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ARTICLE

Women's Perceptions of Artificial Intelligence in Scientific Research

Percepción Femenina sobre Inteligencia Artificial en la Investigación Científica

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ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence (AI) has progressively transformed academic production processes by facilitating information search, scientific writing, and text analysis through advanced language models. This study aimed to analyze the use of AI in scientific research from a women's perspective. It followed a pragmatic paradigm, with a convergent mixed-methods design that was descriptive-interpretive and cross-sectional. The sample comprised 125 female university students from three private universities in Metropolitan Lima, selected through non-probability purposive sampling. Data were collected through a survey, using a structured questionnaire with closed-ended Likert-type items and complementary open-ended questions. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages), and qualitative data through thematic analysis. The results showed that participants perceived AI as a useful tool for accessing information, organizing ideas, saving time, and supporting the writing of scientific articles. Concerns were also identified regarding academic originality, bias, technological dependence, and the ethical use of these tools. The study concludes that AI can serve as a support resource for university research training, provided that its use is guided by ethical criteria, human oversight, and the strengthening of digital competence.

KEYWORDS: Artificial intelligence, scientific research, women's perceptions, digital competence, academic ethics.

RESUMEN

La inteligencia artificial (IA) ha transformado progresivamente los procesos de producción académica al facilitar la búsqueda de información, la redacción científica y el análisis de textos mediante modelos avanzados de lenguaje. El objetivo de la investigación fue analizar el uso de la inteligencia artificial en la investigación científica desde una perspectiva femenina. El estudio se desarrolló bajo el paradigma pragmático, con un método mixto, con un enfoque mixto, diseño convergente, un tipo descriptivo-interpretativo y un corte transversal. La muestra estuvo conformada por 125 estudiantes universitarias mujeres pertenecientes a tres universidades privadas de Lima Metropolitana, seleccionadas mediante muestreo intencional no probabilístico. La técnica utilizada fue la encuesta, y el instrumento consistió en un cuestionario estructurado con ítems cerrados de escala de tipo Likert y preguntas abiertas complementarias. El análisis cuantitativo se realizó mediante estadística descriptiva, a partir de frecuencias y porcentajes, mientras que el cualitativo se desarrolló mediante análisis temático. Los resultados evidenciaron que las participantes percibieron la inteligencia artificial como una herramienta útil para acceder a información, organizar ideas, optimizar el tiempo y apoyar la elaboración de artículos científicos. Asimismo, se identificaron preocupaciones relacionadas con la originalidad académica, los sesgos, la dependencia tecnológica y el uso ético de estas herramientas. Se concluyó que la inteligencia artificial constituyó un recurso de apoyo para la formación investigativa universitaria, siempre que su incorporación se realizara con criterios éticos, control humano y fortalecimiento de las competencias digitales.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Inteligencia artificial, investigación científica, percepción femenina, competencia digital, ética académica.

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Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) has progressively transformed academic production processes by facilitating writing, information searches, and text analysis through advanced language models. According to Martínez-Márquez (2025), discussing artificial intelligence involves entering the field of computer science, which has the capacity to execute processes associated with logical reasoning and learning. In educational and scientific settings, these tools are becoming increasingly relevant because they support activities related to academic writing, information management, and the preparation of research outputs. Therefore, their incorporation into scientific research creates new possibilities for optimizing academic tasks, but also requires criteria for responsible use.

Differences between men and women are also evident in academia, particularly in opportunities for participation, access, retention, and development in scientific and technological settings. Although the presence of women researchers in Latin America has increased, gaps persist in scientific careers, participation in technological fields, and confidence in the use of digital tools. In this context, Bullock et al. (2024) determined that women of low socioeconomic status have a low level of confidence in the use of AI; similarly, Jermutus et al. (2022) found that women have a lower predisposition to trust these technologies. Along the same lines, Busto (2024) states that women display less knowledge, a pessimistic attitude, and negative expectations toward AI, especially in certain age groups.

The use of AI in education has grown since 2015 and reached its greatest expansion in 2021, according to Dogan et al. (2023). These tools can promote innovation and efficiency in the education sector and in research because they facilitate tasks related to scientific writing, automated data analysis, and information organization. According to Flores-Vivar & García-Peñalvo (2023), AI improves the writing of scientific articles, increases productivity, and simplifies automated data analysis. Likewise, tools such as ChatGPT make it possible to select and paraphrase information in academic research, which contributes to effective teaching adapted to individual needs (Aydin & Karaarslan, 2023). Nevertheless, many studies focus on technical aspects and do not examine in sufficient depth the ethical implications, originality, biases, and transparency involved in the academic use of these technologies (Dogan et al., 2023).

The use of AI in the writing of scientific articles generates debate regarding its ethical and academic validity because of the risks associated with plagiarism, lack of originality, the reproduction of biases, and technological dependence. For this reason, it is necessary to analyze how female university students perceive, experience, and value these tools in their research processes. Consequently, the general objective of the study is to analyze the use of AI in scientific research from a women's perspective. Based on this, the following research question is posed: How do female university students perceive the use of artificial intelligence in the preparation of scientific articles?

Methodology

The present research was framed within the pragmatic paradigm. As Creswell & Creswell (2023) point out, pragmatism is grounded in situations, actions, and effects rather than in prior conditions, which makes it possible to integrate quantitative and qualitative strategies to understand the phenomenon under study in a complementary manner. Consistent with this, the study was developed using a mixed-methods approach, which is relevant in fields such as educational technology, where usage metrics must be understood together with users' experiences to address the existing problem (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). Thus, the quantitative component made it possible to describe the participants' perceptions through frequencies and percentages, whereas the qualitative component made it possible to interpret the meanings attributed to the use of artificial intelligence in the preparation of scientific articles.

The study adopted a convergent design, which, according to Creswell & Creswell (2023), corresponds to a mixed-methods procedure aimed at obtaining different but complementary data on the same phenomenon. In this case, the quantitative data, obtained through closed-ended Likert-type items, and the qualitative data, derived from open-ended questions, were collected simultaneously through a digital questionnaire.

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Subsequently, both types of information were organized and integrated into the interpretation of the results based on the dimensions of use, accessibility, ethics, and efficiency. The research was descriptive-interpretive in type because it made it possible to identify response patterns and analyze the meanings attributed by the participants to their experiences with AI, in accordance with Guevara-Pascual et al. (2020). It was also cross-sectional because the information was collected at a single point in time, without manipulation of variables, which Albornoz Zamora & Guzmán (2023) associate with assessing the frequency of a phenomenon in a population.

The population consisted of female university students from three private universities in Metropolitan Lima. According to Stratton (2023), a population or sample is a group of participants who meet specific criteria. In this study, the sample consisted of 125 female university students selected through non-probability purposive sampling, based on accessibility and availability to participate. The participants belonged to different age ranges, with the greatest concentration between 20 and 22 years of age, followed by the 23-to-25 and 18-to-19 age ranges, which made it possible to describe female university students' perceptions of the use of AI in scientific research processes.

The data-collection technique used was the survey, administered through a structured digital questionnaire. According to Sánchez Martínez (2022), data-collection techniques make it possible to obtain information from different sources to construct an overall view of the object of study. Likewise, Barreto Ascona & Lezcano Mencia (2023) indicate that these techniques favor a holistic understanding of the phenomenon analyzed. In this case, the survey made it possible to collect, in an orderly and systematic way, students' perceptions of the use of artificial intelligence tools in the preparation of scientific articles, considering both closed-ended responses and complementary open-ended responses.

The instrument used was a structured questionnaire consisting of closed-ended Likert-type items and complementary open-ended questions. According to Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza (2018), the structured questionnaire is one of the instruments most widely used for data collection in quantitative studies because it makes it possible to identify specific variables and present the results in an organized manner. In this study, the closed-ended items made it possible to analyze the participants' perceptions across four dimensions: use, accessibility, ethics, and efficiency. The open-ended questions, in turn, made it possible to complement the results with direct quotations and reflections on academic usefulness, ethical awareness, and the development of digital competence. In this regard, León & Montero (2020) maintain that this type of instrument is pragmatic in its application and interpretation and is suitable for educational contexts.

The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, based on the calculation of frequencies and percentages of the responses obtained on the Likert-type scale. This procedure made it possible to describe the trend in the students' perceptions in each of the dimensions evaluated. The results were presented through tables and figures to clearly show the distribution of responses concerning the use, accessibility, ethics, and efficiency of artificial intelligence in the preparation of scientific articles.

The qualitative analysis was conducted through thematic analysis. Baena & Resurrección (2023) indicate that this type of analysis constitutes a flexible methodology adaptable to different topics and forms of data collection. Likewise, Braun & Clarke (2022) state that thematic analysis makes it possible to develop, analyze, and report patterns or themes within a dataset. In this study, the open-ended responses were reviewed to identify interpretive patterns associated with the academic usefulness of AI, ethical awareness regarding its use, and the development of digital competence. These qualitative findings were incorporated into the results to complement the interpretation of the quantitative data and strengthen the joint interpretation characteristic of the convergent mixed design.

Data integration was carried out through the comparison and joint interpretation of the quantitative and qualitative results. The percentages obtained from the closed-ended items made it possible to identify general trends in perception, whereas the open-ended responses facilitated understanding of the meanings attributed by the

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participants to the use of AI. In this way, the quantitative results described the level of agreement or disagreement in each dimension, and the qualitative results made it possible to expand the interpretation of those trends through the students' expressions and reflections. This integration made it possible to address the objective of analyzing the use of artificial intelligence in scientific research from a women's perspective.

The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of research involving human participants in educational contexts. At the beginning of the digital questionnaire in Google Forms, the participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the confidential treatment of the information they provided. Sañudo (2006) states that all educational research must be governed by ethical principles aimed at respect for participants, benefit, reliability, justice, and scientific integrity. Consistent with these principles, the students participated freely and voluntarily, their anonymity was protected, and it was guaranteed that the information collected would be used exclusively for academic purposes. The scope of the study was also explained to promote conscious, responsible, and ethical participation.

Results

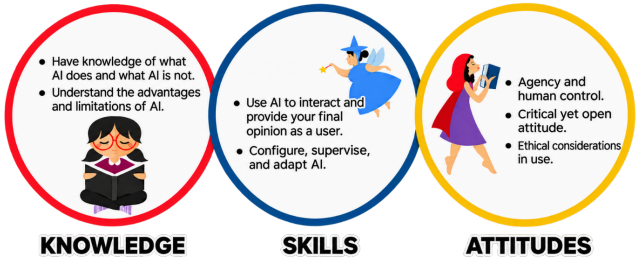
The results were organized according to the four dimensions established for the analysis: use, accessibility, the ethical dimension of the use of artificial intelligence within the framework of Sustainable Development Goal 10 (SDG 10), and efficiency. Based on the 125 questionnaires administered, it was identified that the participants perceived AI as a useful tool to support the preparation of scientific articles, especially because of its contribution to reducing effort, optimizing time, and facilitating access to relevant information. Nevertheless, cautious perceptions were also observed regarding reliability, biases, academic originality, and the ethical use of these tools.

The quantitative data are presented through frequencies and percentages obtained from the closed-ended items on the Likert-type scale. Complementarily, the open-ended responses made it possible to identify three qualitative themes associated with academic usefulness, ethical awareness, and the development of digital competence. This organization made it possible to integrate the quantitative and qualitative findings in accordance with the convergent mixed design established in the methodology.

Figure 1 is presented below and is related to citizens' requirements for interaction with AI within the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp). According to the reported results, the students were located at an intermediate level of digital competence, between levels 3 and 4. This result made it possible to contextualize the participants' perceptions regarding the use of AI tools in academic and research activities.

Figure 1

Citizens' Requirements for Interaction with AI-DigComp.



Note. In this figure, the basic elements for establishing interaction with AI according to the DigComp framework are shown; authors' own work (2025).

Dimension 1: Use. This dimension consisted of three questions aimed at measuring the participants' perceptions of the content, reliability, and adaptability of AI in the preparation of scientific articles. The questions used a five-level Likert-type scale, which made it possible to identify trends of acceptance, neutrality, and disagreement regarding the use of these tools in academic research processes.

Category 1: Reliability. The distribution of the data suggests that 42.4% approve of it as a conditional assistant; on the other hand, 44.0% adopt a wait-and-see stance, indicating that AI has not yet demonstrated stability in terms of the level of reliability, precision, and depth required by high-quality research. This has generated a debate that does not question the usefulness of AI, but

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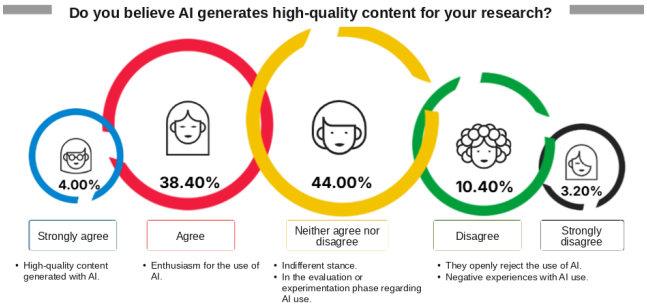
rather its maturity for carrying out tasks that demand a high level of intellectual rigor (see Figure 2).

Figure 2
Use Dimension-Question 1.



Note. In this figure, the results obtained (according to the Likert scale) in response to question 1 of the Use Dimension are shown, with reference to the belief regarding the use of AI for generating quality content, authors' own work (2025).

Regarding question 2, presented in Table 1, 60.80% of the respondents reported that they strongly agreed and 5.60% agreed. Overall, 66.40% expressed a favorable perception of the usefulness of AI for content generation. On the other hand, 20.00% adopted a neutral position, while 13.60% were distributed between the disagree and strongly disagree options.

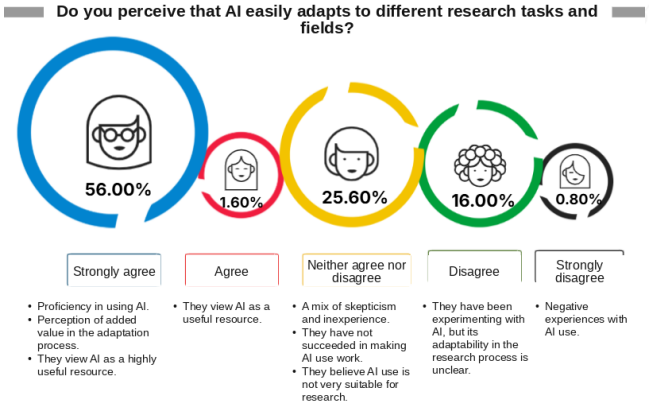
Table 1
Use Dimension-Question 2.

Level	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	76	60.80%
Agree	7	5.60%
Neither agree nor disagree	25	20.00%
Disagree	14	11.20%
Strongly disagree	3	2.40%

Note. The tabulated results in response to question 2 of the Use Dimension are shown with reference to the quality of the content generated by AI, authors' own work (2025).

Category 2: Adaptability. In question 3, presented in Figure 3, 56.00% of the participants reported that they strongly agreed with the ease of adaptation of AI in research activities. A group of responses was also observed in the disagreement and neutrality positions, which shows that the perception of the adaptability of these tools was not homogeneous among the participants. In this regard, the results show a favorable trend, accompanied by a smaller group that expressed reservations regarding their use.

Figure 3
Question 3-Use Dimension.



Note. In this figure, the results obtained (according to the Likert scale) for question 3 of the Use Dimension are shown, with reference to the perception of how easily AI adapts to research activities, authors' own work (2025).

Qualitative Analysis

The open-ended responses made it possible to complement the quantitative results of the use dimension. The participants indicated that AI facilitated access to information, the paraphrasing of texts, and the organization of ideas during the preparation of research. Among the responses, participant P2 stated that "access to large amounts of information facilitated the preparation of her research," while participant P5 mentioned that "the integration of AI tools into my writing process has greatly facilitated the paraphrasing of texts." These statements are linked to the qualitative axis of academic usefulness.

Dimension 2: Accessibility. This dimension consisted of two questions aimed at measuring perceptions of ease and intuitiveness in the use of AI tools. The questions used a five-level Likert-type scale to describe the degree of accessibility perceived by the students when using these tools for the preparation of scientific articles.

Category 1: Ease. Table 2 shows that 12.80% of the participants strongly agreed and 53.60% agreed with the ease of use of AI tools. Overall, 66.40% expressed a favorable perception. In turn, 23.20% remained in a neutral position, while 7.20% indicated disagreement and 3.20% strong

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disagreement.

Table 2

Accessibility Dimension-Question 1.

Level	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	16	12.80%
Agree	67	53.60%
Neither agree nor disagree	29	23.20%
Disagree	9	7.20%
Strongly disagree	4	3.20%

Note. This table shows the tabulated results in response to question 1 of the Accessibility Dimension with reference to the ease of use of AI tools, authors' own work (2025).

Category 2: Intuitiveness. Regarding question 2, presented in Table 3, 15.20% of the participants reported that they strongly agreed and 58.40% agreed with the user-friendliness of AI tools. Overall, 73.60% expressed a favorable perception. Likewise, 20.80% adopted a neutral position, while 5.60% were distributed between the disagreement and strong disagreement options.

Table 3

Accessibility Dimension-Question 2.

Level	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	19	15.20%
Agree	73	58.40%
Neither agree nor disagree	26	20.80%
Disagree	5	4.00%
Strongly disagree	2	1.60%

Note. This table shows the tabulated results in response to question 2 of the Accessibility Dimension with reference to the user-friendliness of AI tools, authors' own work (2025).

Qualitative Analysis of the Accessibility Dimension

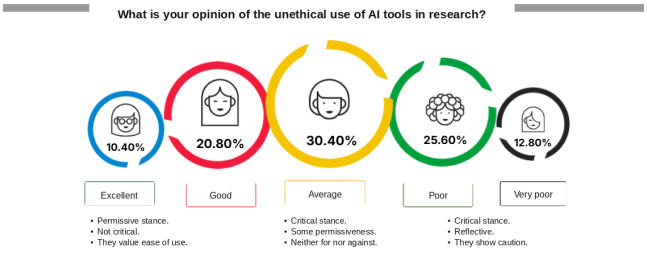
In the open-ended responses, the participants stated that AI tools supported the development of their research because of the speed of response and the ease of interaction in natural language. These qualitative results complement quantitative data, in which a favorable perception of ease and intuitiveness of use predominates. However, the presence of neutral responses shows that not all participants perceived the same level of accessibility when using these tools.

Dimension 3: Ethical Dimension of AI Use within the Framework of SDG 10. This dimension consisted of five questions aimed at measuring perceptions of originality, integrity, responsible use, biases, and dependence on AI. The questions used a five-level Likert-type scale, which made it possible to identify trends in the ethical assessment of AI in the preparation of scientific articles.

Category 1: Originality and Integrity. Figure 4 presents the results related to perceptions of the unethical use of AI in research. The highest percentage corresponded to the average option, with 30.40%, followed by the poor option, with 25.60%, and the good option, with 20.80%. Responses were also recorded at very poor (12.80%) and excellent (10.40%) levels. These data show a diverse distribution of perceptions, with a predominance of intermediate and critical assessments regarding the ethical use of AI.

Figure 4

Ethical Use of AI-Question 1.



Note. This figure shows the results obtained (according to the Likert scale) for question 1 of the Ethical Use Dimension, with reference to perceptions of the ethical use of AI tools for the development of research, authors' own work (2025).

Table 4 shows that 39.20% of the participants considered it very important to maintain originality and avoid plagiarism in research supported by AI, while 41.60% considered it important. Overall, 80.80% placed a high value on originality and scientific integrity. The remaining responses were distributed among somewhat important (16.00%), slightly important (2.40%), and not important (0.80%).

Table 4

Question 2-Ethical Use of AI.

Level	Count	Percentage
Very important	49	39.20%
Important	52	41.60%
Somewhat important	20	16.00%

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Level	Count	Percentage
Not important	1	0.80%
Slightly important	3	2.40%

Note. The tabulated results are shown in response to question 2 of the Ethical Use of AI Dimension, with reference to the originality and scientific integrity of research conducted with AI, authors' own work (2025).

Category 2: Ethical and Responsible Use. Table 5 presents the results related to the ethical and responsible use of AI in the development of research. Most participants rated this aspect as good (40.80%) or excellent (24.80%). Likewise, 32.80% rated it as average, while 1.60% rated it as poor. These data show a favorable trend toward the assessment of responsible AI use, although a relevant group remains in an intermediate position.

Table 5

Ethical Use of AI-Question 3.

Level	Count	Percentage
Excellent	31	24.80%
Good	51	40.80%
Average	41	32.80%
Poor	2	1.60%

Note. The results are shown in response to question 3 of the Ethical Use of AI Dimension with reference to ethical and responsible use in the development of research, authors' own work (2025).

Table 6 shows that 10.40% of the participants strongly agreed and 41.60% agreed with the possibility that AI may generate biases in academic research. Overall, 52.00% recognized this risk. On the other hand, 33.60% remained neutral, while 12.00% disagreed and 2.40% strongly disagreed.

Table 6

Ethical Use of AI-Question 4.

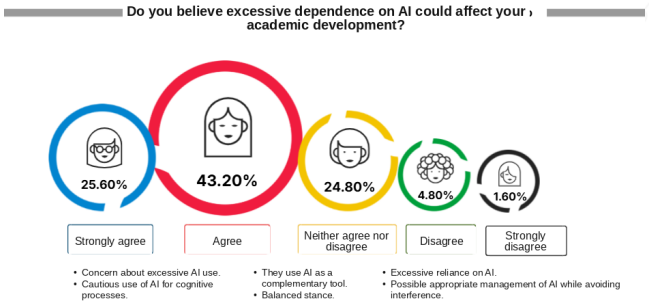
Level	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	13	10.40%
Agree	52	41.60%
Neither agree nor disagree	42	33.60%
Disagree	15	12.00%
Strongly disagree	3	2.40%

Note. The results in response to question 4 of the Ethical Use of AI Dimension are shown below, with reference to the biases that AI may generate, authors' own work (2025).

Figure 5 presents the results related to excessive dependence on AI. A total of 43.20% of the participants reported that they agreed and 25.60% strongly agreed that such dependence could negatively affect academic development. Likewise, 24.80% adopted a neutral position, while 4.80% disagreed and 1.60% strongly disagreed.

Figure 5

Ethical Use of AI-Question 5.



Note. The results obtained (according to the Likert scale) for question 5 of the Ethical Use of AI Dimension are shown with reference to the belief regarding excessive dependence on AI and its negative effect on the development of research, authors' own work (2025).

Qualitative Analysis of the Ethical Dimension

The open-ended responses showed that the participants recognized the importance of using AI consciously, responsibly, and critically in the preparation of scientific articles. The qualitative perceptions were mainly related to the need to avoid plagiarism, preserve academic originality, and maintain human oversight over content generated with AI support. These findings complement quantitative results, especially those related to the high value placed on scientific integrity and the recognition of possible biases.

Dimension 4: Efficiency. This dimension consisted of three questions aimed at measuring perceptions of access to information and time management. The questions used a five-level Likert-type scale, which made it possible to describe the participants' perceptions of the efficient use of AI in the preparation of scientific articles.

Category 1: Access. Figure 6 presents the results related to the capacity of AI to facilitate access to useful and relevant information during the research process. The agreement level obtained the highest percentage, at 55.20%, followed by strong agreement, at 12.80%. Likewise, 26.40% of the participants adopted a neutral position, while the disagreement and strong disagreement levels represented lower percentages.

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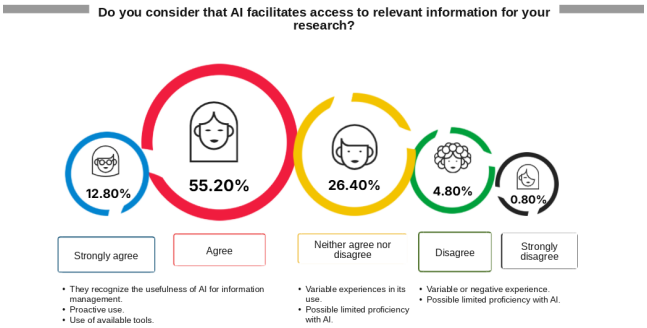
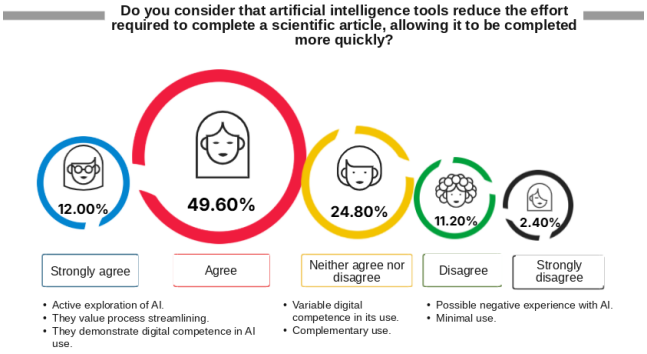
Figure 6
Efficiency-Question 1.



Note. In this figure, the results obtained (according to the Likert scale) for question 1 of the Efficiency Dimension are shown, with reference to perceptions of the ease provided by AI in accessing relevant information in support of research, authors' own work (2025).

Category 2: Time Management. Figure 7 shows the results related to reduced effort in the development of research. Most participants reported that they agreed (49.60%), while 12.00% indicated that they strongly agreed. In turn, 24.80% adopted a neutral position, 11.20% disagreed, and 2.40% strongly disagreed. These results show a predominantly favorable perception of the contribution of AI to time optimization and effort reduction.

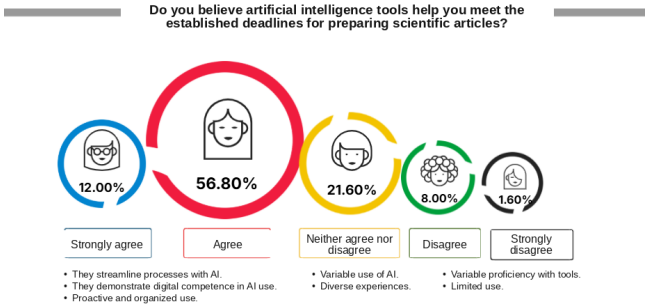
Figure 7
Efficiency-Question 2.



Note. In this figure, the results obtained (according to the Likert scale) for question 2 of the Efficiency Dimension are shown with reference to opinions about AI tools in reducing the effort required for the development of research, authors' own work (2025).

Figure 8 presents the results of meeting deadlines in the preparation of scientific articles. A total of 56.80% of the participants reported that they agreed and 12.00% strongly agreed. Likewise, 21.60% remained in a neutral position. These data show a favorable perception of the role of AI as support for time management and for meeting academic activities related to research.

Figure 8
Efficiency-Question 3.



Note. In this figure, the results obtained (according to the Likert scale) for question 3 of the Efficiency Dimension are shown, with reference to the belief regarding AI tools for meeting deadlines in the development of research, authors' own work (2025).

Qualitative Analysis of the Efficiency Dimension

The open-ended responses made it possible to complement the quantitative results of the efficiency dimension. The participants indicated that AI contributed to organizing ideas, accessing information more quickly, and reducing the time devoted to some tasks in the research process. However, neutral and disagreement perceptions were also identified, indicating that perceived efficiency was not uniform among all participants. Overall, the results show that AI was valued as a support tool, although its usefulness depended on the way in which the students incorporated it into their academic activities.

Discussion

The present study makes it possible to respond that female university students perceive the use of artificial intelligence in scientific research as an academic support tool that facilitates access to information, the organization of ideas, text writing, and time optimization; however, this positive assessment is accompanied by a critical stance toward the reliability, originality, biases, and excessive dependence associated with these technologies. From a women's perspective, the

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findings show that the participants do not regard AI as a neutral or fully autonomous resource, but rather as a tool that requires ethical criteria, human oversight, and digital competence for its responsible integration into the preparation of scientific articles.

These results are related to the current context of higher education, in which universities face the challenge of adapting to the information society through the incorporation of emerging technologies into teaching, learning, and research processes. This transformation has generated significant changes in social organization and in forms of interaction with technology (Arees, 2023). Nevertheless, the effective adoption of AI depends not only on its availability, but also on users' attitudes, perceptions, and levels of trust. In this regard, Ofosu-Ampong (2023) notes that negative perceptions of information and communication technologies can influence assessments of their usability and users' experiences. In the present study, although favorable perceptions regarding the use of AI are identified, a cautious attitude toward its risks is also evident.

The qualitative findings show that the participants recognize the academic usefulness of AI for organizing information, understanding complex content, paraphrasing texts, and supporting the preparation of research. These results are consistent with Flores-Vivar & García-Peñalvo (2023), who highlight the role of AI as a cognitive assistant in knowledge management in educational settings. Likewise, they are related to Aydin & Karaarslan (2023), who indicate that these tools can support academic productivity, scientific writing, and preliminary information analysis. In the present study, this usefulness is also reflected in quantitative data, given that more than 60% of the participants report a favorable perception of the capacity of AI to facilitate access to information, reduce effort, and support the preparation of scientific articles.

Regarding accessibility, the results show that a significant proportion of students consider AI tools easy and intuitive to use. This perception is relevant because it makes it possible to understand that the integration of these technologies into academic research depends not only on their technical availability, but also on the user experience and the trust they generate among students. Unlike studies that report low levels of female trust in AI, such as those by Bullock et al. (2024) and Busto (2024), the participants in this research show a positive self-perception of their competencies and a favorable disposition toward incorporating AI into their academic activities. This difference may be linked to the university context, the age of the participants, and their familiarity with digital tools, although these factors must be interpreted with caution because the study did not use a comparative gender design or causally evaluate these conditions.

The ethical dimension constitutes one of the most relevant findings of the study. The participants recognize the importance of preserving originality, avoiding plagiarism, and maintaining responsible use of AI in scientific research. This concern coincides with that of Dogan et al. (2023), who maintain that the development of ethical competencies is fundamental for the responsible use of AI in higher education. It is also related to Jermutus et al. (2022), who warn that trust in AI systems must be analyzed critically, especially when their outputs may influence decisions, interpretations, or academic products. In this study, the recognition of possible biases and risks associated with technological dependence shows that students value AI as support, but not as a substitute for researcher judgment.

The results also make it possible to interpret the relationship among AI, digital competence, and citizenship within the DigComp 2.2 framework. The participants' responses show that the use of these tools is associated with skills in searching, analysis, information management, and critical evaluation of digital content. This finding is related to Vuorikari et al. (2022), who highlight the need to strengthen citizens' digital competence to interact critically and responsibly with emerging technologies. Likewise, the placement of the participants at an intermediate level of digital competence makes it possible to understand that, although there is willingness to use AI, academic training is still required in digital literacy, information verification, and the ethical use of content generated or mediated by automated systems.

From a gender perspective, the results show that the students do not position themselves as passive users of technology, but rather as reflective agents who recognize the benefits and risks of AI in academic production. This finding is consistent with García (2003), who describes the growing process of

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women's empowerment and autonomy in academic settings. However, it also confirms that the greater presence of women in higher education does not by itself eliminate existing gaps in scientific and technological production. In this regard, the use of AI could contribute to strengthening research competencies and digital competence, provided that its incorporation is accompanied by institutional policies that promote equity, access, ethical training, and bias prevention.

The findings are also related to the approaches of UNESCO (2017) and to the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 10, which is aimed at reducing inequalities. AI can become a support resource for expanding learning and research opportunities, but it can also reproduce inequalities if it is used without ethical criteria, digital literacy, or institutional guidance mechanisms. Along these lines, Jermutus et al. (2022) and Busto (2024) warn that AI systems can reproduce biases present in the data on which they are trained. Therefore, the results of this study reinforce the need to integrate AI into higher education from a critical, inclusive, and responsible perspective.

Among the limitations of the study, it is recognized that the sample consisted of 125 female students from three private universities in Metropolitan Lima, selected through non-probability purposive sampling. For this reason, the results cannot be generalized to the entire female university population or to other educational contexts. Likewise, the study was cross-sectional, so it only made it possible to analyze perceptions at a specific point in time. In addition, the data were based on the participants' self-perceptions, which may be influenced by previous experiences, the level of familiarity with AI, or the degree of digital competence. It is also recognized that, although the convergent mixed design made it possible to integrate quantitative and qualitative data, future research could explore relational or comparative statistical analyses in greater depth.

These findings open several directions for future research. Because the study was conducted in a single private university and relied on a cross-sectional, mainly descriptive design, it remains unclear whether the perceptions identified here hold across public institutions, other disciplines, and different socioeducational contexts, or how they evolve as students gain experience with AI. Further work is also needed to explain, rather than describe, how digital competence and trust in AI relate to academic production, and whether women and men differ in the adoption, trust, and ethical use of these tools in higher education.

Conclusions

The study is relevant because it makes it possible to understand women's perceptions of the use of artificial intelligence in scientific research, especially in the preparation of academic articles in higher education. The results show that the students recognize AI as a support tool for accessing information, organizing ideas, optimizing time, and strengthening certain aspects of digital competence related to research production. However, this favorable assessment is not absolute, since concerns related to originality, biases, technological dependence, and the responsible use of these tools are also identified.

The progressive integration of artificial intelligence into academic research processes may influence the way in which students carry out search, writing, preliminary analysis, and time-management activities. Nevertheless, the findings show that its incorporation requires ethical criteria, institutional support, and training in digital competence to avoid uncritical or dependent uses. In this regard, the study provides evidence for understanding that AI can support university research training if it is used as a complementary resource and not as a substitute for critical judgment, academic authorship, and scientific responsibility.

For future research, it is recommended to (a) include students from public universities, different disciplinary areas, and diverse socioeducational contexts; (b) conduct longitudinal studies that assess the sustained impact of AI use on research competencies, critical thinking, and scientific writing; (c) apply relational or comparative statistical analyses linking digital competence, trust in AI, and academic production; and (d) compare results by gender and by level of familiarity with AI, while examining the ethical implications of its use in depth.

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Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to the conduct of this study or to the interpretation of its results. Likewise, they state that they do not maintain personal, academic, or financial relationships that could influence the development or findings of the research.

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The authors declare that the present research received no funding from public, private, or commercial institutions and that it was conducted using their own resources, which guarantees independence in the research process.

Ethics Statement

The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles applicable to research involving human participants in educational contexts. The students were informed at the beginning of the digital questionnaire about the objective of the research, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the academic use of the information collected. Likewise, they provided informed consent before responding to the instrument. The participants' anonymity, data confidentiality, and protection of the information provided were guaranteed, avoiding the collection of identifiable personal data. The results were analyzed in aggregate form and used exclusively for scientific purposes, respecting the principles of academic integrity, research responsibility, and ethical use of information.

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