

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Gulf University Students' Desire for Traditional Reading and Research in Light of the Uses and Gratifications Theory

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Abstract—This study aims to identify the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and its tools on the desire of Gulf University students for traditional reading and research, according to the uses and gratifications theory. With the rapid development of AI and the widespread use of its tools among university students, these technologies have become a primary means of obtaining information for research and assignments due to their speed and ease. This has raised questions about the impact on students' interest in in-depth reading and reliance on traditional sources such as books and academic references, and whether this impact is positive or negative. The study adopted a quantitative approach and was applied to a sample of Gulf University students using a survey method during 2025 to measure their reliance on AI tools for acquiring information and to reveal their impact on their motivation for self-directed research through books and traditional academic research. The study also sought to explore differences in students' preferences according to demographic variables and to identify the benefits and challenges associated with using AI in the educational journey. The results showed that more than half of Gulf University students (52%) regularly use AI tools in their university studies, indicating the widespread use of these tools and students' reliance on them for learning and academic research.

Keywords—artificial intelligence; traditional reading; academic research; uses and gratifications theory; Gulf University; higher education; ChatGPT; self-directed learning

I. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary world is experiencing unprecedented acceleration in the development of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, a phenomenon that has penetrated virtually every domain of human activity, including higher education. Among university students in particular, AI tools such as ChatGPT and other intelligent assistants have become primary mechanisms for accessing information, completing academic assignments, and navigating the growing complexity of contemporary knowledge environments. These tools offer speed, convenience, and accessibility that traditional research methods—centered on books, academic journals, and library databases—cannot readily match. This fundamental shift in information-seeking behavior has prompted urgent and important questions about the consequences of AI adoption for students' engagement with deep reading, critical analysis, and independent academic inquiry.

The integration of AI tools into academic life is not a marginal or peripheral phenomenon. It represents a structural transformation in the relationship between students and knowledge: how it is sought, accessed,

processed, evaluated, and retained. Platforms such as ChatGPT, Google AI, and Gemini have created an environment in which information that once required hours of library research, careful reading, and systematic note-taking can be obtained within seconds through a single query. While this efficiency gain is undeniably valuable in many respects, it raises fundamental questions about the cognitive and intellectual processes that are displaced when the labor-intensive practices of traditional research are replaced by instant AI-generated responses. The question of whether students are becoming more informed or less deeply educated as a result of AI adoption is one of the most consequential educational challenges of the current era.

The research problem addressed by this study lies at the intersection of technology adoption and academic behavior: specifically, whether the widespread and intensive use of AI tools among Gulf University students has led to a measurable weakening of motivation for self-directed research and a decline in the inclination toward traditional reading and academic investigation, or whether AI has instead enhanced students' intellectual curiosity and capacity

for self-guided learning in new and productive ways. The question is not simply whether AI is used—the evidence clearly shows that it is used widely—but rather what the qualitative implications of this usage are for the intellectual habits and academic competencies of the next generation of scholars and professionals.

The significance of this research stems from several interconnected dimensions. Academically, understanding the relationship between AI tool usage and traditional reading behavior is essential for designing curricula and pedagogical strategies that harness the benefits of AI while preserving the development of critical thinking, analytical reading, and independent research skills. Institutionally, the findings can inform Gulf University's approach to integrating digital tools within its educational programs. Societally, the study contributes to a broader understanding of how technological change is reshaping intellectual culture and the relationship between students and knowledge in the Arab Gulf context.

The study has several objectives: to measure the extent of students' reliance on AI tools for information acquisition; to assess the impact of AI on students' motivation for reading from traditional sources such as books and academic articles; to identify the relationship between AI usage and students' interest in deep academic research; to explore differences across demographic groups including age and academic specialization; and to offer recommendations for achieving a constructive balance between AI tool usage and traditional research methods in higher education.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The existing body of scholarship on AI and academic behavior reflects a consistent and convergent picture of a technology that is simultaneously beneficial and potentially disruptive to traditional learning practices. The literature spans Arabic-language studies focused on the Gulf and wider Arab academic context, as well as a growing international body of research, and the findings across both domains show notable convergence on key themes including the widespread adoption of AI tools, the measurable impact on reading habits and research motivation, and the importance of achieving a balanced integration of AI and traditional learning methods.

Ramadan (2025) conducted a systematic review of trends in AI application in information retrieval, finding that AI tools have significantly facilitated research processes but may simultaneously reduce reliance on traditional research methods and deep reading. Al-Majaidah (2025) investigated the role of AI technologies in developing Arabic language skills among students, showing that AI tools contribute to improving writing and linguistic expression skills while enhancing self-directed learning capacity, though emphasizing the importance of combining technological and traditional learning approaches.

Al-Omari and Al-Harbi (2025) examined the role of generative AI in transforming educational processes, with a particular focus on higher education, concluding that integrating AI technologies in education has contributed to changing learning and research patterns and increasing reliance on digital sources. Hussein (2024) focused specifically on the impact of AI applications on the quality and speed of scientific research production in universities, finding that modern applications have helped increase research efficiency by facilitating data collection and analysis, but have raised concerns about declining independent research effort. Al-Jazira Net (2024) offered a journalistic analysis of the consequences of increasing dependence on AI tools, noting that these technologies assist researchers in accelerating academic work but may simultaneously weaken critical thinking and creative skills, particularly among university students.

CEIDR (2025) addressed AI's impact on reading habits specifically, finding that reliance on ready-made summaries and intelligent tools has led to a decline in traditional reading engagement, while simultaneously creating opportunities to enhance digital reading in interactive formats. Cahyani et al. (2025) examined the impact of AI tool usage on critical reading skills among university students, employing a quantitative approach using questionnaires and reading tests, and finding a negative relationship between intensive AI tool usage and the level of analytical reading. Sayeedi et al. (2025) explored university students' perceptions of using large language models compared to traditional search engines, finding that students do not completely replace traditional search engines with AI tools but tend to combine both approaches according to the purpose of their inquiry. Fu and Hiniker (2025) analyzed the impact of AI tool usage on students'

reading processes and cognitive engagement, finding a tendency toward less active engagement with texts when AI tools are used intensively. Ward et al. (2024) found that AI tools accelerated task completion and improved some academic outcomes, but led to a decline in traditional study skills including deep reading and self-directed learning.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory was developed by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch in 1973 as a response to the then-dominant effects-based paradigm in mass communication research, which treated audiences as passive recipients of media influence. The theory proposed, instead, that individuals are active and purposeful in their engagement with media, selecting channels and content that satisfy specific felt needs. These needs were categorized into informational or cognitive needs—the desire to acquire knowledge, obtain news, and understand the world; affective needs—the desire for emotional engagement, entertainment, and aesthetic pleasure; personal identity needs—the use of media to reinforce personal values and situate the self within a social context; and social integration needs—using media to facilitate social interaction and a sense of community. The theory has proven highly adaptable across new media environments and has been extensively applied to digital technologies, social media platforms, and most recently to AI tools.

The theoretical framework underpinning this study is the Uses and Gratifications Theory, originally formulated by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973). This theory focuses on why and how individuals actively use media to satisfy their personal, cognitive, and social needs, rather than being passive recipients of media influence. The fundamental premise is that the user is active and purposeful in selecting media tools that fulfill specific desired outcomes. Applied to the context of AI tools in education, the theory illuminates the motivations driving students to adopt these technologies: the need for rapid access to information, the desire to reduce cognitive effort, the pursuit of academic success, and the gratification of intellectual curiosity. The theory also provides a framework for understanding the consequences of this usage, since the gratifications obtained through AI tools may partially substitute for the gratifications previously derived from traditional reading and

research activities, potentially leading to a reorientation of academic behavior over time.

Research Gap, Research Questions, and Hypotheses

A synthesis of the existing literature reveals a significant and consequential research gap that the present study is designed to address. While numerous studies have examined individual aspects of AI's impact on student learning—including information retrieval, writing skills, and academic performance—few have directly investigated the specific and subjectively experienced relationship between AI tool usage and students' desire for traditional reading and research in the Gulf academic context. Most prior studies approached AI from a general angle or focused on a single dimension without deeply measuring the reflection of this on students' desire to read from books and engage in traditional academic research with its associated demands of patience, concentration, and independent analysis. Furthermore, the body of research specifically situated in Bahraini and Gulf university contexts is limited, meaning that international findings cannot be assumed to transfer directly to local conditions without empirical verification.

A synthesis of the existing literature reveals that while numerous studies have examined individual aspects of AI's impact on student learning—including information retrieval, writing skills, and academic performance—few have directly investigated the specific relationship between AI tool usage and students' desire for traditional reading and research in the Gulf academic context. Most prior studies approached AI from a general angle or focused on a single dimension such as information retrieval or academic performance improvement, without deeply measuring the reflection of this on students' desire to read from books and engage in traditional academic research. The present study addresses this gap by directly linking AI tool usage to traditional reading and research motivation among Gulf University students, grounded in the Uses and Gratifications Theory, and situated within the specific cultural and educational context of Bahrain.

The study addresses the following research questions: RQ1: To what extent does the use of AI tools affect Gulf University students' desire for traditional research? RQ2: How do Gulf University students use AI tools as a substitute for traditional books? RQ3: To

what extent do AI tools affect students' library visits and traditional book reading? RQ4: What factors influence students' desire to use AI instead of traditional methods? RQ5: Does student use of AI affect faculty members' practice of traditional academic work?

The study advances five hypotheses: H1: There is a significant relationship between the speed of information access when using AI tools and the degree of student reliance on them in research and discovery. H2: Student use of AI tools contributes to enhancing their desire to follow scientific developments and access research more easily. H3: The level of AI tool usage in research differs according to students' age groups and cultural backgrounds, reflecting on their evaluation of information quality. H4: Some students perceive that excessive reliance on AI can affect research credibility and reduce the quality of its results. H5: AI is expected to affect faculty members' desire to practice their work in the traditional manner through books and traditional research.

II. METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach adopted in this study is grounded in the epistemological commitments of quantitative social science research, which prioritizes the systematic and objective measurement of social phenomena through the collection and analysis of numerical data. A quantitative approach is particularly well-suited to this study's objectives because the core research questions involve measuring the extent and patterns of AI tool usage, quantifying the perceived impact of that usage on reading and research motivation, and identifying differences in behavior and attitude across demographic subgroups. These are inherently measurable variables that can be reliably captured through a well-designed survey instrument and analyzed through appropriate statistical methods.

This study adopts a quantitative approach, selected for its suitability to the research topic, as it allows measurement of the phenomenon under study in a numerical and precise manner through the collection of data amenable to statistical analysis. The quantitative method enables the researcher to examine the relationship between the level of AI tool usage among students and their inclination toward traditional sources, without intervening in their behavior or directing them. The study employs a social survey

method through the distribution of a questionnaire to a sample of Gulf University students from different specializations and academic levels.

Research Design

The research design is descriptive-analytical in character, systematically combining quantitative data collection with descriptive statistical analysis to characterize the phenomenon under study and identify meaningful patterns and relationships among its key variables. The descriptive approach is appropriate here because the study aims not to manipulate variables or test causal mechanisms in a controlled experimental setting, but rather to provide a comprehensive and accurate characterization of the current state of AI tool adoption and its perceived effects on traditional reading and research behavior among a defined student population. The analytical dimension of the design involves the systematic comparison of responses across subgroups and the testing of the study's hypotheses against the empirical data.

The research design is descriptive-analytical in character, combining quantitative data collection with systematic descriptive analysis of patterns and relationships among variables. The study focuses on measuring four principal dimensions: the extent and patterns of AI tool usage among Gulf University students; the current state of students' engagement with traditional reading sources; the perceived impact of AI tools on students' motivation for traditional research; and students' attitudes toward the benefits and challenges associated with AI usage in the educational journey. Data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel, employing descriptive statistical methods including frequency distributions, percentages, and comparative analysis across demographic subgroups.

Sampling

The study population comprises all students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate programs at Gulf University in the Kingdom of Bahrain for the academic year 2024–2025, spanning all colleges and specializations. This population was selected because it directly engages with modern technologies including AI tools in its educational and research activities, making it an appropriate target for achieving the study's objectives. Gulf University students represent an academically active youth cohort that continuously

interacts with both digital and traditional knowledge sources.

A simple random sampling method was adopted, whereby all members of the study community at Gulf University were given an equal opportunity to participate in the questionnaire without discrimination between specializations, academic levels, or gender. The questionnaire was distributed electronically through university platforms and student social media channels, enabling access to the largest possible number of students in a random manner. The final sample comprised 212 students. The sample was balanced in terms of gender, with males and females each constituting 50% of respondents, and the target age group was defined as 18 to 24 years, consistent with the study's objectives.

Data Collection

The primary data collection instrument was a structured questionnaire designed using Google Forms and distributed to student groups through WhatsApp, the most widely used communication application among Gulf University students. The questionnaire consisted of five principal sections: demographic data including gender, age, academic specialization, and year of study; AI tool usage, measuring the extent of students' reliance on AI tools in information retrieval and various educational activities; traditional reading and research habits, measuring students' engagement with traditional sources such as books, academic references, and articles; the impact of AI on desire for traditional research, identifying the relationship between AI tool usage and interest in traditional academic inquiry; and motivations, benefits, and challenges, evaluating students' attitudes toward AI usage and the perceived advantages and disadvantages in the educational process. The questionnaire incorporated both yes/no items and Likert scale items ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, as well as multiple-choice frequency items. Questionnaire validity was established through expert review by a faculty member with experience in research methods and media studies, who assessed clarity of wording and alignment with study objectives.

Data Analysis

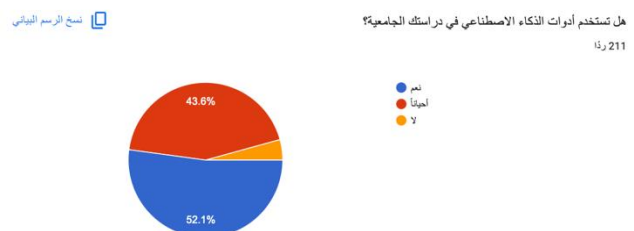
Quantitative data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods

appropriate for the study's objectives. Frequency distributions and percentage calculations were used to present the distribution of participant responses across questionnaire items and to identify the proportion of each response category, particularly for demographic data and behavioral items. Simple comparative analysis was conducted across gender and academic specialization groups to identify general differences without the use of advanced inferential statistical tests. Responses to Likert scale items were analyzed to identify directional trends in student attitudes toward AI tools and traditional research, enabling the testing of the study's hypotheses and the provision of evidence-based answers to its research questions.

III. FINDINGS

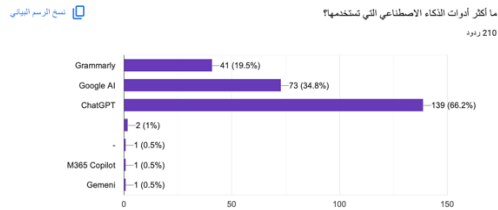
The study yielded eleven substantive findings based on analysis of 212 student responses, collectively addressing the multiple dimensions of AI technology's impact on traditional reading and research behavior among Gulf University students. The findings are organized to respond to the study's research questions and to test its five hypotheses, moving sequentially from documentation of AI usage prevalence, through identification of changes in traditional reading behavior, to analysis of students' perceptions of the broader implications of their AI adoption for their academic skills and competencies. Each finding is discussed in relation to the relevant research question and situates the Gulf University data within the broader international literature where applicable.

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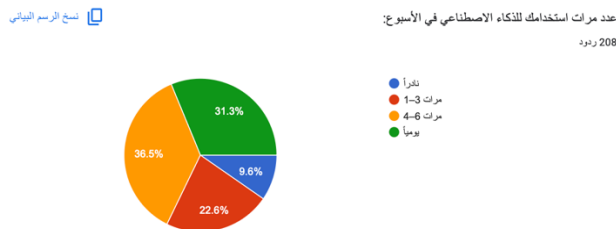


Finding 1 — AI Usage Prevalence: The results of the first question revealed that 52% of Gulf University students use AI tools on a regular basis in their academic studies, while 43% use them occasionally, and only a small minority do not use them at all. These

results reflect the growing and fundamental role of AI as a primary educational tool helping students understand academic material and benefit from it in academic research. The widespread regularity of usage indicates that AI has become a normalized and expected component of the student academic experience at Gulf University.



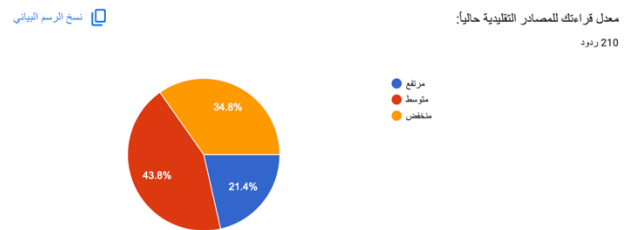
Finding 2 — Tool Preferences: Regarding the most widely used AI tools, the results showed that ChatGPT is the most used among students with a proportion of 66%, followed by Google AI at 34%, while Gemini ranked last at 19%. These proportions reflect students' preference for tools that provide an easy and fast interface for accessing information clearly. The dominance of ChatGPT confirms its central role as the reference AI tool in the student academic environment.



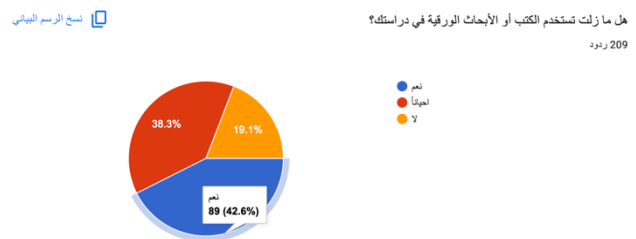
Finding 3 — Frequency of Use: In terms of weekly usage frequency, 31% of students use AI tools daily without interruption, while 36% use them 4 to 6 times per week. Students who use AI 1 to 3 times per week constituted approximately 22%, while rare usage accounted for only 9%. Taken together, 67% of students use AI tools four or more times per week, indicating an intensive pattern of engagement that permeates daily academic life rather than representing occasional or supplementary use.



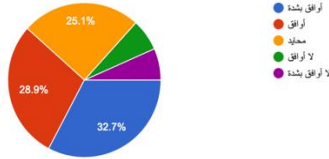
Finding 4 — Pre-AI Reading Patterns: The fourth finding addressed the sources on which students relied for reading before adopting AI tools. Results indicated that 31% previously relied on academic research, 30% on websites, 20% on the library, and 18% on books. These figures reveal that even before the proliferation of AI, students' reading behavior was already partially oriented toward digital sources, suggesting that AI adoption has intensified an existing trend rather than initiating an entirely new behavioral departure.



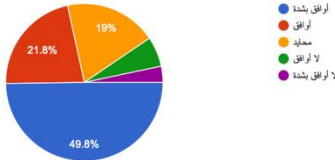
Finding 5 — Current Traditional Reading Rates: Results showed that 43% of students currently read traditional sources at an average rate, 21% at a high rate, and 34% at a low rate. The finding that over one-third of the sample exhibits low traditional reading rates is a significant indicator of the measurable impact of AI adoption on engagement with conventional academic sources. The decline in high-rate traditional reading is consistent with the patterns identified in international studies examining AI's effects on reading behavior.



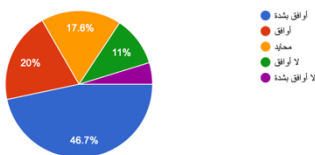
Finding 6 — Continued Use of Traditional Sources: Despite the widespread adoption of AI tools, 89% of students indicated they still use books or paper research in their studies—whether always or sometimes—while only 19% reported no use of traditional sources. This finding is among the most important in the study, as it indicates that the adoption of AI has not resulted in a complete displacement of traditional reading sources. Students appear to maintain a hybrid approach, combining digital and traditional resources according to task requirements and individual learning preferences.



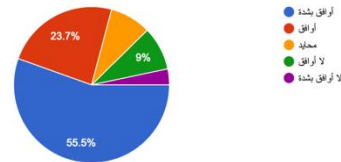
Finding 7 — Reduced Desire for Traditional Reading: In response to the statement 'AI has reduced my desire for traditional reading,' 49% of students strongly agreed and 21% agreed, yielding a combined agreement rate of 70%. Only a small minority disagreed or strongly disagreed. This finding provides direct empirical support for the study's central concern and indicates that the majority of Gulf University students perceive a subjectively felt decline in their motivation for traditional reading as a consequence of AI adoption, regardless of whether they continue to use traditional sources in practice.



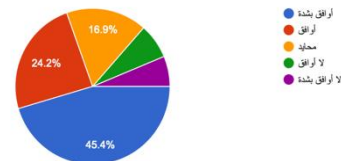
Finding 8 — Substitution of Original Sources: In response to the statement 'I rely on AI instead of searching original sources,' 49% of students strongly agreed and 21% agreed, with 19% remaining neutral and smaller proportions disagreeing. The finding that 70% of respondents agree with this statement indicates a pronounced and widespread tendency among Gulf University students to prioritize AI-generated information over the kind of original source consultation that is foundational to rigorous academic research. This finding is consistent with H4 regarding concerns about research credibility.



Finding 9 — Reduced Patience for Long-form Reading: Results showed that 46% of students strongly agreed that AI use has made them less patient with long reading, with a further 20% agreeing—a combined rate of 66%. Only 11% disagreed and a smaller proportion strongly disagreed, with 17% adopting a neutral position. This finding reveals a measurable behavioral consequence of AI adoption: a reduction in tolerance for the sustained cognitive engagement that deep academic reading requires. This attentional shift represents one of the most significant educational challenges associated with widespread AI tool usage.



Finding 10 — AI Facilitates Faster Understanding: In response to the statement 'AI helps me understand information faster,' 55% of students strongly agreed and 23% agreed—a combined rate of 78%. Only 9% disagreed. This finding confirms the dominant positive perception of AI's educational utility among students and provides an explanation for the high rates of adoption documented in earlier findings. The perceived speed advantage of AI over traditional methods is a primary driver of the substitution behavior identified in Findings 7 and 8.



Finding 11 — Threat to Traditional Research Skills: In response to whether AI threatens traditional research skills, 45% strongly agreed and 24% agreed—a combined agreement rate of 69%—while only smaller minorities disagreed. This finding is particularly significant because it indicates that students themselves recognize the risk that their own AI usage patterns may be posing to the development of essential

research competencies. The coexistence of high AI adoption rates and widespread student acknowledgment of the associated risks suggests a tension between short-term convenience and long-term academic skill development.

With respect to the study's hypotheses, all five were confirmed to varying degrees. H1 was confirmed: the majority of students (52% regular, 43% occasional) use AI precisely for rapid information access, demonstrating a clear relationship between speed of information acquisition and AI reliance. H2 was confirmed: students' strong preference for ChatGPT reflects its role in facilitating access to scientific developments and new research. H3 was partially confirmed: differences in usage frequency across groups—daily users (31%), frequent users (36%), moderate users (22%)—suggest variation by background and need. H4 was confirmed: 69% of students believe AI threatens traditional research skills and 70% acknowledge substituting AI for original sources, reflecting concerns about research quality. H5 was addressed indirectly, with the data suggesting a broader cultural shift in information-seeking behavior that extends beyond students.

IV. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is subject to several methodological and contextual limitations that must be transparently acknowledged in order to appropriately bound the interpretation and application of its findings. The first and most significant limitation concerns the geographic and institutional scope of the research, which is confined to Gulf University in Bahrain, a single institution operating within a specific national and cultural context. While Gulf University is a genuine and representative case study of the AI adoption phenomenon in Gulf higher education, the specific patterns documented here—including the prevalence of ChatGPT, the demographic composition of the sample, and the nature of students' academic tasks and expectations—may not fully translate to other institutional or national contexts with different structural, cultural, or technological characteristics.

This study is subject to several limitations that should be acknowledged. The geographic and institutional scope is confined to Gulf University in Bahrain, which necessarily limits the generalizability of the findings to

other universities, national contexts, or cultural environments. The reliance on self-report data through a questionnaire means that the results reflect students' perceptions and self-assessed behaviors rather than directly measured behavioral outcomes, introducing the standard limitations associated with self-report methodology including potential social desirability bias. The instrument's validity was established through faculty expert review without conducting a full pilot study prior to administration, owing to time constraints; reliability coefficients were not calculated at this stage of the study. The sample, while reasonably sized at 212 respondents, was assembled through convenience distribution via WhatsApp groups, which may not ensure fully representative coverage across all academic specializations and year groups.

On the basis of the study's findings and the limitations identified above, the following directions for future research are recommended. Comparative multi-institutional studies examining AI adoption and its effects on traditional reading behavior across multiple universities in Bahrain and across the broader Gulf region would significantly extend the generalizability of the present findings. Longitudinal research designs tracking changes in AI usage patterns and reading behavior among the same student cohort over extended periods would provide evidence regarding the long-term trajectory of these trends. Future studies should incorporate objective behavioral measures of reading and research activity—such as library usage records and citation patterns in student assignments—alongside self-report data, to provide a more complete and reliable picture of actual behavioral change. Studies incorporating reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha and other appropriate statistical tests would strengthen the psychometric foundation of the research instrument. Research specifically examining the impact of AI tool usage on academic performance outcomes and assessed competencies would clarify whether the behavioral changes documented in the present study translate into measurable educational consequences.

V. CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of AI tools on Gulf University students' desire for traditional reading and research, framed within the Uses and Gratifications Theory. The findings document a clear and significant

pattern: AI tools—led by ChatGPT—have achieved deep penetration into the daily academic lives of Gulf University students, with 52% reporting regular use and 67% engaging with these tools four or more times per week. This intensive adoption has been accompanied by meaningful changes in reading and research behavior, including a 70% rate of self-reported decline in motivation for traditional reading, a 66% decline in patience for long-form text, and widespread substitution of AI for original source consultation.

At the same time, the study reveals that AI adoption has not produced a complete displacement of traditional academic sources: 89% of students continue to use books and paper research to at least some extent, and students themselves widely acknowledge both the benefits and the risks of their AI usage patterns. This dual awareness—of AI's utility for rapid information access and of its potential threat to critical thinking and traditional research skills—reflects the theoretical framework of the Uses and Gratifications Theory, in which active media consumers pursue specific gratifications while navigating the trade-offs associated with their media choices.

The study's findings have direct and practical implications for educators, academic institutions, and curriculum designers. The evidence suggests that the challenge facing higher education is not to resist AI adoption—which is already a normalized feature of student academic life—but rather to develop pedagogical strategies that harness AI's genuine educational benefits while actively developing the critical thinking, deep reading, and independent research competencies that are indispensable for academic and professional success. This requires deliberate institutional investment in guided AI literacy programs, activities that build concentration and tolerance for long-form reading, and assessment designs that cannot be completed through AI substitution alone.

The theoretical lens of the Uses and Gratifications Theory has proven particularly illuminating in interpreting these findings. Students are not passive victims of AI's effects on their reading habits; they are active agents who have chosen to adopt AI tools because these tools satisfy specific and felt academic needs—particularly the need for rapid information access, reduced cognitive effort, and efficient task

completion. The challenge for educators and institutions is not to resist this active choice, but to expand students' understanding of the range of gratifications that traditional reading and research also offer: the deeper comprehension that comes from sustained engagement with complex texts; the critical thinking skills developed through the evaluation and synthesis of multiple sources; and the intellectual confidence that emerges from independent inquiry and original thought. These are gratifications that AI tools, however powerful, cannot yet replicate.

In conclusion, AI tools represent a genuinely dual-edged development in higher education: they offer unprecedented speed, accessibility, and informational breadth, while simultaneously posing meaningful risks to the intellectual habits and competencies that traditional academic culture has sought to cultivate. Realizing the full educational potential of AI while mitigating its risks requires a balanced, intentional, and institutionally supported approach that treats AI as a complement to—rather than a replacement for—the enduring educational value of deep reading, critical inquiry, and independent academic research.

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