artificial intelligence generative tools, specifically ChatGPT, has revolutionized the academic community, highlighting its positive contribution to both students and teachers. However, teachers have raised a lot of concerns, including ethical issues and academic integrity. This paper aims to explore the views and recommendations of professors on the use of ChatGPT by students in higher education. Using phenomenography, 22 professors in higher education from Malaysia (6), Indonesia (5), and the Philippines (11) willingly participated in the Key Informant Interviews (KII). Results revealed that the professors' views were divided into negative impacts (technology dependence and ethical problems) and positive contributions (user's convenience and enhancement of writing content). Moreover, they recommended (1) training on the proper use of ChatGPT and (2) protocols for using ChatGPT. The views and recommendations of the professors showed the inevitability of ChatGPT's use in higher education. Hence, the need for policies and guidance is also foreseeable and should be in place to guide and deter any ethical problems.

**Keywords:** academic integrity, artificial intelligence, education, technology

## INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) is now getting widespread attention from different sectors, such as business, education, military, agriculture, and other fields or disciplines. While AI development quickly evolves worldwide, especially in first-world countries, the ASEAN region cannot be ignored. Singapore is at the forefront of technological advancement in AI, followed by Indonesia and Malaysia, while the Philippines and other member states are catching up

(Zhao 2024). Moreover, as to the expected value of AI development, based on the Kearney Analysis, Indonesia is pegged at USD 366 billion, Malaysia at USD 115 billion, and the Philippines at USD 92 billion (Putra 2024). However, these developments are also met with several challenges such as the lack of clear strategies and policies (Putra 2024). In education, there has been a clamor for safety nets to protect the integrity of the academe with the proliferation of generative AIs. For instance, several concerns were raised regarding the use of ChatGPT, such as reports from



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Indonesia (Arista et al. 2024; Margono et al. 2024; Mulawarman et al. 2024; Shidarta and Martinelli 2023), Malaysia (Annamalai 2024; Arista et al. 2024; Tang and Chaw 2023), the Philippines (Espartinez 2024; Giray and Aquino 2024; Mabuan 2024; Ventayen 2023), and other ASEAN countries. Unfortunately, little attention is given to addressing or mitigating these technologies' negative impact on the academe.

The impact of generative AI tools in education has captured the attention of school administrators, scientists, and scholars worldwide. Both professors and students are also intrigued by how these tools can significantly impact the learning process, especially writing requirements like research tasks. Indeed, several reports have provided a glimpse into the positive contributions of AI tools, such as enhanced experiential learning (Elbanna and Armstrong 2024; Park and Kim 2025; Rejeb et al. 2024; Salinas-Navarro et al. 2024) and improvement of writing content (Kenwright 2024; Rejeb et al. 2024), particularly research requirements (Huang and Tan 2023; Tang et al. 2023). Hence, ChatGPT has caught global attention, including in Southeast Asian countries, which are considered latecomers in adopting AI in general (Putra 2024; Zhao 2024). This tool is seen as beneficial to society, specifically in the academe, in improving students' learning experience and performance. However, with the use of these AI tools, like ChatGPT, many are worried about their negative effect on academic integrity (Currie et al. 2023; Gammoh 2024; Gill et al. 2024) and about questions of accuracy (Hasanein and Sobaih 2023; Suárez et al. 2024).

Though scholars have reported both the benefits and challenges of ChatGPT (Rejeb et al. 2024; Wise et al. 2024; Zeb et al. 2024), educators are worried about this tool's harmful effect on education. Since academic integrity is a crucial component of education (Chavez 2023), particularly in higher education, where students are expected to do research and publication, the impact of ChatGPT cannot be taken lightly. The use of ChatGPT, for instance, has elicited much controversy as it can lead to cheating (Bin-Nashwan et al. 2023; Zhang et al. 2024) and overdependence on the tool itself (Heung and Chiu 2025; Mogavi et al. 2024). In addition, ChatGPT cannot replace the development of critical thinking skills, which is the essence of student formation (Kirwan 2023). In short, the education sector must address many ethical issues (Eppler et al. 2024; Stahl and Eke 2024) before these AI tools can generate unproductive effects in the academic community.

Specific concerns about plagiarism in AI-generated outputs are also an issue in publication. Journals are setting mechanisms to prevent unacceptable outputs in the realm of publication (Park 2023; Wientroub and Hefti 2023). For example, in a systematic review of the top 300 academic journals on

AI authorship policies, Lund and Naheem (2024) found that more than half have policies for acknowledging AI use, which can be placed in the acknowledgment or methods section. However, these policies also prohibit the inclusion of AI in the authorship list. In other words, AI or ChatGPT is already scrutinized by editors and peer reviewers. At the same time, specific policies evolve regarding how AI can be avoided or maximized.

Despite the apprehensions of some educators about the negative impact of ChatGPT and the aforementioned positive contributions, there are more positive contributions of this tool in the academe, as reported by scholars, such as increased student engagement (Cotton et al. 2023; Heung and Chiu 2025), positive user experience (Abdaljaleel et al. 2024), additional instructional content (Gill et al. 2024), and enhancement of student learning (Kim and Adlof 2024). Nevertheless, since ChatGPT is still considered new, though its utilization has already gained momentum in the academe, it is necessary to continue the discussion and propose more tailored policies and guidelines (Bouriemi et al. 2025). Hence, this paper aims to explore the views of professors in higher education regarding their students using ChatGPT. The findings contribute to the debate on the benefits, drawbacks, and ethical implications of ChatGPT in the academe, particularly in higher education.

### Research Questions

1. What are the views of professors on students in higher education using ChatGPT?
2. What are their recommendations on the use or banning of ChatGPT?

## METHODS

### Research Design

Phenomenography is a qualitative method that focuses on and describes conceptions (Svensson 1981). While the debate continues as to the distinction between Phenomenology and Phenomenography, Cibangu and Hepworth (2016) argued that the latter is an offspring of the former, although Marton (2004) disagreed on this premise. Cibangu and Hepworth (2016) identified three lines of work for Phenomenography, namely, naturalistic Phenomenography, hermeneutic Phenomenography, and phenomenological Phenomenography. This study subscribed to phenomenological Phenomenography, which is more concerned with the phenomenon's essence (Cibangu and Hepworth, 2016). This paper is about the experiences and views of the professors in higher education on students' use of ChatGPT that are being investigated. Phenomenography is the most fitting approach in describing the phenomenon of students using AI tools, particularly ChatGPT, in

colleges and universities. Additionally, Phenomenography looks at the varying experiences of the key informants (Yates et al. 2012), eventually finding a common explanation of the phenomenon. Aside from looking at the individual experiences and views of the professors from Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines, this paper captured the phenomenon through common themes elicited from their responses. While variations were recognized, a common description of the phenomenon is given importance to explain the views of professors on students' use of ChatGPT.

### Study Informants and Sample

There were 22 professors in higher education, with details as shown in Table 1, distributed as follows: Malaysia (6), Indonesia (5), and the Philippines (11). The term professor is operationally defined in this study as those with the rank of either assistant professor, associate professor, or professor teaching in higher education, meaning colleges or universities. Due to the nature of the inquiry, the researchers used purposive sampling. The informants were considered

qualified based on the following criteria: (a) They must be teaching in higher education, either undergraduate or graduate level, or both levels; (b) They have been teaching in higher education for at least three years; (c) They are familiar with ChatGPT and its usage; and (d) They can speak and understand the English language. First, the selection of informants from higher education was to capture the phenomenon and the proliferation of AI tools, like ChatGPT, in higher education (Ansari et al. 2024; Wang et al. 2024) and how institutions and teachers react. In addition, research requirements are more rigid in higher education, especially at the graduate or post-graduate level. Second, the respondents must have been teaching in higher education for a good number of years to be credible to share their views on the phenomenon. Third, since the study focuses only on one AI tool, ChatGPT, they must have experienced or be familiar with it to explain well and share their experience with students using it. Lastly, speaking and understanding English were necessary to gain valid and smooth communication between the interviewee and interviewer.

**Table 1.** Profile of the key informants (KI). NA – not available; TE- Teaching experience in years; F – female, M – male.

Code	Age	TE (y)	Sex	Country	Discipline	Highest Position held
KI 1	75	49	F	Philippines	Education	School Vice President
KI 2	76	54	F	Philippines	Business	School Vice President
KI 3	45	15	M	Philippines	Mathematics	Graduate School Dean
KI 4	55	33	F	Philippines	Applied Linguistics	Research Coordinator
KI 5	45	25	F	Philippines	Early Childhood	Graduate School Dean
KI 6	51	25	F	Philippines	Education	College Dean
KI 7	59	28	F	Philippines	Education	College Dean
KI 8	68	11	F	Philippines	Education	School Vice President
KI 9	55	30	M	Philippines	Education	School Vice President
KI 10	47	NA	F	Philippines	Elementary Education	Dean
KI 11	NA	NA	F	Philippines	Agricultural Plant Science	Research Director
KI 12	62	34	M	Indonesia	Education	Associate Professor
KI 13	36	13	F	Indonesia	Economics	Laboratory Head
KI 14	NA	15	F	Indonesia	Literature	Academic Coordinator
KI 15	62	40	F	Indonesia	Educational Technology	Associate Professor
KI 16	60	36	F	Indonesia	International Relations	Senior Lecturer
KI 17	61	12	F	Malaysia	Environmental Education	Department Head
KI 18	52	31	F	Malaysia	Education	Course Coordinator
KI 19	58	33	F	Malaysia	Education	Chair of Education
KI 20	52	20	F	Malaysia	Education	Department Head
KI 21	44	20	F	Malaysia	Chinese Studies	Head Digital Education
KI 22	50	30	F	Malaysia	English Studies	Course Coordinator

### Data Collection

Data collection was done by the researchers simultaneously for their assigned countries from 12 January to 16 March 2024. Data were collected through Key Informant Interviews (KII) using an interview protocol validated by three experts. Interviews were conducted via teleconference or video call or face-to-face. Teleconferencing is acceptable,

given its practicality and technicality (Weller 2017). It is also pragmatic because the key informants came from Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines and were more accessible through the use of technology. Additionally, video conferencing in qualitative research allows researchers access to transnational informants while ensuring safety and saving financial resources (Khan and MacEachen 2022). There were

instances when the researchers conducted interviews through chat and followed-up with video calls at the informant's convenience. Moreover, some face-to-face interviews were conducted in the Philippines and Malaysia. Each interview lasted 30 to 45 minutes, consistent with what was specified in the content of the invitation letter, although there were instances when a few interviews did not reach 30 minutes, particularly the teleconferences. English was the language used, and informants from the three countries were chosen based on their capability to speak and understand the language. Initial data were gathered from those who were interviewed first. After the analysis, the data appeared to be revolving around the same themes; hence, the collection of data was halted in March 2024. Intended additional interviews for Malaysians and Indonesians were not pursued as the number of informants had already reached the range of 5–25, as suggested by Creswell (1998).

### Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The researchers followed Colaizzi's (1978) seven steps to analyze qualitative data. First, each transcript of the interviews was read and re-read for the researchers to get an idea of the informants' views. Second, significant statements were extracted from the transcripts. Third, the meaning was formulated for each significant statement. Fourth, formulated meanings were grouped to create categories or clusters of themes. Then, these clusters of themes were analyzed and grouped according to emerging themes, which were the final themes. Fifth, using the emerging themes, an exhaustive description of the phenomenon was written, supported by selected actual responses from the informants. Sixth, a description of the fundamental structure of the phenomenon was created. Seventh, the findings were sent to the informants for validation to ensure the researchers' analysis was consistent with the description of the phenomenon under study. They were asked to sign the validation form. In addition, the researchers sent the paper to three qualitative experts for review before finalizing it. Furthermore, the paper was sent for review by experts who authored qualitative papers published in journals indexed by Scopus.

### Trustworthiness

The validity and reliability of qualitative research are established by ensuring trustworthiness. The researchers adhered to the four criteria, as Guba (1981) suggested, which are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is achieved when researchers subscribe to, as mentioned by Moustakas (1990, p. 32), "reflecting, sifting, exploring, judging its relevance or meaning, and ultimately elucidating the themes and essences that comprehensively, distinctly, and accurately depict the experience." This was done following the method of Colaizzi (1978) while ensuring that the themes were

consistent with the phenomenon's description, not the researchers' interpretation. In addition, the informants validated the findings before the paper's final output through a member-checking or validation technique. Regarding transferability, the researchers provided a detailed account of the methodology applied in the study, including an explanation of video teleconferencing as a technique in data collection. Regarding dependability, the researchers kept an audit trail of the data and the method of analysis for easy reference to the changes made during the preparation of the paper, from transcription to the final output. As for confirmability, similar to dependability, the audit trail and other documents were preserved for future reference. Additionally, the discussion of the themes included actual responses with proper source coding to ensure confirmation and validity of the data and interpretation of results.

## RESULTS

### Views of Professors on Students Using ChatGPT

The views of the professors on using ChatGPT by higher education students were divided into two: its negative effects and positive contributions. For the negative effects, these were (1) technology dependence and (2) ethical problems. For the positive contributions, these were (1) user's convenience and (2) enhancement of writing content.

**Technology dependence.** The professors expressed disappointment about students using ChatGPT because the latter's outputs are from the technology, not their efforts. They were worried about the effect of ChatGPT on their students. They feared the students would be too reliant on ChatGPT. In a way, it would diminish their capacity to think critically. Also, ChatGPT could make students lazy as the information and analysis of ideas are freely and conveniently provided to them. However, a good number of the informants were positive about using this tool. They considered it very helpful for the students but were also wary of its negative impact. A thirty-six-year-old professor from Indonesia, with 13 years of teaching experience in higher education, commented on the positive contribution of ChatGPT but also cautioned about its negative impact, saying:

"This tool helps the students generate, correlate, and summarize ideas. It makes them work faster. In contrast, however, their high dependency on this tool blocks their creative thinking." (Key Informant 13 or KI 13, Transcript 22 or T22, Page 2 or P2, Lines 51-53 or L51-53)

In short, with ChatGPT, higher education students would be very dependent on technology rather than their intellectual capacity if not guided properly.

The real drawback is for them to be passive, exerting less effort in their academic endeavors, and knowing where to go when they need information. Hence, too much dependence on ChatGPT might erode the very nature of academic formation.

**Ethical problems.** Aside from their fear of students' excessive dependence on technology, all informants pointed out ethical problems in using ChatGPT. There are many debatable areas about using ChatGPT within the boundaries between right and wrong. There is no originality aspect because ChatGPT has already done the analysis and paraphrasing. A fifty-two-year-old professor from Malaysia, with 31 years of teaching experience, shared this observation:

"Students cut and paste assignment questions into ChatGPT, and I noticed their information is funny. I double-check and confirm that the info is wrong. Actually, I see, and I already know it's wrong." (KI 20, T17, P1, L23-25)

The informants were saying that the use of ChatGPT's generated outputs is still an act of plagiarism and, therefore, academic dishonesty. They argued about the tendency of students to copy and paste what ChatGPT provides. It is where ethical issues arise.

**User's convenience.** Though the professors identified two downsides of using ChatGPT, they also recognized the advantages when used properly. One of these is the user's convenience of using the tool. ChatGPT makes writing easier because the tool provides the best information. It also increases the refinement and presentation of ideas. Also, the informants pointed out ChatGPT as a good source of ideas. One of the informants from the Philippines, a graduate school dean with over 25 years of teaching experience in higher education, acknowledged using ChatGPT herself and described how convenient it is to use this AI tool. She said:

"For students and teachers, AI is there to make our lives more convenient. I use ChatGPT. So, it is okay with me if students use ChatGPT in thesis or dissertation writing. Again, that is, as long as the content of the AI-generated output has been counterchecked by the students. And when they submit their output, they should have a thorough understanding of what they are submitting." (KI 7, T7, P2, L53-56)

The professors accepted the huge contribution of this particular information-generating tool in scouring the internet for the best possible ideas on the topics chosen by the students. In short, ChatGPT provides easy access and convenience for users, not only students but also professors.

### **Enhancement of writing content.**

According to the professors, the other positive aspect of using ChatGPT was the enhancement of writing content. They recognized the enormous contribution of ChatGPT in searching for the appropriate information tailored to what the students are looking for. They also agreed that ChatGPT is an easy source of ideas on specific topics that add value to the intended content as conceptualized by the students. However, they suggested for students to make their own judgments. An environmental education expert from Malaysia with 13 years of teaching experience in higher education suggested:

"I think it is fine. Students can learn the content, but they need to discriminate against the use of the content. This is enabled only if they have widely read about the topic and they have both subject and knowledge content." (KI 17, T12, P1, L37-40)

Moreover, the informants opined that using ChatGPT could enhance students' understanding of certain issues or ideas. Referring to ChatGPT for additional information could help students understand the ideas they want to develop or pursue, such as conceptualizing a thesis or dissertation. Hence, they agreed that students' output would be enhanced if the latter used ChatGPT for reference.

### **Recommendations on the Use or Banning of ChatGPT**

Based on the informants' responses, two common themes emerged, which do not include a recommendation to ban ChatGPT. These were (1) training on the proper use of ChatGPT and (2) protocols on the use of ChatGPT.

#### **Training on the proper use of ChatGPT.**

ChatGPT is a new technology that received mixed reactions from various sectors, including professors in higher education. Nevertheless, the professors recommended training students and professors on using it. The training aims to help students maximize the tool's potential without necessarily crossing the bridge of ethical standards. In other words, the purpose of the training is to ensure ChatGPT is used properly. For example, a sixty-two-year-old professor from Indonesia with 34 years of teaching experience in higher education recommended:

"They should freely introduce to the students how to use ChatGPT to help them write their academic writing assignments and theses, but still teach them the theories of academic writing. This is because ChatGPT cannot always write systematically and appropriately with the theory of thesis writing." (KI 12, T13, P 2, L 73-77)

The training on the proper use of ChatGPT could help professors be vigilant and capacitate them to prevent plagiarism. On the part of the students, they will also be guided on the proper use and avoid ethical issues.

**Protocols on the use of ChatGPT.** Since ChatGPT is available and is used by higher education students, the informants recommended developing protocols. These protocols are guided by specific institutional or governmental policies at different levels. While ChatGPT can be allowed, more explicit guidelines and ethical standards should be in place. These guidelines require additional work for the professors, such as scrutinizing the submitted outputs, particularly the thesis and dissertation. Others highlighted mechanisms for values formation and ethical standards in higher education to guide students in using the technology. Some professors even suggested an acceptable threshold or percentage if checked by AI detection software. For example, a research director from the Philippines with 33 years of teaching experience in higher education suggested:

"Part of the protocols also demands additional work from the professors, such as meticulously examining the submitted outputs, like the thesis and dissertation. This can be done by setting a 'threshold' or extent to which AI-generated texts can be allowed, e.g. 5%? 10%?" (KI 4, T6, P2, L75-77)

Because ChatGPT is still new but has already gained much popularity and usage, the recommendations from the informants are very valid. Having clear protocols and guidelines is truly beneficial for both professors and students. A lot of the problems and ethical concerns would be addressed if each higher education institution has an established policy related to ChatGPT and other AI-generative tools.

## DISCUSSION

The study was conducted using phenomenography, which generates the views of professors on the use of ChatGPT by higher education students. The findings revealed the two sides of reality in using ChatGPT—its positive and negative contributions—with two themes generated, respectively. For the recommendations, two themes focused primarily on capacity building and the creation of clear guidelines.

One of the informants' worries is the students' tendency to be too reliant on ChatGPT. Understandably, professors predicted the effect of ChatGPT and other AI-generated tools based on their experience with the emergence of the internet, which provides an easy and convenient way to get

information. How much more can ChatGPT help or even write for the students without much hassle and thinking? This observation by the informants is not something new, as scholars pointed out that over-reliance on this kind of technology (Gao et al. 2024; Kiryakova and Angelova 2023) could affect the development of critical thinking (Farrokhnia et al. 2023; Fuchs 2023). Indeed, it is a serious matter in the academic world. One of the 21st-century skills is critical thinking. However, there is also a 21st-century tool that can affect this particular skill. Nevertheless, several reports argued the positive contribution of ChatGPT and other AI tools to trigger and entice critical thinking skills (Essel et al. 2024; Kiryakova and Angelova 2023; Xu et al. 2024).

ChatGPT elicited so much interest right after it was launched in 2022, but later on, educators were worried about its ethical implications (Casal and Kessler 2023; Ray 2023; Stahl and Eke 2024). The professors shared similar sentiments. Their concern is that if students just copy and paste what ChatGPT provides, the tool no longer elicits critical thinking (Bai et al. 2023; Yilmaz and Yilmaz 2023) and does not help students draw out their essential understanding of information. Surprisingly, ChatGPT can generate outputs that cannot be caught by plagiarism-checker software (Khalil and Er 2023). What more do faculty members need to do in evaluating the submitted outputs of students, knowing there are AI tools with the power to make it appear truly the work of a human being? However, there are measures to address the ethical issues of using ChatGPT and other AI-generative tools. Fortunately, some plagiarism detector software has also evolved to add features for flagging AI-generated outputs (Cingillioglu 2023; Gao et al. 2024). The challenge is crafting and implementing school policies regarding accepting or rejecting AI-generated outputs.

On the positive side, the professors pointed out that the user's convenience is one advantage or contribution of ChatGPT for the students. The tool provides students with much-needed assistance in obtaining and writing information more logically. However, more than what the tool can provide, users found its ease of use (Albayati 2024; Ma et al. 2024), which is an added advantage for those accessing the internet and the tool itself. No wonder why ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI, recorded over 100 million users in just two months after its launch (Huh et al. 2023). Other developers are expected to come up with similar, if not better, services or features (Matherly 2023) as advertising revenues have shown an exponential trend (Huh et al. 2023). Google launched its most capable model, Gemini. As developers continue to push the boundaries of creativity and innovation, users will feast on the merits of using AI-generative tools, particularly in the academe.

As expected, the informants recognized how ChatGPT can greatly help students' outputs. Based on

several studies, ChatGPT improves students' writing content and skills (Khalifa and Albadawy 2024; Khalifa and Ibrahim 2024; Rejeb et al. 2024). It allows them to explore supporting literature and ideas for their thesis statements that need further deepening—something that takes time and a lot of digging in the absence of ChatGPT and other related tools. However, scholars cautioned users to check the generated data meticulously because of the reported inaccuracy (Al-Mughairi and Bhaskar 2024; Elbanna and Armstrong 2024). Scholars also warned of reporting erroneous scientific findings due to overreliance on AI tools, which can surely affect the integrity of scientific inquiry and could even lead to possible harm to society. This is also true in the academic community. When researchers cite a fraudulent scientific output, the wrong information is perpetuated with possible serious consequences. Nevertheless, as emphasized by the informants, ChatGPT is there to help students improve their writing content. Still, it is the role of the professors to check and educate the former on the proper use of it.

As to the informants' recommendation, it is advisable that professors and students in higher education should undergo proper training on using ChatGPT and other tools. The best way to do this is to integrate it into the faculty development plan and even into the curriculum for the students. Several studies have reported that professors are integrating ChatGPT into the teaching-learning process to automate tasks and create a conducive learning environment (Elbanna and Armstrong 2024), and students find many benefits in using ChatGPT (Lo 2023; Ngo 2023). Hence, teaching students how to use this tool maximizes its benefits and contributions. However, professors should be knowledgeable enough to ensure they can offer proper guidance to the students.

Because of the ethical issues surrounding the use of AI tools like ChatGPT, the professors acknowledged the inevitability of crafting and implementing protocols for using ChatGPT. For instance, ChatGPT-generated texts cannot be entirely copied (Kim et al. 2023). Professors are worried about the impact of this tool on the development of students' writing competency. However, ChatGPT can be used for editing and refinement (Kim et al. 2023). In addition, journals are also putting measures in place to ensure they do not publish articles with texts generated solely by AI (Park 2023; Wientroub and Hefti 2023). Thus, with the popularity and extensive utilization of ChatGPT and other AI generative tools, there is a need for clearer policies, protocols, or guidelines, particularly in higher education, underlining the ethical considerations and maximizing its potential for both students and professors. Professors in higher education must ensure these tools are helpful and not a barrier to societal values (Butson and Spronken-Smith 2024).

The findings show how professors view ChatGPT in higher education, particularly regarding

students using it in their academic endeavors. However, the study was limited to the perspective of the professors, not from the students themselves, who are the actual users, although in many instances, professors also use it for varied purposes. The students' experiences would be of great interest for a more in-depth understanding of how these tools can be used and what specific policies and guidelines can be crafted. The paper only focused on three countries in the ASEAN region, which cannot speak in general for all member states. Also, the paper is limited in the number of expected informants to balance the views per country, who are also distributed across different disciplines in higher education. A more focused discipline or even department, like graduate school, would be more appropriate for a specific context.

The findings present both the negative and positive impacts of ChatGPT in higher education and the recommendations from the professors. On the positive side, ChatGPT gains the patronage of students and professors because it is user-friendly and accessible. It also contributes significantly to improving writing content, which is the very nature of developing this tool. However, ChatGPT can also lead students to over-reliance on this technology, affecting their capacity to develop critical thinking skills. Additionally, many ethical concerns have to be addressed. Consequently, there is a need for training among users, especially professors, as well as the crafting and implementing of policies and guidelines to preserve academic integrity and maximize the benefits of using this tool. Based on the findings, professors in higher education did not want to ban or reject ChatGPT but instead suggested ways to maximize its potential while protecting academic integrity. In short, ChatGPT, besides its popularity, has much to offer for professors and students. However, appropriate human intervention has to be in place, such as control facilitated by clear policies and guidelines.

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## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researchers made sure all ethical concerns were addressed before, during, and after the conduct of the inquiry.

**Free and informed consent.** First and foremost, the researchers secured permission from the individual informants. All of them agreed to participate in the key informant interviews using teleconferencing

or face-to-face interviews. They were given an informed consent form before the interview, which they signed as evidence of their free choice and willingness to participate.

**Confidentiality.** The researchers ensured that confidentiality was observed. None of the data, except for the final paper for publication, was divulged by any means of communication. To ensure that their names and identities were protected, the researchers used codes to represent themselves when their actual responses were included in the presentation of results.

**Recruitment.** Using purposive sampling, each researcher assigned to a particular country was responsible for recruiting possible informants who qualified based on the criteria. The researchers made initial contact with informants. Those who showed a positive response were given formal letters of invitation.

**Data storage.** Each researcher was responsible for storing the data collected from the informants from a specific country. Each one was tasked with keeping the data secure and discarding it once the project was done. Similarly, the same process was followed for the collated data for analysis.

## DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that this study was conducted in the absence of any relationships that could be considered a conflict of interest.

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