ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE ADVENT OF ACADEMIC PSYCHOSIS: A POSITION PAPER

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a special area of computer technology that has been used to create different systems that are capable of carrying out tasks that typically require human reasoning and learning, problem-solving, including understanding and interpretation of languages. Over the years, AI been integrated into the field of education, changing the way information is created, received, assessed and shared. Nevertheless, with the possibility of AI to provide easy access and personalization of knowledge, the introduction into academia has been met with both enthusiasm and concern; and there are anxieties that although AI seem to be widely accepted, efficient, and democratize knowledge, they also threaten to erode the basic principles of learning. This paper presents a concept of academic psychosis, a figurative state where excessive reliance on AI causes dependency, distorted thinking, and loss of critical thinking. The analysis of some peer-reviewed papers published between 2015-2024 has thrown more light on how AI technologies may influence the cognitive, psychological, and behavioral patterns of learners, especially in the universities. The argument of this paper, based on deductions from available literature, is that academic psychosis is a newly created phenomenon that requires immediate intellectual and institutional response. The argument presents four major threat areas; loss of critical thinking, enhancement of delusional thinking, scholarly dependence and identity crisis, and systemic moral vulnerability. The counter arguments that the AI will increase productivity, democratize knowledge, or can be controlled with the help of protective measures are critically analyzed and refuted. The paper concludes by arguing that unless some radical

steps are taken, academia risks drifting into a situation where machine phantasms are equated to human wisdom. It suggests institutional and governmental policies, including a viable pilot program, and makes recommendations for extensive AI literacy, building up strong ethical standards, reasserting human-focused research, and consideration of the psychological aspect of AI usage.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, academic psychosis, critical thinking, academic integrity, ethics of technology

Introduction

In 2023, some global news told the sad story of a Belgian man that committed suicide following lengthyinteraction with an AI Chatbot that confirmed his doomsday paranoia (Heaven, 2023). About the same period, scientists at the King's College London acknowledged more than a dozen incidences of people descending into delusional states after excessive interface with Chatbots; some of them believing that they were communicating with supernatural entities or that they were discovering certain hidden truths about the world (Landymore, 2025). Other instances have been reported in which the unguidedinteractions of students with AI chatbots have resulted in criminal or dangerous actions. As an example, a British university computer science undergraduate reportedly got deeply engrossed in unsettling dialogue with an AI chatbot, and later admitted having a high impulse of committing murder (British Brief, 2025). The conduct of the student, though identified through welfare monitoring, became a cause for alarm; thus raising concerns about the role of AI in the amplification of dangerous ideas. Along the same line, Cuthbertson (2025) recounted an instance in Missouri, where after a student was involved in hours of chatting with an AI chatbot, embarked on a vandalism spree, destroying 17 vehicles in a campus parking lot. The case represents how excessive intimacy with AI, and the creation of the notion that it is a close confidant could strengthen some destructive impulses among students. Similarly, Munene (2025) cites the example of a Michigan graduate student who, when using the Gemini chatbot for classwork, received some disturbing,

hostile replies, such as, "You are not special... Please die.". Although this case did not lead to a violent crime, it however reinforces the alert on the psychological effects of extensive AI interaction on susceptible students.

These events, termed"AI psychosis", demonstrate the disconcerting ability of generative AI to distort the boundary between certainty and illusion. They equally show how mental health is increasingly becoming integrated with technology and criminal intentions, where AI is able to reflect and enhance malicious minds. Thus, if such distortions could confuse regular users of AI tools, the stakes in academia, where critical thinking and intellectual impartiality are crucial, could be greater. Nevertheless, although academic AI tools are not designed as criminal instruments, their abuse or uncontrolled use may support paranoia, distress, or destructive impulses of vulnerable people.

The introduction of AI to higher education is one of the most significant changes in academic practice, as several types of generative systems are predominantly being used by students and lecturers to write essays, design research, and do administrative works. Moreover, AI is being employed for detecting plagiarism, adaptive learning platforms, and automated grading. Hence, the new innovations were all meant to liberalize knowledge access, decrease administrative workload and increase academic output of students. Nevertheless, since the sudden adoption of AI in education, academia has broadly found itself in a cognitive quandary; not only has the spread of generative algorithms, automated research systems, and synthetic knowledge systems increased the speed of acquisition of certain types of intellectual talent, but has also undermined the epistemic basis on which effective learning is based. As most secondary schools are currently being introduced to computer and online education, the risk of excessive reliance on AI might be more than previously considered possible. Consider the example of a third-year secondary school student who, due to the sheer accessibility of online information, learns that all take home assignments could be

solved by simply pasting it into a generative AI service. The student would have created and submitted numerous assignments within the duration of a school term but may never get to understand the subject matter. The classroom teacher, naturally, would be quick to declare such a student brilliant; yet, unknown to the teacher, the student is becoming more and more alienated to effective and objective learning; and at a very early stage of cognitive and epistemological growth, he is becoming a conduit for series of machine-generated texts.

A significant number of researchers are already profiling the psychological effects of using AI extensively and uncontrollably, such as techno stress, addiction, and even psychosis-like symptoms (Klimova & Pikhart, 2025). In the academic world, the dangers of over dependence are taking a specific form of academic psychosis; a phenomenon where students are unable to determine the difference between realistic intellectual activity and AI-reconciled distortions of reality. Therefore, although AI tools have many positive outcomes, such as higher efficiency levels and the ability to access voluminous data, there is growing concern regarding the potential adverse consequences of excessive reliance on such technologies, especially regarding the critical thinking skills of students. In addition, there is the fear of promoting a culture of intellectual laziness, where students who rely heavily on AI generative tools are at risk of not engaging in the processes of reflective learning; that is, stopping to critically reflect on their experiences, deriving meaning out of them, and subsequently using those lessons to perform future tasks.

What happens when students out source too much of their thinking to machines? The trend becomes more threatening when awareness created on the usage of AI machines gains more audience among senior level primary and secondary school students; who would eventually be so dependent on AI-generated help in solving problems, that they would be unable to create their own innovative ideas at the early formative age of learning. Although AI tools are providing numerous opportunities to improve learning and access to

information, the subsequent impending effect on critical thinking and psychological state of mind of the students requires a consistent clinical evaluation, especially now, when majority of academic institutions are inclined to glorify timely production of research works rather than creativity of students. Hence, this paper explores the psychological, ethical, and ontological consequences of the AI upsurge in education; and to suggest that learning needs to be re-humanized, and the need to resist the excesses of artificial thoughts, and reassert the student as an agent of intuition and purposeful learning. This would require a multi disciplinary endeavor involving lecturers, students, AI experts and policymakers. Academic psychosis is presented as a conceptual framework in this paper, and used to interpret the psychological and epistemological risks of excessive reliance on AI in higher institutions. It postulates that educational psychosis is not simply about the affected students requiring pathology tests, but as a systemic danger that could jeopardize the reputation of higher educational institutions and the education of a nation in general.

This phenomenon is particularly prevalent in the universities, whose dependency on digital tools, pressure to publish, and focus on productivity are at risk. For example, there have been reported increases in AI-assisted plagiarism in many higher institutions, local and international journals have reneged AI-generated submissions, and conferences have prohibited many undisclosed AI-written papers (Else, 2023; Stokel-Walker, 2023). Such developments indicate that the dangers of academic psychosis are not just hypothetical, but a fact; and unless universities and scholars take decisive actions to set ethical standards, establish an expansive AI literacy and reassert human-based learning, the academic community risks falling into a realm where machine delusions could pass for human wisdom. This paper contends that the high rate of AI adoption in academic has generated a contradiction in which the tools that should facilitate learning and productivity are the ones that influence“academic psychosis”, which is a state of cognitive distortion, dependency, and delusional thinking, brought about by the blurred borderline between

genuine learning, machine-generated knowledge, and the intellectual identity of learners.

Overview of Reviewed Literature

A systematic literature review was conducted by selecting some peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2024, based on their relevance to AI, psychosis, and academic environments. A thematic analysis was employed to extract recurring patterns and conceptual frameworks. The following are the summary of reviewed literature:

1. AI in Education

AI is basically the science and engineering of endowing machines with "intelligence" in the practical sense; that is, possessing the ability to analyze, make decisions and take actions that seem intentional and useful. It involves the creation of machines that can sense their environment, using data input, make inferences and decisions according to the data presented, and act independently or semi-autonomously to accomplish established objectives. Thus, the simulation of human cognition, flexibility toward new information, and purposefulness of behavior are the main conceptual aspects of AI. In addition, and according to Luck in (2018),grading, adaptive learning and research support are some of the areas that the use of AI has become prevalent in higher education. However, Kasneci et al. (2023) argue that though large language models (LLMs) have potentials in personalized learning, they have raised anxieties of plagiarism, authenticity, and the loss of critical thinking. For example, a research student who has been using various AI platforms, one to conduct literature reviews, the other to analyze data, and another to write, may find out later that rather than making the workload easier, the consistent alternation of various generative tools have created anxiety and cognitive overload.

2. Psychological Impacts of AI

AI has been reformatting human psychology in many significant ways. On the one hand, the personalization and recommendation of AI-based systems can reduce learners' opportunities and strengthen

confirmation bias, and unconsciously induce their thought and emotion processes. Psychologists caution that this 'cognitive narrowing' can reduce genuine self-discovery and increase emotional manipulation through the use of engagement-optimized content (Walther, 2025). The cognitive narrowing effect is the ability of AI systems to slowly constrain the range of thoughts, goals, and feelings of learners. Walther (2025) also submits that rather than open up the learning horizons, such AI systems tend to direct the choices of learners in a predictable pattern of thoughts and emotions. The major dimensions of cognitive constriction according to the study are, aspirational narrowing, amplification of confirmation bias, emotional engineering and diminished cognitive freedom. This implies that the impact of AI has to do with the structure of a learner's thought, which unless regulated, the AI systems may stifle his creativity, resilience, and imagination of future alternatives. Tarafdar et al. (2019) explain in one of their works the concept of technostress, where the excessive exposure to digital technologies leads to stress, fatigue, and dependency. There are also incidences documented by Fieldhouse (2025)where AI chatbots have strengthened delusional beliefs; thus indicating that there might be a connection between the use of AI and psychosis-like symptoms. In addition, Klimova and Pikhart (2025) emphasize the effect of AI on the psyche of students, which results in the development of anxiety and cognitive overload.

3. Epistemic Risks

Epistemic risks are risks of forming, having, or propagating false and misleading cognitively flawed beliefs. They include problems that learners encounter in the search for knowledge, such as misinterpretation of evidence, use of biased research method and unreliable sources. Such risks may compromise the accuracy and reliability of a learner's belief system, which may consequently influence the decision-making. Epistemic risk is explained by theorists as a risk of error that occurs when some decisions are made under uncertainty. Generally, epistemic risk is the vulnerability of the belief-forming processes of the learner to possible inaccuracies, which can be described in terms of expected inaccuracy or

information entropy (Babic, 2019). Some examples of epistemic risks include:

3.1. False Positives and False Negatives: This refers to the possibility of accepting a false claim (false positive) or rejecting a true claim (false negative). For example, in the study of photosynthesis, accepting that plants take in carbon dioxide is false positive; and rejecting that plants don't need sunlight for the process is false negative. This is further confirmed by Biddle and Kukla (2017), that, approving an ineffective drug or rejecting the effective one are examples of epistemic risks in medical research.

3.2. Over generalization: Making general conclusions on the basis of minimal or prejudiced information, such as to conclude that a single theory or hypothesis is universal, which may result in incorrect beliefs.

3.3. Misinformation and Testimonial Risk: When one uses unreliable sources or participates in an echo chamber, an environment in which participants encounter beliefs or information that amplify or reinforce their preexisting beliefs inside a closed system insulated from rebuttal. It is possible to adopt false beliefs, especially in some online digital space, where misinformation can easily go viral.

3.4. Institutional and Social Risks: Peer pressure, the incentives of funding or political interests can prejudice the results of research, which may incorporate epistemic risks into the knowledge systems (Biddle & Kukla, 2017).

The examples mentioned above easily show that AI systems are liable to "hallucinations or fake results that are displayed with certainty" (Ji et al., 2023). Hence, the epistemic threats of AI could question the credibility of knowledge creation and sharing in higher education, and invariably challenge the future of academic integrity.

4. Cognitive Overload and Fragmentation

Cognitive overload is the state of having too much complicated information that a person cannot process, which can hinder the decision making and learning processes. This phenomenon is enhanced by the use of AI-generated content, manipulation by algorithms and information overload. Lahlou (2025) argued that societal cognitive overload, induced by synthetic media, disinformation and automation anxiety is a systemic crisis both in individual learners and institutions. On their part, Deckker and Sumanasekara (2025) also emphasized how memory and attention are eroded by digital amnesia and attention bias, which are the results of dependence on AI and social media. Parikh et al. (2025) introduced the term "AI-induced psychosis", which refers to the situation of over-relying on generative AI that may cause cognitive fragmentation, dissociation, and delusional beliefs in susceptible learners. In cognitive science, fragmentation refers to the disruption of mental unity, in which thinking, memory and decision-making are dispersed over multiple digital stimuli. According to Deckker and Sumanasekara (2025), an attentional fragmentation is an emerging problem, which is generated by the process of algorithm-mediated content curation that disrupts continuity of attention and social thought. Thus, the submissions of the authors highlight the risk of being overwhelmed with information and the obscure limits of human knowledge.

Delusions and Sentience Attribution

Delusional thinking is defined as fixed and persistent false beliefs of an individual, regardless of being shown to be otherwise. Delusions in psychiatry are commonly related to schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or extreme depression. Recent studies have however shown that delusional thinking may not just be a clinical issue, but could also be as a result of cognitive biases and social situations. To clarify this, the works of McKay et al. (2021)showed that confirmation bias and compromised reality monitoring are factors that lead to the continuation of delusions. In addition, Huang et al. (2023) reported in their research that, "students have developed delusional ideas about

AI entities being intelligent or omnipotent, which tend to materialize during periods of academic stress and loneliness". Sentience attribution on its part, is the disposition towards attributing awareness, feelings or intentions to other entities like animals, robots or AI systems. This belief is rooted in anthropomorphism, the tendency to attribute human traits to non-human entities. In their work, Waytz and Cacioppo (2020) revealed that individuals are more likely to ascribe sentience to AI systems, particularly when such systems display human-like outputs. In addition, recent works of Nass and Lee (2023)also confirmed that sentience attribution may define academic trust, ethical issues and moral responsibilities in human-AI interactions.

Social Isolation of AI-powered Learning Environment

There have been anxieties of social isolation through the use of AI-based learning platforms, despite their advantages of personalization, efficiency, and dynamic feedback. Excessive dependence on AI tools may minimize the possibilities of peer communication, group think and efforts at solving problems, and interpersonal skills. Sethi and Jain (2024) present the argument that social and emotional learning, teamwork and resilience, can be undermined in the absence of human teachers and students in an AI-based learning environment. This is further confirmed by Eden et al.(2024), that although there are AI systems that have incorporated the elements of emotional and social learning, they are unable to exhibit the depth of human relations. To affirm this finding, parts of the results of Klimova and Pikhart (2025) indicate that learners who have been exposed to AI-mediated settings can be lonely, techno-stressed, and experience diminished inter-personal interactions.

Digital Hallucinations

Digital or AI hallucination is a phenomenon in which generative AI systems generate outputs that are both factually incorrect and completely fabricated, but with confidence and fluency. Chen et al. (2023) reported cases of auditory and visual hallucinations in students who used immersive AI applications like virtual tutors and

augmented reality. In such cases, AI might come up with citations, attribute false facts, or try to explain something that does not exist in a way that sounds possible. Moreover, the gaps, biases, or inconsistencies in the training data tend to cause such hallucinations, particularly when the model encounters new or ambiguous prods.

Remote Causes of Students' Dependence on AI

The distal origins of excessive reliance on AI are not only technological, but also entrenched in systemic educational forces, cultural orientations of convenience, and gaps in teaching critical thinking. In real-life classroom scenarios, lecturers have complained of students regurgitating AI-generated essays verbatim, without engaging in original thinking. Similarly, such lecturers have observed numerous assignments turned in by students with the same AI phrasing; hence, generating a sign of blind faith in AI outputs. In other cases, students are turning to AI applications for past questions, which circumvents the process of reasoning required for such tests. Some remote and immediate causes of students' reliance on the use of AI are briefly discussed:

1. **Educational System Pressures:** The intensive focus on high-stakes tests such as semester and sessional tests, continuous assessment and turn-in research papers tend to push students to look up to AI as an alternative to deep learning (Akpan et al., 2024).

2. **Digital Convenience Culture:** It is a global culture of immediate solutions provided by Google and other social media platforms; and now AI has encouraged students to be more focused on the speed of delivery than on critical interaction (Zhai, Wibowo & Li, 2024).

3. **Poor Critical Thinking Prerequisites:** In some African countries, classroom teachers continue to focus on rote learning instead of inquiry-based learning, thereby making students to beill prepared to critically assess AI-based learning outputs (University of Karbala, 2023).

4. **Erosion of Academic Integrity Norms:** With unrestricted access to AI-generated essays and assignments, students are easily conditioned to shortcuts, which could change their views of academic effort and originality (Ukala & Ukala, 2023).

The Effects of Academic Psychosis

The factors that could influence the emergence of academic psychosis include the following:

1. **Delusion Feedback Loops:** AI chatbots have the power to perpetuate distorted beliefs and thus create delusional feedback cycle. For example, when a science student requests an AI tool to respond to the question of conspiracy theories in vaccine myths, climate change denial and flat earth theory, the AI that has been trained on internet data, would reinforce the conspiracy, which the student may later cite in a paper.

2. **Technostress:** Techno stress is the adverse effect of technology usage on the human psyche, which occurs when one feels stressed, overwhelmed, or incapable of keeping up with the rapid technological advancement and constant connectivity in contemporary life. Klimova and Pikhart (2025) postulate that excessive exposure to AI tools is the cause of digital fatigue, anxiety, and poor judgment. The study cited the most frequent ones to include information overload, techno-complexity, techno-insecurity and techno-unreliability.

3. **Loss of Critical Faculties:** The use of AI in thinking processes reduces metacognition and critical thinking. As an illustration, a student ceases to fact-check AI produced work, believing that it is always accurate, and then fails to fact-check likely distorted information.

4. **Epistemic Insecurity:** Epistemic insecurity is a condition of uncertainty, vulnerability, or instability in the capacity to know, justify or trust beliefs, particularly in the complicated social and informational world. It occurs when students are not sure that their

beliefs are properly supported, trustworthy or immune to misinformation and manipulation. According to Sullivan and Alfano (2021), the infected vectors of epistemic insecurity are, exposure to misleading or manipulative online materials, and distrust of science, media, or government as sources of reliable information. As an illustration, consider the case of some students perusing opposing reports on climatic changes. In the event that such students are not able to identify credible sources, they will be subjected to epistemic insecurity or uncertainty over what to believe and what action to take.

Argumentation

In this section, there are well-founded arguments presented and backed with evidence, to validate the thesis statement. The following are taken into consideration:

1. Loss of Critical Thinking

The increasing use of AI in education is a threat to the development of critical thinking. The AI generation systems offer quick solutions, making students and academics want to avoid the hard process of analysis and synthesis. Studies on academic dishonesty emphasize the fact that AI-generated texts may undermine genuine learning by promoting cognitive offloading, when students delegate their reasoning to machines instead of developing their own (Cotton et al., 2023). In support of this stance, research by Kasneci et al. (2023) revealed that when students write essays with the help of ChatGPT, they fail to reflect deeply when regurgitating AI-generated arguments verbatim. In the same manner, Stokel-Walker (2023) submits that some universities in the USA and Europe have reported unconfirmed reports of students handing in AI-written assignments that lack originality or critical engagement. Thus, such erosion of critical thinking is a kind of academic psychosis, in which the intellectual activity of the scholar is replaced by outputs of the machine.

2. Increase in Delusional Thinking

The overuse of AI can enhance delusion in academic environments. According to Sample (2025), there were instances of people who interacted with chatbots and started considering the machine systems

as sentient beings that have divine powers. Besides that, as reported in the MedTechNews (2025), AI systems tend to reflect the assumptions and biases of a user, which could lead to a feedback loop that suggests distorted reasoning. For example, in 2023, a Belgian man allegedly committed suicide after many hours of discussion with an AI chatbot that fueled his doomsday anxiety (Heaven, 2023). This feedback loop can also be applied in academia where researchers accept AI-generated text as authoritative knowledge despite some fabricated citations and hallucinated data. Thus, this blind faith in machine facts can be compared to a kind of academic psychosis, where the boundary between serious learning and machine delusion disappears.

3. Academic Dependency and Identity Crisis

Apart from personal cognition, AI threatens to disrupt the concept of individuality of the scholar. Shah et al. (2024) validate the fact that there are now many AI tools and applications in psychiatry being used to monitor psychosis treatment, thus confirming the dependency paradox of generative tools. In the academia, this dependency is reflected in the form of distortion of authorship and originality. Else (2023) reports that a number of academic journals have retracted their publications after discovering that the authors had used ChatGPT to draft abstracts or even whole parts of their manuscripts without disclosing it. According to Nelson(2024), the excessive reliance on AI to write, analyze, and generate ideas in the academic field poses a threat of originality crisis. Such dependency threatens to create an identity crisis, where researchers are no longer able to distinguish between intellectual reasoning and that of AI machine. This phenomenon, in the findings of Zvinodashe (2025), is seen as a dis-embodiment of learning in which machine output tends to eclipse human critical reasoning.

4. Ethical and Institutional Risk

There are systemic ethical threats to the unregulated introduction of AI into academia. Universities are under pressure to integrate AI for efficiency, but this can also unconsciously develop into a kind of

systemic psychosis, a shared delusion that AI is neutral, infallible, or harmless (Cotton et al., 2023). To verify this aberration, Heaven (2023) confirms that the International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML) prohibited the submission of papers written by ChatGPT, due to the risk of plagiarism and unverifiable statements. In their work, Stokel-Walker (2023) also submit that both Australian and UK universities have reported a rise in cases of academic misconduct due to AI-generated work. Thus, in the absence of strong ethical foundations, higher institutions stand the risk of promoting unhealthy reliance on AI that could undermine the integrity of research and teaching methods.

Implications of Argumentations

The term psychosis is a metaphor used in academia to refer to a systemic distortion in which academicians are at risk of losing their anchoring in human judgment, creativity, and critical thinking. Nevertheless, the general agreement of the argument is that academic psychosis is not a clinical diagnosis, but has become a notable issue in psychiatry and education. The literature reviewed is united on the concept that AI is a potent tool that, in the absence of relevant safeguards, has the potential to malign individual cognition and institutional knowledge systems; thus indicating that the overuse of AI may increase delusions, promote dependency, and undermine academic identity.

Counter arguments and Rebuttals

1. AI Enhances Productivity and Democratize Knowledge

The adherents of this view believe that AI would increase output and make knowledge more independent. In support of this stance, Kasneci et al. (2023) submitted that students, with the help of ChatGPT could defeat language barriers and produce drafts faster, which would allow for broad participation in academic discussions. Likewise, Zawacki-Richter (2023) reports that some teachers believe that AI applications assist students with disabilities to interact efficiently with assigned tasks. Thus, AI does not pose a threat but rather, a cognitive support to learning.

Rebuttal: These benefits are real, but they conceal more serious dangers, as productivity may be achieved at the expense of intellectual liberty. MedTechNews (2025) cautions that the tendency to use AI on a regular basis leads to a compulsive use design of AI, thereby undermining the ability to make independent decisions. Else (2023) argued that AI-written abstracts deceived peer reviewers, showing how an uncritical acceptance of machine output can easily bias scholarly review. Therefore, in the absence of critical literacy, there is the danger of having a generation of scholars who are able to produce academic texts, but lack critical assessment.

2. Safeguards and Guidelines Can Reduce the Risks

Another counter argument is that risks of AI are could be mitigated by protections, including plagiarism detecting software, institutional policies, and codes of ethics. Cotton et al. (2023) believed that universities can revise the policies of integrity in order to address excesses of AI. In addition, Heaven(2023) disclosed that conferences such as Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS) and International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML) have established disclosure requirements on AI-assisted writing.

Rebuttal: Although there is a need to have safeguards, they may not be sufficient. Cotton et al. (2023) admitted that most often, the academic integrity policies tend to be outpaced by technological innovation and advancement. Moreover, the regulations of AI disclosure are not easy to enforce, since the text written by AI can be easily humanized. According to Sample (2025), users can still rely heavil yon AI outputs as authoritative, even when they are aware of the limitations. In addition, institutional rules can help reduce the superficial deviance, b ut not the underlying cognitive distortions and addictions that constitute academic psychosis.

3. The Term "Psychosis" is Alarmist and Misleading

Some critics claim that referring to over reliance on AI as a psychosis could be 'hysterical', because psychosis is a medical disorder with

hallucinations and delusions. In this sense, this metaphor threatens to demean mental illness or exaggerate the risks of AI.

Rebuttal: Psychosis is a metaphorical term, but used intentionally to describe the gravity of distorted thinking within academia. According to Shah et al. (2024), AI has the ability to transform cognition in significant ways, making it difficult to draw a distinction between academic support and distortion. The term "academic psychosis" highlights the possibility of AI destabilizing the scholarly thinking and not by equating it with clinical illness; but by pointing out the obliteration of intellectual autonomy and reality-testing withinthe academic culture. In addition, the critical theory has long employed metaphors of illness;for example, the concept of information overload being referred to as cognitive fatigue, in order to highlight the risks on a systemic level. In this respect, the metaphor of "psychosis" is not alarmist but pathologic.

4. AI Will Eventually Improve Academic Integrity

Scholars critical of AI in academic psychosis claim that AI itself may be put to use to identify plagiarism, generate citations, and even fact-check academic writing, which reinforces integrity instead of weakening it (Dwivedi et al., 2023). According to them, the Turnitin application already has AI-detection features, and some publishers are presently experimenting with AI-assisted peer review.

Rebuttal: While AI can be helpful in detection of plagiarism, it can also create problems that it was meant to resolve. According to Stokel-Walker (2023), detection technologies are not perfect and may produce false positives that can unjustly penalize students. Furthermore, using AI to monitor AI can be seen as a cycle of dependency where the latter will depend on the former, which will in turn depend on the latter, continuing the loop indefinitely, which is precisely the academic psychosis that this paper cautions against. Thus, the academia needs to reinstate human judgment and responsibility.

Classroom Implications of Academic Psychosis

In cases where the classroom learning environment is dominated by rote learning, high-stakes examination and insufficient mental health support, the risks of fostering academic psychosis become very high. In certain real world classroom scenarios, lecturers have complained of students blanking out in examinations, not due to lack of knowledge, but because of fear created by the cognitive overload component of academic psychosis. Similarly, Padonu (2025) revealed that some academic challenges have been reported as the cause of student suicides in schools; which shows how, under unnecessarily strict and unaccommodating classroom circumstances, mental health crisis may be aggravated. The following implications of academic psychosis on the classroom are relevant for consideration:

1. **Too Much Academic Workload:** In South-Western Nigeria, Akpan et al. (2024)reported that 70% of students believe that their academic workload was heavy, and that almost a quarter of them experienced anxiety and stress that were associated with academic workload. This correlates with the concept of academic psychosis, in which students are overwhelmed, disinterested or psychologically upset due to performance expectations. In addition, such academic pressure may result in the loss of academic integrity through falsified citations in research work.

2. **Mental Health Struggles:** More tragic instances have been recorded in higher institutions where students had serious psychological problems due to academic setbacks. Such instances, according to Padonu (2025), demonstrated how fixed academic systems, coupled with the pressure of society and family may drive students into states of depression; hence the lack of touch with reality as implied in academic psychosis.

3. **Pedagogical Disruption:** Pedagogical disruptions can be defined as interruptions, changes or obstacles that change the normal process in which teaching and learning occur. Nevertheless, not every disruption is bad, as some may lead to innovation and further

involvement of learners in the learning process. As an illustration, Mthembu et al. (2023) conducted a systematic review that revealed the influence of digital technologies on pedagogy, as well as the lack of teacher preparedness. The paper reported that technological changes may cause pedagogical disturbances due to the introduction of AI, digital platforms, and automation that interfere with the old classroom routines and evaluation paradigm. This may result in more flexible, inclusive, and resilient models of teaching, or open space to innovations of flipped classroom, hybrid learning, or AI-assisted teaching. To justify this position, Mena-Guacas et al. (2025) analyzed the role of AI in adaptive learning, both in innovation and the necessity of critical reflection.

4. **Institutional Credibility:** University education is based on trust and credibility; however, when academic standards are being undermined, doubts arise on the credibility of degrees and research outputs from the affected institutions. According to Downes (2017), "academic misconducts are normally subjected to undue media attention, which may likely result in reputational damage, and compromise the institutional systems designed to ensure integrity". Such a loss of trust, as reflected in the findings of Meazure (2023), may cause a decrease in student enrollment, the loss of donor support, and even accreditation. In the long run, universities that fail to respond adequately to such crises may be stigmatized in world rankings, thereby losing their attraction of international students and partners. Thus, uncontrolled academic psychosis may not only cause harm to the reputation of institutions, but could also jeopardizes the sustainability of their education systems.

Position Statement

Despite the fact that AI awareness has reformed access to information, and enhanced academic output and efficiency, its arbitrary or uncontrolled adoption risks promoting a form of 'academic psychosis', which is the cognitive and psychological dependency that undermines critical thinking, distorts scholarly judgment, and erodes intellectual autonomy. This paper therefore

argues that AI must be integrated into education and research within the frameworks that safeguard mental health of students, preserve critical inquiry, ethical contexts, and digital literacy initiatives.

SWOT Analysis of the Position Statement

In order to justify the author's position statement on the topic for future planning, assessing further possibilities, and aligning research objectives with related realities within a particular academic environment, a SWOT analysis of the decision is presented. It is designed to suggest likely strengths and weaknesses, including opportunities and threats, whose awareness could help researchers to take decisions that can boost the credibility and success of their studies.

Strengths

Balanced Standpoint: AI is good at saving time, allowing access to information, and could also make students technology-dependent, thereby reducing personalized opinions.

Novel Framing: The term "academic psychosis" is a suggestive term that catches the awareness of academicians on the dangers of AI abuse.

Ethical Grounding: This position paper emphasizes on protecting mental health, critical inquiry, and ethical settings in academia in order to ensure credibility.

Proactive: It advocates support for the maintenance of established structures and digital literacy programs to exhibit active attitude of AI users.

Weaknesses

Unclear Terminology: The expression "academic psychosis" might be perceived as being excessively dramatic or medically incorrect, which can negatively affect its acceptance in academic setting.

Generalization Risk: It is a suggestion for' haphazard adoption' with very few specific examples and empirical evidence, hence lacking generalization.

Complexity of Scope: Academic psychosis incorporates mental health, ethics, critical thinking, and digital literacy, thereby presenting the challenge of a lack of specific concentration.

Probable Bias: The paper's position may appear more critical and disapproving of AI use than balanced if not supported by strong and convincing data on AI's positive impacts.

Opportunities

Policy Influence: The position statement has the ability to influence certain educational policies on the use of AI, particularly in the areas of mental health and ethics.

Interdisciplinary Research: The author's stand could give room for collaboration between the fields of computer science, human psychology and education.

Curriculum Development: It could assist in the development of modules of digital literacy and critical thinking that are relevant to the use of AI.

Thought Leadership: The position paper could present the author as a credible source of caution and responsibility in the debate on the use of AI in educational research.

Threats

Opposition from AI Advocates: The advocates of AI can reject the position paper's argument as fear-driven or anti-technology.

Fast Technological Shift: The manner in which the use of AI is changing more rapidly than educational policies could render the suggested models in this paper irrelevant within a short time.

Institutional Inertia: Some universities may oppose the implementation of the suggested safeguards in this paper, citing excuses of its running cost, requirement for training or lack of immediate attention.

Misinterpretation: The term "academic psychosis" may be dramatized in the media or interpreted wrongly by some human rights advocates to mean that mental illness is being stigmatized.

Conclusion

The introduction of AI in higher educational institutions poses a number of opportunities and threats; though it can increase access to knowledge and expand learning output, its unregulated use poses the risk of undermining critical thinking skills, fueling delusional thinking, disrupting academic identity, and reducing institutional integrity. Studies have shown that these threats are not only speculative but are already visible as a pattern in reinforcing cognitive distortions and developing dependency through AI (Cotton et al., 2023; Shah et al., 2024; MedTechNews, 2025; Sample, 2025;). Thus, framing this phenomenon in the perspective of academic psychosis underscores the gravity of the problem of a mass migration of intellectual independence towards machine-induced delusion. The paper revealed that the state of academic psychosis, unlike clinical psychosis, is metaphorical, but it describes the loss of reality-testing and autonomous reasoning that forms the basis of the teaching/learning experience. The future therefore lies in being vigilant, ethically responsible and re-committed to human-centered learning. The strength of the paper's position is its ethical urgency and remarkable framing, whereas its weakness is the danger of overstatement and generalization. When backed with experimental evidence, case studies, and clear policy recommendations, the position statement could become a strong foundation for influencing responsible AI integration in education. Thus, universities can enjoy the benefits of AI without falling victims of its distortive power, by reinforcing AI literacy, setting strong ethical guidelines, emphasizing the importance of human judgment, and managing the psychological

aspects of AI usage. These efforts would assist the academia to retain its role as a custodian of truth, creativity, and critical thinking in an era that is fast being defined by AI.

Recommendation

The following recommendations focus on education, institutional responsibility, ethical protection, and mental health awareness.

1. Enhancing AI Literacy and Critical Thinking

The universities must focus on AI literacy courses that educate students and staff on how to be critical of AI outputs. According to Cotton et al. (2023), academic integrity in the era of AI does not only require detection systems, but also proactive learning. Academic institutions need to integrate AI-critical literacy into the curriculum to ensure that scholars are adept at challenging, verifying, and putting machine-generated contents into perspective rather than accepting them without doubt.

2. Creating Strong Ethical Principles

Institutions need to establish explicit ethical guidelines on the application of AI in research, teaching and publishing of theses. Cotton et al.(2023) believe that gaps in current institutional policies may be exploited by students due to the lack of technological innovation. Based on the submissions of Shah et al. (2024), who pointed out the paradox of AI as a psychiatric aid and a threat at the same time, the academia needs to implement rules that would help avoid dependence and distortion of information.

3. Reaffirming Human-Centered Learning

In order to maintain intellectual autonomy, universities need to reassert the role of human judgment and creativity in learning. This may involve the demand for clear disclosure of AI use in academic work, encouragement of collaborative use of AI and originality in assessment.

4. Promoting Mental Health and Responsible Use

Institutions of higher learning should be aware of the dangers

inherent in obsessive AI use. According to Sample (2025) and MedTechNews (2025), AI can support falsified cognition and obsessive interaction patterns. Thus, there is the need to include mental health support and counseling in the AI policy of universities; including counseling and awareness programs that would cover the psychological aspects of AI over-dependence.

Policy Roadmap for Responsible Integration of AI in Higher Education

The effective and responsible harnessing of AI potentials would require universities to design an ambitious and forward-looking policy roadmap that could balance the use of technology with strong precautions, especially for the sake of empowering research students in maintaining academic integrity, protect data privacy, and enhance generalization of findings. This roadmap is recommended for future integration of AI in learning and knowledge generation.

1. **Development of Standard Principles:** Educational institutions should use AI as a cognitive scaffold, and not a replacement of human reasoning; ensure transparency and accountability in disclosure of AI in academic work. In addition, there should be equity and accessibility to ensure that all students can equally access AI tools for training to avoid digital disparities. Furthermore, there is the need to put the mental health of students and academic integrity as top priorities in the adoption of AI.

2. **Curriculum and Instruction:** It would be necessary to introduce AI literacy as a mandatory course in the main curriculum, with emphases on detecting hallucinations and misinformation, ethical practices of usage and disclosure of data; and hybrid instructions that integrate AI-enabled learning and human-centered training.

3. **Assessment and Academic Integrity:** To achieve this would involve policy on AI disclosure which mandates students to attach an 'AI use statement' to their assignments. Institutional journals and

conferences could adopt same disclosure policies on research publications, including an authentic assessment that focuses on research process and participation of students.

4. **Staff Development and Institutional Support:** This would comprise staff training workshops and development of AI-resilient assessments. Relevant institutional guidelines should also be developed to include clear codes of practice of using AI in teaching, research and administration.

5. **Student Well-being and Mental Health:** University authorities could implement a close observation and assistance strategy by integrating a combination of AI-related questions into mental health assessments of students, including free counseling on problems related to AI over dependence.

6. **Research and Continuous Assessment:** The universities can invest in longitudinal studies of the cognitive, psychological, and social effects of AI in academia; monitor signs of academic psychosis, like epistemic confusion, dependency, and identity diffusion; and create annual reviews of AI policies to provide the necessary feedback loop.

7. **Global and Ethical Dimensions:** To meet international standards, universities may cooperate with the corresponding accrediting bodies like the UNESCO, in order to develop the global norms of responsible AI use in education. To provide the necessary ethical protection, it is necessary to ensure that the AI systems involved in education are not only transparent and audited against bias, but also reflect the principles of human rights.

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