



Reconceptualizing of GenAI adoption in higher education: A task-based perspective

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Generative AI
Higher education
Educator adoption
Task design
Job characteristics
Task–technology fit
Qualitative research

ABSTRACT

The quick incorporation of generative AI (GenAI) in academia triggers essential discussions regarding its role in educational methodologies. Despite extensive research on student acceptance via models like Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), the educator's viewpoint is insufficiently examined, despite its significance in pedagogical development. This qualitative study aims to address this gap by examining GenAI adoption in relation to task characteristics, pedagogical identity, institutional support, and ethical concerns. By conducting semi-structured interviews with 20 educators from Europe and North Africa, the research leverages a conceptual framework integrating with the Job Characteristics Model (JCM), Task–Technology Fit (TTF), and Institutional Theory to comprehend the multifaceted nature of adoption. The data reveal that GenAI is mainly leveraged for standard tasks, but experiences challenges in critical or identity-associated functions. The research presents the notion of pedagogical role integrity and reconceptualizes TTF as a context-dependent process influenced by both values and functionality. These insights hold practical relevance for higher education institutions seeking to develop responsible AI policies, create supportive training initiatives, and AI literacy modules for future managers, thereby aligning management education with the requirements of the changing workforce.

1. Introduction

The swift rise of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools, like ChatGPT, DALL-E, and Bard, is fundamentally reshaping the higher education landscape by redefining the methods of content creation, assessment, and distribution (Mustapha et al., 2024). These advanced technologies are progressively employed to automate evaluative feedback, enhance administrative processes, facilitate curriculum development, and offer immediate learning resources (Almufarreh & Arshad, 2023). In the realm of management education, which frequently occupies a pioneering position in innovation, GenAI embodies both a potential catalyst for transformation and a significant challenge to established pedagogical conventions (Acar, 2024; Kurtz et al., 2024). While the advancement of AI is extensively endorsed within the discourse of higher education policy, the practical incorporation of GenAI into pedagogical practices remains inconsistent (Nikolic et al., 2024). Current empirical investigations have predominantly focused on how students engage with these tools, utilizing theoretical frameworks such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Alowayr & Al-Azawei, 2021; Alvi, 2021; Xue et al., 2024). These research underscore

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individual-level factors, including perceived utility, ease of use, and behavioral intention (Kanont et al., 2024). Nevertheless, they infrequently take into consideration the contextual and institutional complexities that educators must traverse when deliberating the integration of GenAI. This oversight creates a significant lacuna in our comprehension of the ways in which academic personnel interact with artificial intelligence technologies within the scope of their professional responsibilities (Pakarinen & Huisling, 2025).

In management education, this gap carries direct implications for employability: employers increasingly expect graduates to develop AI literacy and the capacity to critically evaluate AI outputs. Educators' decisions about GenAI adoption therefore influence not only classroom practice but also the preparedness of students to meet evolving labor market expectations. By focusing on the educator's role, this study connects adoption decisions to broader institutional goals of aligning curricula with workforce needs.

It is important to highlight that the limited research on faculty experiences suggests that GenAI adoption is shaped by a wide range of factors beyond simple considerations of functionality or ease of use (Ivanov et al., 2024). Elements including job structure, academic freedom, ethical ambiguity, and institutional support collectively influence educators' propensity to either embrace or resist the utilization of these technological tools (Awadallah Alkhouk & Khlaif, 2024). Faculty often report a lack of clear institutional guidelines, uneven access to training, and uncertainty around intellectual ownership and academic integrity, all of which affect how and whether GenAI is used in teaching (S. Wang, 2025). Academics frequently express concerns regarding the absence of explicit institutional protocols, inconsistent availability of training opportunities, and ambiguity surrounding intellectual property rights and academic integrity, factors that significantly influence the implementation and utilization of GenAI in pedagogical practices (Kizilcec, 2024). This research addresses the identified gap by employing a qualitative, abductive methodology to investigate the ways in which higher education educators interpret and interact with GenAI within their pedagogical practices. It utilizes a synthesized conceptual framework comprising three well-established theoretical constructs: the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), which delineates the mechanisms by which work motivation is influenced by factors such as task identity, autonomy, and skill variety; the Task-Technology Fit (TTF) theory (Goodhue & Thompson, 1995), which evaluates the alignment of technological tools with specific cognitive and technical requirements; and Institutional Theory (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983), which explores the impact of organizational norms, legitimacy pressures, and professional expectations on behavioral dynamics.

Together, these theories address different dimensions of adoption: JCM explains the motivational 'why,' TTF highlights the task-related 'what,' and Institutional Theory situates adoption in the contextual 'where.' Applied in combination, they provide a multi-dimensional framework that overcomes the limitations of single theory approaches and captures the full complexity of GenAI integration in higher education.

This integrative framework facilitates a more nuanced examination of GenAI adoption, one that recognizes not only individual perspectives but also the social, structural, and task-oriented contexts within which educators' function (Mishra et al., 2024, pp. 189–226). Furthermore, it permits the discernment of barriers and facilitators that influence the implementation of GenAI across various strata of the educational framework, from classroom practices to institutional policies. Thus, the central research question guiding this study is:

What factors influence educators' adoption of GenAI in higher education?

To explore this, the following sub-questions are posed:

1. How does the nature of academic tasks shape GenAI adoption?
2. How do GenAI functionalities align with educators' instructional and cognitive needs?
3. What role do autonomy, task identity, and skill variety play in educators' acceptance of GenAI?
4. What organizational policies, ethical concerns, and support mechanisms enable or constrain GenAI use?

This study is founded upon semi-structured interviews conducted with 20 educators addressing from diverse educational institutions situated throughout Europe and North Africa, encompassing a diverse range of institutional types and disciplinary specializations. Participants were deliberately chosen based on their preliminary involvement with GenAI tools or involvement in AI-related institutional initiatives. Data was subjected to analysis via abductive thematic analysis, which facilitated the iterative refinement of categories, considering both theoretical frameworks and emergent empirical findings. This research contributes to literature in multiple dimensions. First, it provides an empirically grounded, educator-centric perspective on GenAI adoption that serves to complement the predominantly student-focused research that currently exists. Second, it advances the theory of technology adoption by integrating aspects of job design and institutional variables that are frequently neglected in traditional models. Third, it offers support to organizational decision-makers by pinpointing specific levers, such as autonomy, task alignment, and clarity of policy, that can enhance the responsible and effective integration of GenAI. As business and management academic institutions encounter escalating pressures to innovate while concurrently upholding academic standards, comprehending the factors that influence educator engagement with GenAI is both timely and crucial. This paper aspires to contribute to both theoretical advancement and the formulation of institutional policies and faculty development initiatives, thereby providing a strategic framework for the ethical and sustainable incorporation of AI within management education.

2. Literature review

2.1. Technology adoption in higher education

Technology adoption studies in higher education have largely been informed by the TAM and the UTAUT. These frameworks focus on individual factors influencing technology use, including perceived usefulness and ease of use, demonstrating significant predictive

power across various digital tools, including GenAI applications (Jin et al., 2025). Recent investigations examine the integration and sustained application of AI technologies within educational contexts. Research has expanded the Expectation-Confirmation Model (ECM) to evaluate post-adoption dynamics in GenAI and AI chatbots (Tian et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2024). These frameworks are essential. Research involving educators indicates that trust, perceived educational value, and previous AI experience significantly affect adoption choices (Al-Abdullatif, 2024). TAM/UTAUT face critiques for inadequately addressing the complex realities educators encounter. These frameworks simplify educational contexts to linear cognitive relationships, neglecting the influences of context, policy, and workload on technology utilization (Abdullah & Zaid, 2023). Educators function as technology users, policy enforcers, curriculum developers, and ethical overseers. Consequently, there is an increasing call for integrative frameworks that assess GenAI adoption through organizational, motivational, and task-oriented perspectives, rather than merely focusing on attitudinal factors (Khlaif et al., 2024).

2.2. The Job Characteristics Model in academic work

JCM, conceptualized by Hackman and Oldham (1976), posits that five relevant job attributes: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback, catalyzing three psychological states pivotal to motivation and performance: experienced meaningfulness, responsibility, and knowledge of outcomes. Despite its extensive application within the realms of organizational psychology and human resource management, the JCM has recently begun to influence research concerning technology integration in higher education. Nonetheless, its relevance is increasingly recognized as GenAI reshapes academic work, influencing how educators approach responsibilities such as grading, course design, and research mentorship (Barrett & Pack, 2023; Kurtz et al., 2024). For instance, while GenAI tools may facilitate content generation, they may also carelessly diminish task identity or autonomy if excessively integrated into fundamental instructional activities (Essien et al., 2024). In the management education context, where the principles of experiential learning and pedagogical ownership are of extreme importance, the motivation of educators is profoundly intertwined with their sense of autonomy and the significance they attribute to their role within the learning environment (Chan & Hu, 2023; Stojanov et al., 2024). GenAI implementation, if misaligned with these professional characteristics, possesses the capacity to undermine job satisfaction. Equally, when AI serves to augment rather than replace instructional complexity, it has the potential to enhance engagement levels among educators and learners alike. A limited amount of research has examined these complexities within the domain of higher education, with even fewer studies focusing specifically on business schools, thereby highlighting a critical gap that this research endeavor aims to fill (Hindley, 2022).

2.3. Assessing Task–Technology Fit in GenAI adoption

TTF framework posits that technology adoption is most probable when the functional attributes of technology correspond with the specific requirements of the task being performed (Goodhue & Thompson, 1995). Within the realm of management education, instructors frequently engage in a variety of task types, including grading, mentoring, project design, and administrative reporting, each characterized by distinct cognitive, relational, and ethical imperatives. Utilizing insights from task classification research by Autor et al. (2013), GenAI can be assessed across three pertinent task domains: *Routine cognitive tasks* (e.g., grading, reformatting, summarizing) demonstrate a strong alignment with GenAI's functionalities, yielding a high degree of fit and significant potential for efficiency improvements. *Non-routine analytic tasks* (e.g., case writing, project scoping) exhibit a partial fit; while GenAI may assist in ideation processes, it is deficient in contextual comprehension. *Non-routine interactive tasks* (e.g., mentoring, ethical discussions) reveal a low degree of fit, as these tasks necessitate emotional intelligence and human interpretation that exceed the current capabilities of GenAI. However, the presence of fit alone does not ensure acceptance among educators. Instructors may exhibit unwillingness towards tools that, despite a technical alignment with tasks, contravene established pedagogical values, what some scholars refer to as a “deep misfit” obscured by superficial functionality (Kizilcec, 2024). In this regard, TTF encompasses not only aspects of efficiency but also considerations of legitimacy. Educators, who are often rooted in principles of ethics, critical thinking, and student engagement, may eschew technologies that jeopardize these foundational tenets, even if such technologies are technically efficacious (Abubaker et al., 2025; Bond et al., 2020). Moreover, GenAI frequently occupies hybrid roles, functioning as a co-creator, suggestion engine, or augmentation layer, rather than existing as a singular, discrete tool. This hybridization complicates the traditional binary categorization of TTF as “fit or misfit” and necessitates a more nuanced model that considers educators' subjective interpretations of task-technology interactions (Yang et al., 2024). These complexities have been inadequately addressed in qualitative research, particularly within the context of professional education programs such as those in management and leadership.

2.4. Organizational pressures and ethical tensions in educators' AI use

Aside from the effects observed at both individual and task levels, the adoption process takes place within large institutional frameworks. Institutional Theory, as defined by Dimaggio and Powell (1983), highlights how organizational behavior is shaped by regulatory pressures, professional norms, and peer influences. Institutional innovation in management education is frequently shaped by external pressures, competition with peer institutions and compliance with policy mandates. (AlMalki & Durugbo, 2023). Faculty members may experience pressure to integrate GenAI tools to ensure alignment with strategic objectives, accreditation requirements, or the agenda of digital transformation (Cotton et al., 2024). However, top-down directives lacking sufficient support may undermine trust and autonomy, elements that are indispensable to professional identity (Selkrig et al., 2024). Ethical considerations strongly influence faculty decisions about using GenAI. In the absence of clear institutional guidelines, concerns about authorship, data bias,

and transparency frequently lead to hesitation or resistance (Russo et al., 2023; Sweeney, 2023). Instructors express uncertainty not only about GenAI's capabilities, but also about the ethical boundaries of its use. These conflicts are further intensified in disciplines with a strong emphasis on assessment, where academic integrity is dominant (Dalalah & Dalalah, 2023; Ellis et al., 2025). In the absence of institutional policies that empower faculty rather than exert control, there is a tendency for educators to resort to avoidance or passive utilization, thereby undermining the strategic objectives associated with GenAI investments.

2.5. Gaps in literature

A persistent constraint within the domain of GenAI research is the principal focus on student users and survey-based research methodologies. Although investigations grounded in TAM and UTAUT provide valuable perspectives regarding overall acceptance, they frequently neglect to encompass the interpretative and contextual frameworks that educators navigate when assimilating novel technologies (Al-kfairy et al., 2024; Greener, 2022). The responsibilities of faculty members, as arbiters of decisions, guides for mentees, and implementers of policy, necessitate more profound and relational methodologies of investigation (Zhu et al., 2023). A limited number of investigations employ qualitative methodologies to assess GenAI integration from the perspective of educators, particularly within professional schools such as business or management disciplines (Chiu, 2024). Furthermore, there has been a few research that delves into the interaction of motivational, technological, and institutional dynamics within authentic instructional environments (Bahari, 2023; Martin, 2023; Zainuddin et al., 2020). Thus, theoretical advancements remain classified: TAM fails to account for institutional influences, TTF framework disregards ethical complexities, and Institutional Theory neglects the micro-level pedagogical activities. This investigation seeks to mitigate these shortcomings by merging three theoretical paradigms, JCM, TTF, and Institutional Theory, within a qualitative research framework, thereby yielding a more practice-centric and contextually refined comprehension of GenAI adoption. Besides, it broadens regional representation by integrating viewpoints from educators throughout both Europe and North Africa, areas distinguished by considerable variances in digital infrastructure, policy readiness, and cultural conventions (Kampylis & Sala, 2023; Nikolic et al., 2024; Shonfeld et al., 2021) (Nikolic et al., 2024). In sum, the examined body of literature indicates that no singular theoretical framework sufficiently captures the difficulties associated with GenAI adoption by educators. TAM/UTAUT emphasizes cognitive aspects yet neglects the specificity of tasks and the frameworks of organizational structures. JCM incorporates motivational dimensions but is deficient in its analysis of technological specifics. TTF theory elucidates the concept of alignment but fails to adequately consider the institutional and ethical contexts. Institutional Theory offers a macro-level perspective yet disregards the lived experiences of educators as they navigate their daily professional practices (Prasad Agrawal, 2024). This research overcomes previous limitations by combining three theoretical frameworks. The integrative model facilitates, the examination of how GenAI adoption is influenced by the compatibility of technology and tasks, the motivational dynamics of academic work, and the organizational context of faculty. This conceptualization underpins the abductive qualitative methodology utilized in this study and guides both data collection and analysis throughout the research.

Taken together, these three theories provide a complementary lens: the JCM explains the motivational 'why' by addressing how autonomy, task identity, and significance shape educator choices; TTF clarifies the 'what' by evaluating alignment between GenAI functionalities and instructional tasks; and Institutional Theory situates adoption in the contextual 'where,' highlighting norms, policies, and organizational pressures. Integrating them moves beyond the limitations of single frameworks and allows a multidimensional understanding of GenAI adoption that reflects both individual motivations and institutional realities. This synthesis is particularly salient in management education, where educators' adoption decisions directly affect students' acquisition of AI competencies and, by extension, their preparedness for evolving employer demands.

3. Methodology

3.1. Data collection

This study utilizes a qualitative methodology informed by social constructivism and interpretivism, emphasizing that reality is shaped through interaction and context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This framework is apt for examining how educators interpret GenAI within their changing instructional roles. It aims to establish a contextually relevant understanding of technology adoption, moving beyond generalized acceptance theories. To reinforce this constructivist approach, an abductive logic of inquiry was utilized (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012), facilitating an iterative relationship between theoretical frameworks and new findings. This method proved effective in understanding how educators navigate the balance between pedagogical autonomy and institutional digitalization with GenAI tools. Data were gathered from a strategically selected group of 20 educators across Europe and North Africa, representing diverse higher education contexts, from technologically advanced institutions to those with limited resources. Maximum variation sampling ensured a broad spectrum of academic disciplines (e.g., business, social sciences, STEM), professional roles (e.g., lecturers, curriculum leaders, instructional designers), and GenAI experience (from early adopters to cautious non-users).

The final sample size of 20 was determined based on the principle of data saturation, as new interviews no longer yielded substantially new themes or insights. This decision aligns with best practices in qualitative research where depth, rather than breadth, is prioritized.

All participants had a minimum of five years in higher education teaching and were involved in curriculum development or instructional decision-making, critical elements of faculty roles in management education. Participants were recruited via academic networks, conference interactions, and snowball sampling methods. Invitations outlining the purpose of research, voluntary participation, and ethical considerations were disseminated through email. Informed consent was secured from all participants, ensuring

their anonymity and data confidentiality, with pseudonyms employed throughout the analysis to safeguard identities. Interviews occurred virtually using platforms like Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Each session ranged from 45 to 70 min, adhering to a semi-structured format. To address linguistic diversity, interviews were conducted in English, French, or Arabic, based on participant preference, with transcripts from French and Arabic sessions translated into English by bilingual research assistants.

To ensure accuracy, a back-translation procedure was performed by a second bilingual researcher, and discrepancies were resolved through consensus.

The interview guide was structured around five core dimensions:

1. Understanding GenAI's pedagogical potential and limitations
2. Alignment between GenAI functionalities and instructional or administrative tasks
3. Barriers to adoption at individual and institutional levels
4. Ethical, professional, and disciplinary considerations (e.g., autonomy, academic integrity)
5. Experience with institutional support, training, or digital strategy pressures.

Sample inquiries included: “How is GenAI integrated into your pedagogical or evaluative processes?” and “What institutional or cultural elements affect your engagement with or avoidance of these technologies?” Field notes were documented during and post-interview to record environmental indicators, emotional nuances, and initial analytical insights. These notes facilitated subsequent interpretation, particularly in reconciling expressed experiences with contextual subtleties. This investigation adhered to the ethical standards established by the Declaration of Helsinki. Ethical consent was secured from the university's institutional review board. All data were securely stored on encrypted platforms, and participants maintained the right to withdraw from the research at any point.

3.2. Data analysis

Interview transcripts were subjected to reflexive thematic analysis per (Braun & Clarke, 2019) for its constructivist applicability and focus on meaning-making. This method facilitates profound interpretation of participant values and complexities in professional practices concerning GenAI. The analysis encompassed six iterative phases. Initially, familiarization occurred through transcript and field note review to extract preliminary impressions. Subsequently, open coding in NVivo assigned descriptive and conceptual codes to significant text segments, integrating both inductive and deductive codes from the theoretical framework. In the third phase, codes were categorized into initial themes, employing constant comparison across variables such as region, discipline, and GenAI adoption levels. To enhance dependability, two researchers independently coded a subset of transcripts and compared results; differences were discussed until consensus was reached, thereby improving consistency of the coding scheme.

Iterative refinement of coding decisions was achieved through memo-writing and visual mapping in NVivo. By the fourth phase, three primary themes emerged, each reflecting components of the integrated theoretical framework:

1. *Job Design and Task Nature*, examining the impact of task complexity, skill variety, and autonomy on GenAI engagement, informed by the JCM.

Table 1
Results.

Theme	Occurrences per sample % (No. inst/ total)	Key Findings	Illustrative Participant Quotes
Skill Variety (<i>JCM – P1</i>)	85 % (17/20)	Adopted for repetitive, low-skill tasks; resisted for complex, high-skill teaching.	“I use it to draft rubrics or generate quiz questions—but never for designing an entire course. That’s still my job.”
Task Identity (<i>JCM – P2</i>)	87 % (18/20)	Concern that GenAI disrupts core academic identity, especially in grading and feedback.	“Grading is where I understand my students’ thinking. Giving that to AI feels like giving up part of my role.”
Task Significance (<i>JCM – P3</i>)	80 % (16/20)	Educators resist GenAI when they feel it undermines meaningful, student-centered pedagogy.	“If students rely on AI for feedback, they miss the human connection that helps them grow.”
Task–Technology Fit (<i>TTF – H1</i>)	92 % (19/20)	Higher adoption for administrative and content - generation tasks; low adoption where GenAI lacks pedagogical nuance.	“It helps with draft emails and ideas, but AI doesn’t understand context. I always revise what it suggests.”
Institutional Support (<i>H2</i>)	75 % (15/20)	Educators are more open to adoption when policies are clear, inclusive, and co-developed with faculty input.	“They say we should innovate, but where’s the support? We’re figuring this out on our own.”
Ethical Concerns (<i>H3</i>)	95 % (19/20)	Key concerns include fairness, bias, misuse in assessment, and student dependency. Educators want transparent ethical frameworks.	“I’m not against the tool—but without clear ethics, it’s risky. Who takes responsibility if things go wrong?”
Autonomy & Professional Judgment (<i>cross-cutting: JCM/Institutional</i>)	83 % (17/20)	Fear of GenAI mandates undermining autonomy; adoption is higher when educators feel trusted and in control.	“If AI is just another top-down requirement, we’ll resist it. Let us experiment on our own terms.”
Blended Use (<i>TTF refinement</i>)	70 % (14/20)	GenAI is often used as a co-creator or brainstorm partner, not a final decision-maker.	“It helps me generate ideas—but I always rewrite. It’s not replacing me, it’s assisting me.”

2. TTF, assessing the alignment between GenAI capabilities and academic responsibilities, particularly in assessment, interaction, and knowledge creation
3. Institutional Support and Ethical Concerns, exploring policy clarity, digital strategy trust, autonomy versus compliance, and GenAI legitimacy.

Percentages reported in the results refer to the proportion of participants mentioning a given theme.

Raw counts (n) are provided in Tables 1–3, based on a total sample of 20 educators.

In the fifth phase, thematic maps were constructed to link sub-themes with theoretical dimensions, illustrating connections such as “automated grading fatigue” related to task routinization and JCM’s emphasis on skill variety, while “GenAI as idea partner” highlighted task augmentation through TTF. The sixth and concluding phase entailed theoretical integration, interpreting themes against existing literature and identifying convergence, contradiction, or innovation. To ensure trustworthiness, Lincoln and Guba (1985) criteria were adhered to:

- *Credibility* was bolstered through extensive data engagement and member-checking with five participants, who validated thematic summaries.
- *Dependability* was maintained via an audit trail documenting coding decisions, theme development, and theoretical considerations.
- *Confirmability* was supported by reflective memos recognizing researchers’ positionality within higher education and management education systems.
- *Transferability* was enhanced through detailed descriptions of institutional, cultural, and disciplinary contexts, allowing readers to evaluate applicability to their own environments.

Ethical protocols, including participant anonymity, secure data storage, and voluntary withdrawal, were integral to the project. This multi-layered approach ensured that findings were both methodologically rigorous and contextually trustworthy.

4. Results: key relationships

4.1. Skill variety → GenAI adoption

Educators with broad skill sets expressed skepticism toward using GenAI for core pedagogical tasks, noting risks of diminishing intellectual complexity. As one senior faculty member in Spain remarked: “My teaching isn’t just lectures, it’s problem-solving, storytelling

Table 2
AI adoption across JCM.

JCM	Occurrences per sample % (No. inst./total)	Key findings	Testimonials
Task significance	80 % (16/20)	GenAI cannot replace high-stakes, student-centered pedagogy.	Ed17: “While AI may take on some tasks in creating content, it certainly doesn’t diminish the importance of my role in helping students navigate the complex world of responsible marketing choices.” Ed14: “Absolutely! While AI can offer automated feedback on assignments [using Likewise], I truly value the insights gained from engaging discussions, evaluations of case studies, and reviews of real-world projects ... elements that AI simply cannot replicate in a meaningful way”.
Task identity	85 % (17/20)	Concern that GenAI undermines educators’ identity as knowledge creators.	Ed11: “If AI begins to take the lead in developing difficult branding case studies and crafting comprehensive digital strategy models, I find myself thinking whether I will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the marketing expertise of my students, or if I will simply be overseeing content that has been generated by AI, which could lead to a change in my involvement and influence in their learning journey”. Ed6: “Whenever I’m working on putting together marketing materials, I totally rely on AI to help me out with the initial drafts, but you know what? I always go back and tweak them a bit to make sure they really hit home in terms of being relevant and feeling genuine.”
Autonomy	83 % (17/20)	Adoption is positive when educators retain freedom to adapt and contextualize content.	Ed7: “I utilize AI to help create marketing materials, and I am the one who chooses what elements to keep and what requires further enhancement. If AI begins to dictate our course content, we may risk losing our capacity to adapt to changes in the industry effectively [...]”. Ed8: “I rely on AI to help create content, but I ultimately choose what to keep and what requires further improving.” Ed18: “AI can help in producing organized content, but if organizations order uniform AI-generated resources, it overlooks the distinctive teaching approaches and industry knowledge we offer to our students.” Ed20: “These tools lack flexibility, making it difficult to integrate current market changes, emerging technologies, and evolving consumer behaviors into lesson planning. I think educators need the freedom to modify and contextualize content beyond the constraints of AI.”

... *GenAI can't replace that.*” In contrast, others adopted GenAI for peripheral tasks such as emails or basic instructions, conserving energy for substantive teaching. In short, GenAI was accepted when it augmented minor tasks but resisted when it risked reducing professional expertise.

Thus, P1 is supported.

P1: Educators are more likely to adopt GenAI tools when these tools are seen as augmenting peripheral, repetitive skills rather than encroaching on core intellectual competencies.

4.2. Task identity → GenAI adoption

Task identity strongly shaped adoption. Core activities such as feedback and mentorship were shielded from automation, even when technically feasible. A French professor explained: *“Correcting essays transcends correction, it is a dialogue with students.”* In

Table 3
AI adoption across task types.

Task Type	Occurrences per sample % (No. inst./total)	Reasons for Adoption/ Resistance	Theoretical Link	Testimonials
Routine Cognitive (Grading, Admin Tasks)	High 90 % (18/20)	GenAI improves efficiency & reduces workload in repetitive academic tasks	Task-Technology Fit (TTF)	Ed5: <i>“Now that I've made lesson planning and quiz creation way easier, I can get these things done a lot faster, which means I've got more time to really chat with my students about cool market trends and awesome real-world campaigns they actually care about.”</i> Ed2: <i>“I'm really relieved [...] I no longer need to dedicate endless hours to formatting citations or creating meeting agendas, and this time I've acquired helps me focus much more on exploring consumer behavior research innovativeness and thoughtfully developing comprehensive case studies that can truly elevate my students' learning experiences.”</i>
Non-Routine Analytical (Research, Content Creation)	Selective 70 % (14/20)	AI speeds up work but requires human oversight for industry relevance	Skill Variety (JCM)	Ed3: <i>“ChatGPT accelerates the organization of literature reviews and research concepts but requires validation and critical evaluation, particularly in digital marketing trends.”</i> Ed12: <i>“AI can totally be a super handy tool that helps out a lot in various ways, but let's be real, it often tends to miss those really important little details that are crucial in understanding how consumers think and feel, or it might just spit out some pretty basic responses that don't really dig deep into the whole marketing scene, which is kind of an annoyance when you think about it.”</i> Ed10: <i>“I really love how efficient the tool is, still I have many concerns about its ability to fully capture the accuracy needed for evaluating those complex and creative responses that require a nuanced understanding of the industry.”</i>
Non-Routine Interpersonal (Mentorship, Industry Collaboration, Strategy Discussions)	Low 65 % (13/20)	AI lacks contextual marketing expertise & human intuition	Task Identity (JCM)	Ed7: <i>“No AI tool can substitute for the mentorship process in marketing education, where we assist students in interpreting market data, statistics, making innovative branding choices, and navigating real-world industry hurdles.”</i> Ed13: <i>“Marketing education involves analyzing trends, tackling ethical dilemmas in advertising, and offering strategic insights, all of which necessitate human expertise.”</i> Building on that worry, Ed19 said, <i>“Marketing mentorship is all about helping students shape their careers, getting a hold on the changing industry issues, and giving them one-on-one support. For sure, AI just doesn't have that personal vibe needed to boost students' confidence and leadership skills.”</i> Ed16: <i>“If students lean too heavily on AI for generating campaign concepts, they jeopardize their ability to think critically about brand positioning and market segmentation. [...] I've observed students accepting AI-generated marketing insights without questioning their authenticity, which undermines their analytical abilities.”</i>

contrast, educators were open to GenAI for auxiliary functions like structuring resources. This pattern reveals that when tasks are tied to professional identity, educators safeguard them from GenAI integration.

P2: GenAI adoption decreases when the task in question is closely tied to the educator's professional identity and pedagogical philosophy.

4.3. Task significance → GenAI adoption

Educators consistently resisted GenAI in high-stakes or ethically significant tasks, such as thesis supervision. One European psychology professor noted: "Supporting a student's thesis is a profound responsibility, if AI intervenes, it feels dishonest." Conversely, low-stakes tasks like formatting were seen as appropriate for AI. Thus, the more pedagogical or moral weight a task carries, the less likely educators are to delegate it to GenAI.

P3: The higher the pedagogical or moral significance attributed to a task, the lower the likelihood of educators integrating GenAI into that task.

4.4. Task-Technology Fit (TTF) → GenAI adoption

The empirical evidence provides substantial confirmation for Hypothesis 1 (H1). Educators systematically implemented GenAI in contexts where they discerned a distinct alignment between the demands of the tasks and the capabilities of GenAI, particularly in administrative functions, content creation, and translation assistance tasks (Dalalah & Dalalah, 2023; Moundridou et al., 2024). A marketing academic in Morocco remarked: "When I encounter difficulties in drafting an assignment prompt or an email, ChatGPT proves to be highly beneficial, it serves as a collaborative ideation partner." Others utilized it to enhance presentation slides, rephrase directives, or generate foundational questions. Conversely, when prompted regarding higher-order cognitive tasks, such as facilitating live discussions, providing emotional support, or delivering creative feedback, educators articulated a pronounced sense of incongruity (Maranna et al., 2022). A Spanish literature educator noted: "It fails to comprehend metaphor, nuance, or sarcasm. My students possess that understanding. This is why I continue to engage in the more intricate analyses myself." Numerous participants adopted hybrid workflows in which GenAI generated a preliminary draft, yet they undertook the task of refinement and contextualization. This indicates a "partial fit" paradigm, wherein GenAI provides support but does not supplant the educator's role. Consequently, H1 is corroborated, but the data implies the necessity of refining the TTF framework to encompass human-AI task orchestration rather than adhering to binary classifications of fit or misfit (Samuel et al., 2022).

H1. Educators are more inclined to adopt GenAI when there is a clear functional alignment between the capabilities of the tool and the cognitive/technical demands of the task.

4.5. Institutional support → GenAI adoption

The existence or non-existence of institutional support significantly influenced the adoption of GenAI, thereby affirming Hypothesis

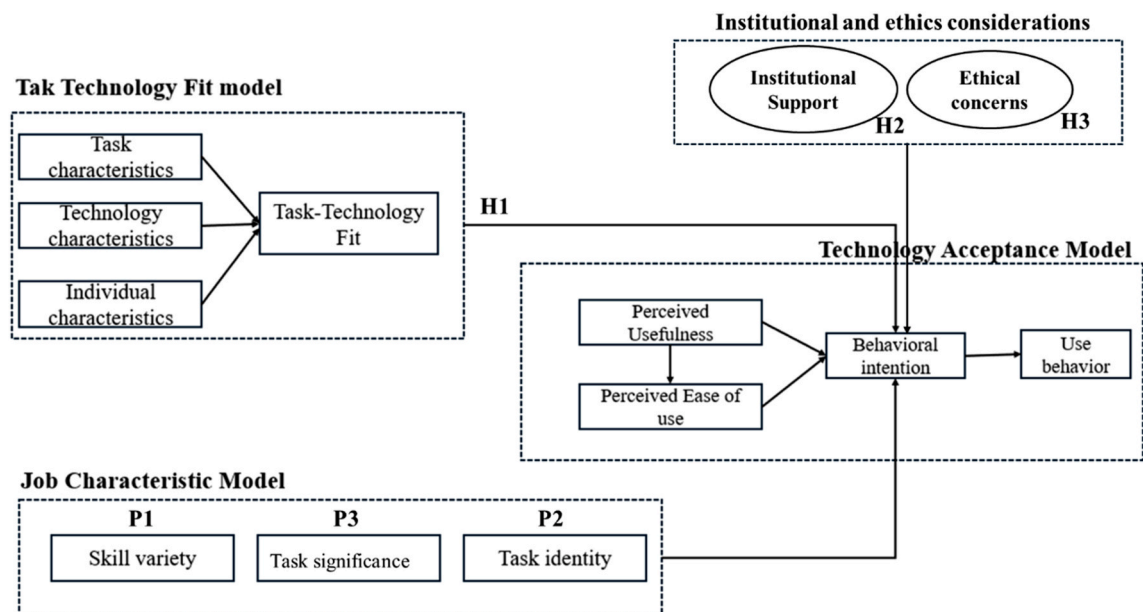


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework.

2, although with notable restraints. Educators who identified as active participants in decision-making frameworks, or who engaged in peer-led training and received ethical guidance, demonstrated greater confidence and enthusiasm in experimenting with GenAI (Rana et al., 2024). A faculty member from France articulated: “We convened a workshop with our colleagues, during which we exchanged examples, queries, and best practices. This collaborative effort facilitated my exploration of the technology in a secure manner.” Conversely, participants who encountered vague, top-down directives lacking consultation reported feelings of either coercion or a lack of support. As one academic from North Africa contemplated: “We received a memorandum instructing us to innovate with AI. However, the means? What training is available? What guidelines are in place?” Educators underscored that effective institutional support encompasses not merely resources, but also the necessity for dialogue, collaborative governance, and explicit policies (Fasco et al., 2024). Without these elements, institutional advocacy for GenAI often amounted to little more than performative signaling. Thus, Hypothesis.

2 is conditionally validated: institutional support must be characterized by trust-building, inclusivity, and contextual relevance to exert a positive influence on adoption.

H2. Institutional support positively influences GenAI adoption, but only when it includes participatory policy development, ethical clarity, and responsive training infrastructure.

4.6. Ethical awareness → GenAI adoption

Ethical considerations emerged as the predominant barrier GenAI adoption, thereby providing substantial corroboration for Hypothesis 3 (H3). Educators articulated apprehensions regarding student dependency on technology, biases manifesting in AI-generated outputs, issues of academic dishonesty, and the necessity for transparency in AI systems (Parida et al., 2023). A scholar from Spain articulated a prevalent ethical quandary: “In instances where a student employs AI to compose their essay, what criteria should I utilize for evaluation? Am I assessing the student’s capabilities, or those of the machine?” Other educators conveyed their personal ethical unease. A faculty member in the humanities commented: “I aspire for my students to encounter challenges during their learning process. It is within these struggles that genuine learning occurs. If AI alleviates all difficulties, we fail to cultivate their resilience and creativity.” Concerns also encompassed trust in institutional data management practices and the privacy of platforms utilized. Numerous educators expressed a sense of inadequacy in addressing student inquiries regarding ethical utilization, particularly in the absence of formalized policies established by the university (Parida et al., 2023; Steedman et al., 2020). This observation suggests that the adoption of GenAI is contingent upon a more extensive ethical framework; when ethical support is lacking, educators tend to show reduced willingness to engage in experimental practices, even when they possess the necessary technical expertise.

H3. Ethical concerns such as fairness, transparency, and intellectual integrity significantly hinder GenAI adoption, even when technical alignment is present.

Table 1 summarizes the prevalence of key themes across the 20 participants, while Fig. 1 visualizes the conceptual framework derived from these findings. Additional illustrative quotes supporting these themes are available in Appendix A.

5. Discussion

This investigation examined the integration of GenAI within the domain of higher education utilizing a conceptual framework that amalgamated the JCM, TTF, and Institutional Theory. Drawing from qualitative data obtained from 20 educators spanning Europe and North Africa, the results indicate that the assimilation of GenAI is not merely a straightforward issue of technological efficacy or user familiarity with the tool. Rather, it constitutes a contextualized and interpretive process, shaped by educators’ views on task significance, role identity, ethical obligations, and institutional trust. Support for the JCM was prominently evident in the educators’ narratives, particularly regarding autonomy, task identity, and significance. Tasks considered integral to pedagogical identity, such as mentoring, assessment, or feedback, were uniformly safeguarded against automation. Educators exhibited a favorable disposition towards GenAI in tasks they regarded as low-stakes or ancillary, such as the formatting of course materials or the drafting of administrative documents, wherein the technology could enhance their capabilities without undermining their professional integrity. These observed trends are consistent with existing research in non-educational domains, including healthcare and public administration, where job design and role integrity have influenced receptivity to AI technologies. Our findings reinforce the notion that in the educational sector, the more central a task is to an individual’s sense of purpose, the more circumspect educators are regarding the utilization of GenAI (Barrett & Pack, 2023; Chan & Hu, 2023). Concurrently, robust support was discerned for the TTF framework. GenAI was broadly accepted for tasks entailing information retrieval, linguistic structuring, or repetitive formatting, domains where the technology demonstrated a strong alignment with the technical requirements of the tasks (Furneaux, 2012; Hidayat et al., 2021; Howard & Rose, 2019). On the contrary, this alignment was repudiated in relational, interpretive, or emotionally intricate areas such as ethics instruction, feedback provision, or facilitation of critical discussions. These tasks necessitate more than mere cognitive processing; they demand emotional acumen, contextual awareness, and pedagogical intentionality (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2019; Hickey & Riddle, 2024; Holdo, 2023). Educators frequently characterized their engagement with GenAI as a form of “co-piloting,” wherein the tool aids in the drafting or ideation phases, while the ultimate assessment and refinement remain under human control. This implies a necessity to reconceptualize the notion of fit as dynamic and adaptive, rather than fixed. Fit does not exist merely as a static relationship between a task and a tool; it is a construct that educators continuously negotiate within specific contexts. Institutional Theory also demonstrated significant resonance within the data collected. Moreover, our data suggests that this negotiation is influenced not only by technical alignment but also by educators’ underlying pedagogical philosophies. For example, constructivist-oriented faculty,

who prioritize student-driven inquiry, were more likely to perceive a misfit when GenAI tools appeared to standardize or automate interpretive tasks. In contrast, educators with a more didactic orientation often see these same tools as highly compatible with their teaching style. This finding broadens the concept of TTF from a technical assessment to a pedagogical one, showing that “fit” is partly a reflection of educators’ epistemological commitments.

While institutional pressures, including policy mandates, peer expectations, and sector-wide trends, were duly acknowledged, the responses of educators to these pressures exhibited considerable variability. The process of adoption was markedly influenced by the way institutional messaging was both articulated and operationalized. When institutions engaged faculty in the development of policy, provided ethics-oriented training, and created environments conducive to experimentation, educators exhibited responses characterized by openness and inquisitiveness. Conversely, in instances where support was ambiguous, hierarchical, or merely performative, educators exhibited a tendency to disengage, even when they possessed the requisite technical capabilities. This observation reinforces the increasing acknowledgment that frameworks for institutional adoption must be dialogic and founded on trust (ten Have, 2021; Thornton & Jaeger, 2008; Zolkefli et al., 2024). Educators do not merely react to coercion; their responses are also shaped by considerations of legitimacy, inclusivity, and ethical congruence. These educator perspectives also gain meaning when contrasted with parallel research on students’ attitudes toward GenAI. For instance, Wang et al., (2025) demonstrate that students’ acceptance is shaped by self-efficacy, emotional engagement, and perceived institutional support. Our findings suggest that faculty hesitation is not simply individual reluctance but reflects a broader ecosystem: when students are open to experimentation, educators may feel pressured to adapt, yet when students express concern about fairness or authenticity, faculty become even more cautious. Situating educator choices alongside student acceptance thus reveals important tensions within AI-enabled classrooms.

Beyond the foundational frameworks, the analysis elucidated a crucial cross-cutting insight: the significance of task centrality in influencing educators’ reactions to GenAI. While task significance is conventionally articulated within the JCM as the degree to which a task affects others or contributes to meaningful outcomes, it emerged in this inquiry as a critical lens through which educators assessed the appropriateness of GenAI integration. Tasks perceived as pedagogically or ethically significant, such as mentoring, grading, or providing personalized feedback, were frequently insulated from automation. Educators conveyed hesitance to assign such tasks to GenAI, perceiving them as integral to their professional identity and the student learning experience. In contrast, tasks regarded as routine, peripheral, or administrative were more readily supplemented by GenAI. This finding implies that task significance functions not solely as a motivational catalyst but also as a normative boundary, delineating which applications of GenAI are regarded as legitimate, ethical, and professionally acceptable. It is also important to acknowledge that GenAI is not a monolithic category. Text-based generators such as ChatGPT afford different pedagogical opportunities than visual tools like DALL-E or administrative assistants such as syllabus builders. Our findings imply that the JCM and TTF dimensions apply differently across these categories: what constitutes a high fit in administrative automation may be perceived as a misfit in creative or interpersonal learning contexts. Recognizing these distinctions underscores the need for tool-specific integration strategies.

The study further highlights the inadequacies of prevailing adoption models such as the TAM and the UTAUT. While these frameworks prioritize ease of use and perceived usefulness, these elements were not central to the narratives provided by participants. In fact, ease of use was occasionally regarded as a drawback, particularly when it fostered superficial engagement or diminished pedagogical complexity. Educators placed greater importance on alignment with their professional identity, moral values, and educational objectives over technical efficiency. These findings bolster the increasing advocacy for more integrated and value-sensitive adoption models that accurately reflect the intricate, relational, and ethical dimensions of educational practice.

Another factor that emerged indirectly is familiarity. Educators frequently framed their reluctance to adopt GenAI in high-stakes settings as a function of novelty and cognitive load. Similar to findings in other AI domains, users often prefer familiar tools that minimize learning costs, even when more advanced systems are available (Wang and Sun, 2025, Wang et al., 2024). This suggests that adoption trajectories are partly psychological: with time and exposure, initial resistance may soften as GenAI becomes integrated into daily workflows.

Finally, cross-regional contrasts enriched our interpretation. Educators in North Africa emphasized infrastructural uncertainty and the absence of institutional policy, often linking these deficits to heightened ethical concerns. Their European counterparts, by contrast, highlighted student preparedness, curriculum integration, and alignment with accreditation requirements. These differences suggest that adoption is mediated not only by theory-driven constructs such as task identity or institutional trust, but also by the broader policy and infrastructural environment in which faculty operate.

6. Conclusion

This investigation provides a robust and conceptually nuanced examination of the manner in which educators within higher education engage with GenAI, utilizing the JCM, TTF theory, and Institutional Theory to elucidate their decision-making frameworks. Drawing upon comprehensive interviews conducted with faculty members from Europe and North Africa, the results illustrate that the adoption of GenAI is influenced not solely by its technological capabilities but also by its interplay with task identity, pedagogical principles, institutional milieu, and ethical considerations. From a practical standpoint, this study underscores that the successful integration of GenAI necessitates more than mere access to technology and training. It hinges upon the formulation of inclusive policy frameworks, intentional institutional communication, technology development aligned with core values, and ongoing opportunities for faculty introspection and collaborative engagement. Educators ought to be regarded as active co-creators in the adoption journey, rather than relegated to the role of passive executors of predetermined strategies. On a methodological level, this research validates the significance of a constructivist, abductive methodology in the context of technology adoption. It adds to the burgeoning corpus of scholarship advocating qualitative, contextually situated inquiries into the interactions between emergent technologies, professional

cultures, ethical obligations, and pedagogical practices. Although the sample is specific to contexts, the conceptual revelations provide a solid groundwork for forthcoming comparative, longitudinal, and interdisciplinary investigations. In summary, the conscientious adoption of GenAI in higher education must transcend simplistic narratives of innovation or disruption. It must prioritize the authentic experiences of educators while honoring the pedagogical, ethical, and institutional frameworks that characterize their professional endeavors. Only through the alignment of technological potentials with educational values can GenAI be assimilated in ways that truly augment learning and bolster the evolving mission of higher education.

6.1. Theoretical implication

This investigation enriches theoretical discourse by augmenting and expanding three foundational frameworks, specifically, the JCM and TTF theory, in manners that reflect the interpretative, ethical, and context-sensitive essence of GenAI adoption within higher education. Rather than employing these models in their traditional form, the results prompt a reconceptualization of their fundamental assumptions, propelled by the situated experiences of educators navigating emergent technologies. Initially, the JCM is enhanced through the incorporation of the concept of pedagogical role integrity. While JCM conventionally underscores how structural attributes of a task, such as skill variety, autonomy, or task significance, influence motivation and performance, this investigation illustrates that educators' responses to GenAI are not reducible to these dimensions alone. Rather, their decisions are profoundly mediated by the ethical and identity-based significances they assign to specific tasks. Activities such as grading, mentoring, and personalized feedback were not merely perceived as high in task significance, but as essential manifestations of professional and moral accountability. Educators resisted automation not due to functional inadequacy, but because these tasks were regarded as crucial for maintaining the integrity of the pedagogical relationship. This implies that models of job design in professional and knowledge-intensive contexts must transcend motivational logic to encompass ethical significance and role preservation as core determinants of task engagement. Subsequently, the TTF theory is reconceptualized as an adaptive and interpretive model. The conventional TTF framework concentrates on the degree of consonance between a technology's functionalities and a task's requirements, presupposing that greater fit yields enhanced performance outcomes. However, the discoveries of this study elucidate that TTF is not evaluated in a fixed or objective manner. Instead, educators partake in a continuous, reflective process wherein the appropriateness of GenAI is repeatedly assessed in relation to pedagogical objectives, ethical boundaries, and evolving institutional expectations. What constitutes "fit" is thus a product of human discernment, professional judgment, and contextual interpretation, rather than a singular technical alignment. This positions TTF as a dynamic construct, shaped as much by values and social norms as by task logic or system capabilities.

Finally, this study highlights the vital necessity of organizational endorsement, especially trust, stakeholder participation, and policy lucidity, in determining educators' involvement with GenAI. Instead of perceiving institutional influence as a top-down mandate, the results indicate that educators' reactions are influenced by how supportive frameworks are regarded and experienced. When policies were ambiguous, enforced without consultation, or disconnected from educators' principles, GenAI adoption was met with doubt or superficial compliance. Conversely, settings marked by open communication, ethical transparency, and collective ownership encouraged more authentic and proactive adoption. These observations underscore that organizational support is most effective when it is collaborative, and contextually adaptable, serving not as a limitation but as a facilitator of ethical and meaningful GenAI integration. Collectively, these theoretical refinements extend beyond generic adoption models and provide a framework tailored to management education, where educators' choices directly shape students' readiness for AI-enabled workplaces.

6.2. Practical implications

Numerous implications arise from this research. Initially, educational institutions ought to prioritize the collaborative formulation of GenAI policies that are firmly rooted in educational ethics and informed by a broad spectrum of disciplinary practices. Such policies should not be enforced unilaterally but rather cultivated through a cooperative dialogue that encompasses educators, administrators, and students. Secondly, training initiatives should be conceived as reflective, scenario-based explorations instead of mere technical demonstrations. It is imperative that educators are provided with safe and supportive environments to experiment with, interrogate, and enhance their utilization of GenAI technologies. Thirdly, developers of GenAI applications ought to incorporate educator autonomy into their design, thereby facilitating nuanced oversight, output transparency, and contextual adaptability. Trust is established not solely through policies but also through the design of the products themselves. In addition, business schools and management programs should consider introducing dedicated "AI literacy for future managers" modules. These would equip students not only with technical fluency but also with the critical capacity to evaluate AI outputs, understand ethical constraints, and lead AI-augmented teams, skills increasingly demanded by employers.

Lastly, institutions are compelled to invest in fostering cultures characterized by ethical leadership and professional trust. Issues concerning data governance, academic integrity, and the protection of intellectual property must be addressed proactively, rather than as secondary considerations. Cross-regional insights significantly augment the study's findings. While foundational patterns exhibited consistency across Europe and North Africa, notable regional distinctions emerged. Educators from North Africa frequently identified infrastructural ambiguity and vague policies as substantial barriers, whereas their European counterparts underscored student preparedness, ethical complexity, and alignment with curricular frameworks. These disparities underscore the necessity for localized, culturally responsive strategies for the integration of GenAI. These findings highlight that results should be interpreted within their regional scope; adoption dynamics may differ significantly in other global contexts. Adoption frameworks should exhibit adaptability to varying institutional capacities, regulatory environments, and pedagogical traditions.

In conclusion, this investigation augments theoretical frameworks by integrating role integrity into employment design models,

recontextualizing task–technology alignment as an ongoing interpretative endeavor and enhancing institutional theory to encompass the procedural and relational circumstances under which innovation attains significance and legitimacy. These conceptual advancements not only elucidate the intricacies of GenAI assimilation in higher education but also provide a more expansive perspective through which to comprehend technological transformation in professionalized, value-oriented contexts.

6.3. Future research and limitations

While this investigation offers profound, contextually anchored perspectives into educators' interaction with GenAI, it concurrently unveils numerous pathways for subsequent exploration. One pivotal trajectory resides in the implementation of longitudinal research methodologies that can delineate the evolving rapport between educators and GenAI over time. As institutional regulations evolve, technological proficiencies enhance, and cultural paradigms transform, it is plausible that educators' practices and dispositions towards GenAI will similarly metamorphosis. Specific research would track a cohort of management educators across multiple academic years, examining how perceptions of task identity, autonomy, and institutional support shift as they progress from novice to expert users of GenAI.

Longitudinal analyses would therefore enable scholars to capture the dynamic and iterative essence of adoption, encompassing alterations in trust, competence, and ethical orientation. Future inquiries would also gain from comparative explorations across academic fields, such as commerce, engineering, the humanities, or the social sciences. Considering that task attributes, pedagogical ideologies, and epistemological commitments exhibit significant variability across domains, it is reasonable to anticipate that the perceived worth, hazards, and constraints of GenAI utilization will diverge correspondingly. Such disciplinary comparisons could elucidate how professional standards, and educational priorities mediate the assimilation of AI technologies, contributing to more nuanced and contextually attuned theoretical frameworks. Moreover, participatory action research (PAR) constitutes a valuable methodological avenue for co-constructing ethical and pedagogically sound paradigms for GenAI integration. Engaging educators not merely as research subjects but as collaborators in formulating institutional strategies would foster shared ownership and ensure that forthcoming policies mirror the lived experiences of academic labor. PAR methodologies could also facilitate the identification of optimal practices for capacity enhancement, peer learning, and community-driven innovation in the deployment of AI instruments. Finally, the present research predominantly concentrates on educators' experiences. Nevertheless, a more comprehensive comprehension of GenAI's repercussions on higher education necessitates broadening the unit of analysis to encompass students, administrators, and other institutional stakeholders. Students' encounters with AI-mediated learning, administrators' viewpoints on policy execution, and the broader implications for academic governance and power dynamics all merit further investigation. Incorporating these perspectives would enable researchers to attain a deeper understanding of how GenAI reconfigures the relational and institutional fabric of higher education. Collectively, these prospective avenues will not only enrich the empirical foundation surrounding GenAI adoption but also facilitate the formulation of more holistic, inclusive, and ethically sound frameworks for technological transformation within academic environments.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Marwa Chaieb: Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Roberta Cuel:** Writing – review & editing, Validation, Supervision, Methodology, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Rym Bouzaabia:** Writing – review & editing, Validation, Supervision, Project administration.

Intellectual property

We confirm that we have given due consideration to the protection of intellectual property associated with this work and that there are no impediments to publication, including the timing of publication, with respect to intellectual property. In so doing we confirm that we have followed the regulations of our institutions concerning intellectual property.

Authorship

We confirm that the manuscript has been read and approved by all named authors.

Funding

No funding was received for this work.

Conflict of interest

No conflict of interest exists.

We wish to confirm that there are no known conflicts of interest associated with this publication and there has been no significant financial support for this work that could have influenced its outcome.

Appendix A

Theme/Proposition	Illustrative Quotes	Participant
Skill Variety (P1)	"My teaching isn't just lectures, it is problem-solving, storytelling, adapting case studies to the group in front of me. GenAI can't replace that."	Senior faculty, Spain
	"When I am composing emails or drafting elementary instructions, I utilize ChatGPT to enhance my professional tone. This conserves my energy for the actual pedagogical activities."	Junior lecturer, Tunisia
Task Identity (P2)	"Correcting essays transcends mere correction. It is an opportunity for me to discern my students' thought processes, what challenges they encounter, what they deem important. This constitutes a dialogue rather than a mere task."	Professor, France
	"If I begin allowing AI to propose grades or construct comments, I find myself questioning the essence of my professional role. Students will no longer feel individually recognized."	Law lecturer, North Africa
Task Significance (P3)	"Facilitating a student's journey through their thesis is a profound responsibility. Should I employ AI for that purpose, even merely for suggestions, it would feel as though we are both engaging in an act of academic dishonesty."	Professor of Psychology, Europe
	"For tasks such as transforming a lesson plan into a tabular format, I find it appropriate to utilize AI. However, during the instruction of ethics or critical thinking, it is imperative for me to be entirely engaged."	Educational technology expert
Task–Technology Fit (H1)	"When I encounter difficulties in drafting an assignment prompt or an email, ChatGPT proves to be highly beneficial, it serves as a collaborative ideation partner."	Marketing academic, Morocco
	"It fails to comprehend metaphor, nuance, or sarcasm. My students possess that understanding. This is why I continue to engage in the more intricate analyses myself."	Literature educator, Spain
Institutional Support (H2)	"We convened a workshop with our colleagues, during which we exchanged examples, queries, and best practices. This collaborative effort facilitated my exploration of the technology in a secure manner."	Faculty member, France
	"We received a memorandum instructing us to innovate with AI. However, what is the meaning? What training is available? What guidelines are in place?"	Academic, North Africa
Ethical Concerns (H3)	"In instances where a student employs AI to compose their essay, what criteria should I utilize for evaluation? Am I assessing the student's capabilities, or those of the machine?"	Scholar, Spain
	"I aspire for my students to encounter challenges during their learning process. It is within these struggles that genuine learning occurs. If AI alleviates all difficulties, we fail to cultivate their resilience and creativity."	Humanities faculty member, Tunisia

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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