

University Students' Understanding of Artificial Intelligence: The Relationship Between Social Interactions, Digital Capital, and Self-Efficacy

Dr. Baris Cagirkan

Associate Professor, İzmir Democracy University, Türkiye

Abstract:

This study aimed to analyse university students' attitudes toward artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in the context of sociocognitive variables and social interactions. Data were collected through an online survey of 384 students at a state university in Turkey using descriptive and relational survey designs, which are quantitative research methods. T-tests, ANOVA, and correlation analyses were used for data analysis. The findings indicate that students' overall attitudes are positive, and attitudes show significant differences based on knowledge level, perceived self-efficacy, frequency of use, and academic expectations. Students who use AI more frequently and perceive themselves as competent in this area have developed more positive attitudes. Most students believed that AI would play a more influential role in academic processes in the future. Furthermore, structural factors such as digital capital, cultural practices, and accessibility have been found to influence student attitudes. These results demonstrate that AI is not merely a technical innovation but also a tool with the potential to transform social inequality. With a theoretical framework based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Social Cognitive Theory, this study demonstrates the importance of AI technologies in educational processes and highlights the need to develop more inclusive policies in this area. Consequently, this study offers theoretical and practical recommendations for educational policies that will enhance AI literacy.

Keywords:

Attitudes Towards Artificial Intelligence, University Students, Socio-Cognitive Variables, Use of Technology in Education.