ASCILITE 2026

The Future is Connection:

Collaboration, Creativity and Compassion in a Digital Society

The tension between artificial intelligence and knowledge: Power relations in the policies of universities and publishing organisations

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Maintaining academic integrity is a serious issue in higher education, affecting the paradigms governing the production and dissemination of human knowledge. Although a significant body of research has explored the ethics of AI tool usage in higher education settings, these studies have neglected to examine the power relations inherent within them. In response to this issue, this study employs Bourdieu's theories of symbolic violence and actor-network theory to review the AI usage policies of Australian higher education institutions and mainstream academic journal publishers. Specifically, actor-network theory is first applied to identify the governance networks surrounding AI usage within the technological adoption process, thereby establishing that AI tools act as mediating agents that actively facilitate communication between institutions and users. Furthermore, symbolic violence provides a comprehensive explanation of the means by which power-holding institutions legitimise such governance. In summary, the aim of this inquiry is to expose and challenge the "false pretences" of AI ethics regulations that merely adjust, reinforce and gloss over the status quo, thereby channelling the potential of AI towards justice and combating latent human bias.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, ethical principles, power relations, dominant ideology, qualitative policy analysis

Introduction

Artificial intelligence tools have increasingly posed a threat to the upholding of academic integrity in the production and dissemination of academic knowledge (Banerjee, 2025; Bradley et al., 2024; Muldoon & Wu, 2023). Academic misconduct is defined as the use of ideas, content or formats without proper acknowledgement of the original source (Roig, 2015). Microsoft (2025) reports that 86% of university students use AI in their studies, and that approximately 99% of educational leaders use it more frequently than students. Similarly, the Digital Education Council (2024) surveyed nearly 4,000 university students across 16 countries, finding that almost three-quarters of students globally use AI in their daily studies, and that over half believe over-reliance on AI has a negative impact on their academic performance. This situation was also reported by The Guardian, which found, based on the use of AI by thousands of UK university students during assessments, that there had been 5.1 breaches of academic integrity for every 1,000 students since the emergence of AI tools (Goodier, 2025). Although Cardon et al. (2023) claim that the use of AI tools has not significantly increased breaches of academic integrity, as some students are unclear about the definition and scope of academic integrity, the figures cited imply that strengthening regulations governing the use of AI has become a challenge that higher education institutions must address.

However, knowledge cannot simply be understood as a commodity. As Kramm and McKenna (2023) and Anderson and McLachlan (2016) argue, the transformative research paradigm is rooted in the process of knowledge mobilisation. This implies that the knowledge disseminated through higher education is not merely a purely academic transfer, but rather an interaction between that knowledge and its social context, designed to help students transform their understanding of their own position and that of the world around them. Put simply, the knowledge disseminated by universities constitutes a transformative relationship between knowledge and the individual within the unknowns of the world (Glisczinski, 2007). This relational view of knowledge necessitates that assessment of learning outcomes should not be based solely on what knowledge is but should instead evaluate the relationship between students and that knowledge (Bradley et al., 2024; Kramm & McKenna, 2023). However, there is currently a widespread misalignment within the higher education system regarding knowledge, learning, and educational objectives (Kalaitzidis, 2026). Specifically, whilst institutions claim to cultivate students' critical thinking skills, they prioritise quantifiable, standardised

and legitimised output principles in their assessment practices. Similarly, higher education institutions treat outputs as a measure of their own value, rather than their intended purpose of disseminating knowledge. Examples include competitive ranking mechanisms and a GPA-driven academic culture. In fact, the impact of AI on higher education stems fundamentally from the dissonance between the stated aims of universities and their actual practices. Bradley et al. (2024) argue that the gradual liberalisation of AI use by higher education institutions stems from the fact that AI tools align with—and can reinforce—the dominant paradigm of knowledge. Consequently, this appears to confirm that, for higher education, AI tools are not merely a reactive measure, but rather a catalyst requiring institutions to delve into their very essence and adjust their systems accordingly.

Several distinct trends emerge from these studies, guiding the discussion on the use of AI tools. Firstly, in the production of academic knowledge, different types of institutions regulate the use of AI based on specific strategies or justifications; this legitimacy reveals reflections on power relations. As Bradley et al. (2024) emphasise, the focus on opaque power and the relationships between language and technology stems from a desire to denaturalise the frameworks that sustain the functioning of higher education. Similarly, Effoduh (2025) affirms the importance of examining the power dynamics involved in the dissemination of knowledge, as the power to determine what knowledge is disseminated tends to be concentrated in the hands of the dominant class, who possess capital and social status. This echoes Bourdieu's understanding of knowledge; Bourdieu (1989) argued that knowledge categorises legitimacy in order to impose legitimate meanings and thereby govern marginalised groups. Secondly, current research on AI tends to discuss it solely in terms of its instrumental effects, whilst neglecting to explore its dual identity as both a subject and an agent. For example, Natale (2021) argues that current research fails to consider AI from a socio-cultural perspective and overlooks the interactive value of the tool within specific contexts. Similarly, Michel-Villarreal et al. (2023) add that researchers should not discuss AI tools merely as human-designed artefacts, but rather as agents that transform human lives. Gutiérrez (2024) contends that AI possesses only the capacity for social mediation, thereby exerting power over humans. Although current research remains divided on whether AI can be considered a subject, it is almost universally acknowledged that AI is a technology that operates according to human patterns of thought and influences individuals' lives. Nevertheless, with regard to the constructed relationship between subject and object in Bourdieu's theory, it appears that, to a certain extent, it is difficult to clearly map out the complex agency relationships between institutions (universities/publishers), intermediary actors (lecturers/editors), AI users (students/teachers), and AI itself. Given this theoretical gap, this study innovatively employs Actor-Network Theory to understand the power relations arising from these networks and their interactions.

Literature review

AI, as a brand-new technological tool, has sparked numerous debates regarding integrity within the field of higher education. AI is a tool that utilises deep learning models and algorithms to mimic human-like content in response to complex user instructions (Michel-Villarreal et al., 2023). The use of AI has prompted academic discussions regarding ethical theoretical frameworks. Amidst these debates, Kofinas et al. (2025) propose that consequentialism can serve as an ethical framework—an approach that assesses whether the use of AI meets moral requirements based on the outcomes or consequences of such behaviour. Similarly, Lund et al. (2025) similarly employed a theory-based framework focused on the impact of outcomes—Prospect Theory—to assess whether university students were willing to take risks by misusing technology. These ethical frameworks are primarily actor-centred (focusing on the student population) and rely on principles of rationality to assess and regulate issues of academic integrity among students. In contrast, some studies have also drawn upon psychological perspectives to examine students' motivations when using AI. For example, Bin-Nashwan et al. (2023) and Bouteraa et al. (2024) both employed Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) to explore the factors influencing students' use of ChatGPT. SCT provides a comprehensive understanding of various personal, behavioural and environmental aspects. The survey by Bouteraa et al. (2024) found that for university students in South-East Asia, performance expectations and social influence served as the driving factors behind their use of AI, whilst promotion of such technological tools by peers and on social media also acted as catalysts. Similarly, Awal and Haque (2025) utilised quantitative research methods to conduct a study among university students in Bangladesh, which validated the effectiveness of SCT as a theoretical framework. Whether based on the principle of student rationality or on an examination of student motivation,

both approaches focus the ethics of AI usage on the individual actor. This approach can clearly identify which types of students are likely to use AI under certain circumstances and enable appropriate responses to such predictions to prevent unethical behaviour (Jansen et al., 2025; Kamali et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the contexts in which AI is used are also interrelated with students' ethical behaviour. Activity Theory, the framework developed by Vygotsky to explain the creation of meaning through human dialogue and social interaction, has been applied by some studies to ethical discussions surrounding AI (Essien et al., 2024; Kamali et al., 2024). For example, Essien et al. (2024) argue that the dynamics of university students' engagement with AI stem from the interplay between sociocultural and technological factors. This implies that Activity Theory can offer a sociocultural perspective, thereby elucidating the role of tools, community norms and the division of labour in shaping educational technology processes. Similarly, Alsalem (2024) utilised this theory to understand how EFL teachers' positive beliefs regarding AI can have a beneficial impact on students' use of such tools; for instance, students can utilise the marks and feedback provided by AI as learning aids. Furthermore, ecosystem theory has been applied to ethical decision-making issues relating to AI (Raffaghelli et al., 2026), facilitating contextualised negotiation based on individual, institutional, cultural and local political contexts.

As a cultural and cognitive tool, AI is influenced by a range of factors, including a nation's historical and cultural context, policymaking, educational policies and learner agency. This suggests that the contextual value of historical and cultural factors must be fully taken into account in ethical debates regarding the use of AI (Essien et al., 2024; Raffaghelli et al., 2026). Overall, ethical discussions from a sociocultural perspective serve to fully emphasise the positive value of AI as a tool, whilst fostering effective collaboration between learners and the tool through the creation of positive social and learning environments.

However, a common shortcoming in the current literature is the tendency to overlook power relations in the use of AI, focusing instead on the superficial mechanisms of ethical interactions. As Bradley et al. (2024) suggest, the rapid adoption and development of AI tools in higher education institutions is, in fact, a form of intellectual output aligned with Western epistemology. Within this framework, AI, as an embodiment of the dominant knowledge ideology and institutional structures, marginalises alternative possibilities, thereby perpetuating and stabilising an abnormal natural system. Similarly, Maas (2023) affirms that AI operates through opaque mechanisms, namely regarding who possesses—or should possess—decision-making authority over system development. Identifying explicit power relations is essential for recognising the potential pitfalls within current ethical controversies surrounding AI that hinder the development of more ethical machine learning. In particular, the literature exploring the tension between technological development and ethical constraints has led to direct interventions that question the necessity of focusing on power relations (Almuhanna, 2025; López Jiménez & Ouariachi, 2021). However, focusing on power relations in the ethical development of AI holds significant value for students at different levels and with varying needs. Owing to the objective existence of individual structural barriers, students' engagement with higher education—which occurs in diverse ways—is influenced by the use of AI (Cardon et al., 2023; Grichko et al., 2026). Consequently, clarifying these power relations can present an opportunity to reconfigure educational resources and achieve sustainable and equitable educational development.

Theoretical framework

Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence provides a methodological tool for understanding how power exerts control over actors' practices through invisible mechanisms. From this theoretical perspective, symbolic violence is defined as a form of violence that is invisible in everyday life yet genuinely perceived (Bourdieu, 2018). That is, the cultural group within society that holds the majority of the means of production imposes specific cultural and institutional practices, subsequently acting with impunity towards marginalised and working-class groups (Bourdieu, 2018). On the surface, when the dominant class exercises symbolic violence against actors in a particular sphere, it appears to stem from considerations of the collective good; in reality, however, it serves as a means of "disguising" those dominant ideologies and strategies as legitimate. Nevertheless, the validity of symbolic violence has been questioned by some researchers due to its deterministic nature and the lack of a clear distinction between subject and object. For example, Archer (2012) argues that the interactive dimension of Bourdieu's concept of agency has been lost, as he views the

relationships between habits, individuals, networks and membership as systemic rather than contingent. Similarly, Tholen (2015) questions whether Bourdieu's theory overlooks the variable interactive nature of space, thereby failing to effectively account for intersubjective characteristics. Although such criticism overlooks the concept of habit to some extent—since actors can take strategic actions based on their own habits to increase their capital allocation (Barrett & Martina, 2012)—habits are defined as deriving from an individual's social position and the distinctive tastes of a particular class, and positional characteristics also imply a certain tendency towards fixity (Nikunen, 2021).

Given the existence of such objective issues, actor-network theory can breathe new life into symbolic capital. As a form of transformative sociology, actor-network theory operates within the process by which human and non-human entities come together (Eid & Akella, 2025). Similarly, the theory is defined as a process in which actors experience and create meaning within a series of relationships (Törrönen et al., 2025). This implies that Actor-Network Theory assists in identifying which actors, relationships, assemblages and trajectories enhance the capacity for its use. Although Gutiérrez (2024) argues that the theory encompasses power relations, it can reveal the roles, capacities and positionality of actors within networks during the use of AI. However, such power relations effectively constitute a neglect of dominant ideologies and discourses of knowledge. Furthermore, Actor-Network Theory has been applied to contexts involving new technologies; it can help explain how individuals and AI respectively exercise agency in the process of human-AI interaction, as well as the relationship between such agency and the overarching structural system (Eid & Akella, 2025; Gutiérrez, 2024). In summary, Actor-Network Theory and symbolic violence can provide an interpretation of the complex power relations presented by ethical policies governing the use of AI. Based on the identified knowledge gaps and theoretical frameworks, the research questions for this study are formulated as follows:

Given that AI tools are increasingly being utilised as "intellectual" tools in higher education practice, the legitimate scope of their use and the power relations they entail remain to be explored. *How do existing power relations shape the ethical norms governing AI use established by higher education institutions and academic publishers?*

Method

Qualitative document analysis and content analysis are employed as the research methods in this study to analyse how higher education institutions and academic journal publishers address the power relations embodied in the use of AI tools in knowledge production. As institutional AI policy documents represent the formal regulatory and governance frameworks governing the application of AI, official policy documents are regarded as the data source best reflecting institutional value orientations, governance logic and regulatory requirements (Bowen, 2009). Furthermore, this study analyses official AI policy documents issued by two types of institutions involved in academic knowledge production: Australian research universities and leading international academic publishers. The aim is to compare the discursive symbols adopted by different institutions in the process of AI governance, in order to analyse how symbolic violence manifests power relations and class control within the dynamic relationships between institutions and individuals, thereby perpetuating long-standing mechanisms of systemic inequality.

Data Collection

The data for this study will be drawn primarily from two categories of official AI policy documents. The first category comprises AI-related policies, academic integrity policies, and teaching and learning guidance documents publicly released by the Group of Eight (Go8) research universities in Australia. The Go8 universities were selected as the research subjects because they represent Australia's highest-level research universities and are capable of reflecting the culture of authority, structural differences and power disparities concealed within policy discourse (Jones et al., 2012). Furthermore, a significant portion of the funding for these research universities comes from the Australian government; and, given their strong research reputations, their collaboration and interaction with businesses and industry have shaped a more complex higher education research ecosystem. Similarly, Watson and Widin (2015) note that the Australian higher education environment is profoundly influenced by contemporary neoliberal ideologies characterised by high

levels of marketisation, performativity and a performance-driven culture. The symbolic violence inherent in this market-driven logic provides a framework for discussing how university institutions, ideologies, discourses and social relations shape the ethical rules governing the use of AI. For these reasons, the universities included in the analysis comprise the Australian National University, Monash University, the University of Adelaide, the University of Melbourne, the University of New South Wales, the University of Queensland, the University of Sydney and the University of Western Australia. Furthermore, data sources were drawn exclusively from the respective universities' guidance websites on AI use and relevant policy links. The selection of content for data collection centred on the core objective of comprehensively gathering relevant information regarding each university's guiding principles on AI. As each university maintains multiple webpages explaining how students should use AI and the potential penalties for misuse, the completeness of the data collection is determined by the comprehensive inclusion of policy-related information; where similar content recurs, no additional policy data is collected. In summary, this compilation of AI usage policies within higher education institutions stems from a thorough examination of the governance networks established within universities, and an understanding of how such networks are legitimised to exert control over those they govern and the academic environment as a whole.

The second category of data derives from AI usage policies and author guidelines publicly released by major international academic publishers. Publishers were selected based on their influence within the international academic publishing sector, their disciplinary coverage, and whether they have established relatively comprehensive guidelines for the use of generative AI. As noted by Rughiniș et al. (2025), academic journal publishers, as participants in market competition, establish varying degrees of legitimacy for rules governing AI usage through the application of different competitive value mechanisms. The rules established by these institutions regarding the scope of AI use for specific groups reflect the publishers' normalisation of the legitimacy of specific rules, thereby rendering other configurations illegitimate. Based on this reasoning, the publishers included in the analysis are Elsevier, Springer Nature, Wiley, Taylor & Francis, SAGE Publishing and Emerald Publishing. Furthermore, all policy documents were sourced from the official websites of the respective organisations, and only formally published and publicly accessible policy documents were included. Where multiple versions of a policy existed for the same organisation, this study selected the most recently published version during the data collection period to ensure that the research findings reflect the organisation's current practices regarding the governance of generative AI.

Data analysis

This study will employ traditional qualitative content analysis to conduct a systematic analysis of policy texts from universities and academic journal publishers. Firstly, the theoretical conceptual framework of Bourdieu's "symbolic violence" will serve as the initial coding scheme, with deductive coding carried out around core issues in AI governance. Examples include areas of AI application, requirements regarding methods of use (practices), attribution of responsibility, and human oversight mechanisms. Through preliminary coding, the core norms relating to AI governance within the policies of various institutions will be systematically identified. Subsequently, inductive coding will be carried out whilst continuously comparing different policy texts, supplementing and refining new themes not fully covered by deductive coding, and continually refining the coding system to identify emerging practices and institutional characteristics formed by different institutions in the process of AI governance.

Findings

Comparison of Go8 policies on the use of AI

Overall, the Go8 university consortium exhibits a positive attitude towards the use of AI and its overarching objectives. Virtually none of the eight universities completely prohibit students from using AI, and they all recognise the value of this technology for independent learning. For example, UNSW states that "AI and generative AI tools, when used ethically and responsibly, can effectively support student learning and serve as useful tools for completing assignments." Similarly, the Australian National University emphasises the value of using AI tools with integrity to aid learning. For instance, it advises students to use AI tools as prompts for research or brainstorming, thereby guiding them to identify high-quality, evidence-based sources. Likewise,

Monash University has recognised the value of AI for sourcing information, brainstorming and refining writing, whilst clearly emphasising the need to clarify the scope of the technology's use. Consequently, regarding the use of AI tools, the Go8 universities have almost unanimously affirmed the value of the technology for higher education, yet differences exist in terms of the objectives of its use.

In terms of the objectives achieved through the use of technology, Go8 universities differ in their focus on stakeholders. In UNSW's statement, the university explicitly identifies that the objectives regarding the ethical and responsible use of AI will benefit the university, individuals, society and the environment. However, the University of Melbourne's principles emphasise that the use of such tools primarily stems from driving innovation through research and collaboration with industry and other external partners. Similarly, the University of Sydney emphasises that the ethical use of AI stems from safeguarding students' written work and protecting the intellectual property of external partners. However, the University of Queensland's policy explicitly links the use of AI tools to the skills graduates will need in their future careers, thereby establishing the need to prepare them for the workplace. Consequently, whilst the Go8 consortium generally adopts a positive stance towards the use of new technologies, there are marked differences in their consideration of stakeholders.

When it comes to determining students' access to AI, Go8 universities have all delegated decision-making authority to a certain extent to programme coordinators with specialist expertise. Specifically, these universities have opted to establish overarching principles of integrity and ethics to govern the manner and scope of students' use of AI. However, the authority to determine the specific extent of use and whether a particular technology may be utilised is delegated to the administrators of individual courses. For example, the University of Melbourne not only explicitly emphasises that students must honestly report their use of AI but also restricts the scope of their use of generative AI to the discretion of subject coordinators. Similarly, the University of Western Australia adheres to a comparable set of rules, emphasising that students must comply with the guidelines established by course coordinators in the syllabus and use AI in accordance with these instructions. However, unlike the University of Western Australia, the University of Melbourne specifically emphasises that if teaching staff encourage the use of AI tools in student assessment, they must provide guidance and support on AI usage and assist students in accessing the relevant tools, thereby promoting educational equity. In contrast, the University of Sydney and the University of Queensland delegate this authority to specific course syllabuses. Specifically, the University of Sydney states that whether students are permitted to use AI, and to what extent, is entirely determined by the specific task descriptions in the course syllabus. Similarly, the University of Queensland explicitly emphasises that the use of AI and specific requirements must be outlined in each course description. Consequently, within the Go8 university consortium, all universities delegate the authority regarding whether to use AI and the scope of its use to individual disciplines, though there are differences in the entities holding this authority.

Major publishers' guidelines on AI use

At the publisher level, the overall objectives of stakeholders differ from those of the Go8 university alliance. For publishers, their internal focus is on authors, reviewers and editorial teams, whilst external stakeholders include the academic community, readers, and the academic publishing system. For example, Sage explicitly emphasises that, as the use of AI writing tools becomes more widespread, restrictions on such tools are based on their ethical use in assisting authors, reviewers and editors. Similarly, Wiley has provided specific guidelines for research authors, editors and reviewers, whilst also emphasising the responsible use of such tools and the sustainable use and protection of intellectual property, privacy and data. In contrast, both Taylor & Francis and Wiley emphasise opportunities for non-native-speaking authors, such as supporting authors in expressing themselves in a language other than their mother tongue to accelerate the research process. Consequently, mainstream publishers' management of AI usage primarily centres on authors, reviewers and editorial teams.

Secondly, when it comes to establishing rules for AI usage, publishers generally delegate authority to editors and employ a tiered classification system for governance. Specifically, Springer has established a risk-based management system comprising three levels: green, amber and red. Under the green management system, the use of AI is permitted; the expected requirement is that AI tools be used to verify existing content, rather than to introduce new intellectual content. Under the amber management requirements, the use of AI

involves the incorporation of verified knowledge generated by AI. However, within the red category—where use is prohibited—the primary concern is where AI completely supplants academic judgement. This implies that Springer's risk-tier system is primarily based on whether and to what extent AI technology intervenes in the process of knowledge creation. Similarly, Sage and Emerald have adopted comparable approaches to defining boundaries, imposing constraints on the use of AI in the production of knowledge. For example, Sage employs a classification system comprising "assisted," "generated" and "prohibited." Similarly, Emerald and Wiley impose constraints based on the extent of human intellectual contribution. These boundaries apply not only to the final published academic output but also to the drafting of manuscripts, datasets and the generation of any content. Consequently, at the regulatory level, although different publishers have varying management models regarding the boundaries of AI use, they all uphold the core principle of human authors' agency in knowledge production.

Discussion and conclusion

In line with the emphasis of actor-network theory, the governance frameworks for AI adopted by universities and publishers primarily stem from the continuation of the existing order of governance. Gutiérrez (2024) describes this theory as one that examines the actors, relationships and trajectories that enhance the capacity to utilise technology. Within the governance framework of higher education, universities centralise the authority over AI usage by delegating it to lecturers possessing specialist knowledge and expertise; however, the overarching management systems and regulations remain centred on the university as a whole. At the university level, lecturers further regulate the scope of students' AI usage within their respective specialist fields. This implies that the university's governance logic stems from a system of qualification assessment. Under this system, lecturers and the university hold the power of assessment, whilst students are perpetually positioned as the subjects of evaluation. Similarly, at the level of academic publishers, the logic of governance regarding AI use stems from normative issues of knowledge ownership. Specifically, authors must bear primary and central responsibility for the production of knowledge; editors hold the power of adjudication; and publishers retain ultimate control over whether knowledge can be published and disseminated. Within this governance network, the network of knowledge production comprises authors, editors and publishers, and the core content they oversee derives from the source of knowledge. Consequently, this study first establishes that the ethical governance networks regarding AI use established by higher education institutions and academic journal publishers do not stem from strict restrictions on the scope of AI use. Therefore, universities and academic journal publishers are largely indifferent to whether students and scholars use AI, or to the extent of such use. Their core concern lies in whether AI disrupts the existing institutional division of labour.

Secondly, this study draws upon Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence to identify the disguised legitimacy implicit in the processes of knowledge production and dissemination. Educational institutions and publishers have adopted divergent practices regarding the scope of AI use. For instance, UNSW (2025) adopts a relatively flexible approach to students' use of AI in their work, emphasising transparency and full disclosure regarding the use of such tools. Similarly, the University of Sydney (2023) also emphasises that students must acknowledge any software and tools used and employs relevant tools to detect AI usage. Although the effectiveness of such detection tools has been deemed relatively limited by some studies (Cotton et al., 2024), university institutions place great emphasis on transparency and flexibility regarding students' use of such tools. In contrast, academic journal publishers maintain stricter regulations regarding the use of AI in scholarly works. For example, Sage (2025) categorises AI usage into auxiliary, generative and prohibited uses, with different disclosure requirements for each scenario. However, Bradley et al. (2024) and Rughiniș et al. (2025) have highlighted that attitudes towards AI and the boundaries of its use are fluid, whether among higher education institutions or academic journal publishers. In other words, the boundaries of AI use have not affected the core governance frameworks of universities and academic journals, nor have existing power relations been altered.

In terms of research contributions, this study effectively fills a gap in current research on the ethics of AI use. Existing research often maps out the future of AI from an ethical perspective (Grichko et al., 2026; Nikoçeviq-Kurti & Bërdynaj-Syla, 2024) yet overlooks the power dynamics surrounding the scope of technological application within higher education institutions and academic journals. This implies that the acceptance of AI by higher education institutions and academic journal publishers stems from its alignment with mainstream

knowledge frameworks and institutional structures, an alignment that marginalises other possibilities (Bradley et al., 2024; Effoduh, 2025). However, this study has established that the key determinant of whether students engage in plagiarism is not their use of any AI tool, but rather whether their skill acquisition aligns with the essence of the institution's qualification standards. These findings also necessitate that higher education institutions and academic journal publishers clarify their own qualification systems and their focus on knowledge attribution. This implies that, although these institutions currently have explicit requirements for certifying the transmission of their core knowledge, these requirements are being challenged to varying degrees by the emergence of AI. The aim of this is to further enhance the professionalism and rigour of knowledge production within higher education degrees and academic journals. In summary, whilst the emergence of AI technology may not pose a threat to the production of knowledge, the authority and processes involved in the dissemination of knowledge through such tools involve deeper levels of cognitive construction.

Furthermore, this study makes significant theoretical contributions. The integration of Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence with actor-network theory creatively addresses the shortcomings of symbolic violence in understanding the dynamics among multiple actors. As Kalfa and Taksa (2015) concur in their evaluation of Bourdieu's theory, its structural framework fixes individuals' behavioural habits and tastes within specific fields, thereby influencing other classes and fields. This implies that Bourdieu's social process constitutes the manifestation of an individual, group or institution within a specific field. Whilst individuals are accorded a degree of agency and are interpreted through intersubjective characteristics, the theory remains subject to certain limitations due to its deterministic nature and its inability to address behavioural relationships between individuals. Consequently, the incorporation of actor-network theory effectively complements the theoretical framework of symbolic violence, extending it to the complex network of interactions between actors. Although the design of this study was not intended merely to examine the formulation of AI usage rules by universities and academic journal publishers, but rather to provide an in-depth exploration of the power relations inherent within them, numerous limitations remain. For instance, the collection of AI usage policies from higher education institutions is not comprehensive, and there is a lack of data on the actual experiences and attitudes of users operating within such management systems. Consequently, it is hoped that future research will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dual oppression faced by higher education administrators (such as lecturers) in the context of technological innovation, as well as their actual experiences and perspectives.

Overall, this study has established that the rules governing AI use are merely a disguised, seemingly objective mechanism, but in reality constitute a form of symbolic violence that serves to maintain and propagate the dominant ideology. More importantly, this study also reveals the dominant ideology concealed within these rules. In other words, it seeks to identify "how the dominant ideology shapes the formulation of ethical guidelines for AI." By identifying these symbolic markers, it can effectively assist higher education institutions and academic journal publishers in introducing ethical measures for AI usage that are more aligned with the dominant ideology, thereby contributing to improved work efficiency.

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