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Influence of Artificial Intelligence on Academic Performance of Social Studies Undergraduate Students of Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi, Nigeria

By

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ABSTRACT: This study investigated influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on academic performance of Social Studies undergraduate students of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi, Nigeria. Three purposes and three research questions guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. Population for this study comprised of five hundred and forty-two (542) students. Sample consisted of 136 Social Studies student representing 25% of the total population. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select the respondents. Instrument used for data collection was a 15 item self-developed questionnaire titled; Social Studies Artificial Intelligence and Academic Performance Questionnaire (SSAIAPQ). The desired responses were tabulated on a four points Likert scale with the response mode of Strongly Agree (4) Agree (3) Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument was validated by two experts. Cronbach's Alpha was employed yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.80. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were employed for data analysis. Findings revealed that Artificial Intelligence have a positive influence on assignment completion of Social Studies undergraduates. The study concluded that AI influences academic performance in Social Studies. It was recommended among others that Departments should integrate AI writing tools such as Grammarly, ChatGPT into student support services.

Keywords: Social Studies, Academic Performance, Artificial Intelligence, Assignment Completion, Class Participation, Project Work.

INTRODUCTION

Social Studies is a field of study that could be considered as an instrument of productive change in terms of knowledge, attitudes, values and skills through which learners are required to be responsible members of the society. Social Studies is a discipline that concerns itself with learning about people, where and how they live, how they form and put the society into structures, how they govern themselves and provide for their material and psychological needs, how they use their resources or misuse them and how they love or dislike one another. Utulu (2018) sees Social Studies as the integrated study of the social science and humanities that promotes effective citizenship. It provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as Economic, History, Geography, Anthropology, Law, Philosophy, Political Science, Religion and Sociology as well as appropriate content from the humanities, Mathematics and the natural sciences.

Social Studies is a flow and transfer of ideas. Supporting this view, Shamija (2013) maintains that Social Studies is also a corrective study. It aims is correcting the inadequacies of the colonial

education system. While the purpose of colonial education was to primarily serve the interest of his foreign masters, the product of today's educational system is found to be ill-equipped to cope with the demands of social harmony, national unity and national consciousness. Social Studies inculcates good morals in man, it inculcates in learners the cognition, skills, values, attitudes, abilities and competence that will enable him become an informed, rational, analytical, participative and functional citizen.

Social Studies education, particularly at the undergraduate level have been observed by students to be abstract and disconnected from practical realities, leading to reduced motivation and shallow academic performance. Davidovitch and Wadmany (2025) observe that inadequate instructional support, outdated pedagogical methods and limited access to academic resources contribute to students' declining participation and academic performance in the discipline. Given the fundamental role Social Studies plays in fostering civic engagement, critical thinking and sociocultural awareness, all of which can be gauged by academic performance; this declining trend is particularly worrisome. The degree to which a student meets predetermined learning objectives is referred to as academic performance and it is usually assessed through coursework, tests and intellectual engagement. The quality and consistency of student outputs in regard to anticipated learning outcomes, such as critical thinking, writing proficiency and the application of discipline knowledge, are all included in academic performance, according to Wang and Fan (2025). Academic performance, according to Jang (2025), is a comprehensive indicator of students' capacity to arrange thoughts, exhibit topic mastery and participate in learning activities in an autonomous and significant manner. It is not just a reflection of grades.

Academic performance remains an important indicator of student success in higher education, especially in subjects such as Social Studies, which emphasize analytical thinking, historical interpretation and contextual understanding. In Nigeria, Social Studies undergraduates are frequently obliged to complete writing-intensive assignments such as essays, policy studies and group projects that involve high levels of cognitive engagement and critical thought. However, a variety of obstacles, including insufficient academic support, limited access to digital resources, infrastructural deficiencies and huge class sizes, continue to hinder students' capacity to perform well.

According to Davidovitch and Wadmany (2025), structural impediments, particularly those in public institutions, have a major influence on students' academic performance and involvement in difficult fields such as Social Studies. These issues are especially acute in public colleges, where resource limits regularly impede students' ability to meet academic requirements. As a result, educators and policymakers are increasingly looking to digital technologies as potential solutions to close these gaps and improve learning outcomes. One of the most disruptive advances in modern education is the incorporation of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the creation of computer systems capable of doing activities that traditionally require human intelligence, such as reasoning, problem-solving, language understanding, and learning from experience. Marion and Ma (2025) define Artificial Intelligence as a class of digital systems that replicate cognitive capabilities, allowing for the automation and augmentation of intellectual tasks in academic settings. AI-powered technologies like ChatGPT, Grammarly, Quill Bot and Elicit are quickly becoming commonplace in academic settings, supporting students with content creation, paraphrasing, grammatical correction, literature synthesis and idea organization. These technologies provide personalized, real-time feedback that helps students understand academic activities, improve their writing, and express complicated ideas. Granić (2025) and Wang and Fan (2025) found that AI improves student autonomy and access to academic materials, leading to better academic performance. In Social Studies, where assignments frequently demand the synthesis of several sources and complex arguments, AI could be a significant cognitive aid. AI is especially important in fields like Social Studies since it helps students develop arguments and share ideas through assignments, project work and active class participation.

Assignment completion is the process by which students effectively complete academic tasks such as essays, reports, reflections or analyses within a specified deadline and in accordance with established academic standards. Jang (2025) defines assignment completion as not only submitting projects on time, but also demonstrating critical thinking, consistent organization and conformity to academic writing rules. Bermeo and Salazar (2025) expand on this viewpoint, arguing that successful assignment completion shows a student's capacity to connect with knowledge meaningfully, synthesize multiple sources and convey ideas clearly and freely. In Social Studies, where writing-intensive assignments are crucial to curriculum delivery, assignment completion is an important predictor of academic engagement, comprehension and overall academic performance.

The influence of AI is particularly noticeable in assignment completion. Writing projects in Social Studies need the expression of critical thought, analysis of social concerns and proper reference, which can be difficult for many students. Tools like ChatGPT and Grammarly help students plan, draft and refine written content, which improves clarity, coherence and confidence. Jang (2025) discovered that generative AI promotes self-regulated learning by assisting students in organizing their thoughts and completing tasks more efficiently. Similarly, Bermeo and Salazar (2025) found that AI promotes higher task independence, particularly in online and hybrid learning settings when immediate human feedback is limited. These advances show that artificial intelligence may improve students' academic performance by lowering the strain of academic writing and the anxiety associated with project work.

Project work refers to a structured academic task that requires students to investigate a topic, synthesize information and present findings, often collaboratively and over an extended period. It emphasizes inquiry-based learning, critical analysis and the practical application of theoretical concepts. According to Hjálmarsdóttir (2024), project work in higher education enables students to engage deeply with real-world problems, organize interdisciplinary knowledge and demonstrate autonomy in planning and executing academic tasks. Similarly, Pohn et al. (2025) define project work as a learner-centered approach that fosters research skills, teamwork and reflective thinking through the integration of diverse academic sources and the production of a final output. In Social Studies, project work often involves analyzing social issues, developing policy proposals or evaluating historical case studies, making it a critical tool for assessing students' analytical, collaborative and presentation abilities.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly transforming how undergraduate Social Studies students conceptualize and execute project work, a core component of the discipline that involves critical inquiry, social analysis and interdisciplinary synthesis. AI tools such as ChatGPT, Elicit and AI-powered literature review assistants are now used to generate research questions, access diverse academic sources and structure project content with improved clarity and coherence. According to Hjálmarsdóttir (2024), such tools support students in aligning their project goals with assessment rubrics, enabling them to manage tasks more efficiently while focusing on deeper thematic exploration. In Social Studies, where project topics often deal with governance, social inequality or civic participation, AI can aid students in gathering case studies, summarizing theories and organizing findings into analytical formats. Pohn et al. (2025) found that AI also facilitates collaborative learning, allowing students to co-develop content and simulate real-world policy scenarios.

However, Rodríguez-Gallego and Ordóñez-Sierra (2024) caution that heavy dependence on AI-generated content can weaken original argumentation and critical reasoning skills, central to the aims of Social Studies education. Therefore, while AI enhances efficiency and digital fluency in project work, it must be integrated with pedagogical guidance to ensure that students maintain academic integrity and engage meaningfully with social issues.

Furthermore, AI technologies are transforming how students approach project work, which is a core component of the Social Studies curriculum. Projects typically require research planning, data analysis, literature review and structured presentation of findings; activities that are

cognitively demanding and time-consuming. AI platforms such as Elicit and AI-based mind mapping tools are now being used to generate research ideas, organize content and simulate case analyses. Hjálmarsdóttir (2024) notes that such tools help students align their projects with academic rubrics, while Pohn et al. (2025) highlight the role of AI in facilitating group collaboration and peer-supported learning. However, concerns persist. Rodríguez-Gallego and Ordóñez-Sierra (2024) argued that overdependence on AI may lead to a "false sense of mastery," where students mistake AI-generated insights for deep understanding. This tension underscores the importance of integrating AI literacy and ethical consideration into academic instruction which is stimulates students' class participation.

Class participation refers to the active engagement of students in classroom activities through asking questions, contributing to discussions, responding to prompts and collaborating with peers and instructors. It is a critical component of interactive learning and is often used as an indicator of students' preparedness, confidence and conceptual understanding. According to Bermeo and Salazar (2025), class participation enhances academic discourse by fostering critical thinking, reflective inquiry and knowledge sharing among students. Jang (2025) defines it as a dynamic process where learners verbally and cognitively engage with content, peers and facilitators in order to deepen comprehension and demonstrate academic readiness. In Social Studies, where dialogue, debate and interpretation are essential pedagogical tools, class participation plays a vital role in shaping students' analytical perspectives and civic awareness.

Beyond individual writing assignments, AI has ramifications for classroom engagement. Many students, particularly those who struggle with language proficiency or lack academic confidence, are hesitant to actively participate in class discussions. AI solutions can help to overcome these barriers by giving real-time clarification of concepts, summarizing complicated materials and facilitating practice-based interactions like virtual talks. According to Jang (2025) and Bermeo and Salazar (2025), scaffolding allows students to participate more confidently and meaningfully in

classroom debate. This increased participation helps to build crucial academic abilities such as argument creation, evidence-based reasoning, and collaborative research, which are essential in Social Studies education.

In the Nigerian context, particularly within universities like Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi, the adoption of AI tools occurs within a complex ecosystem shaped by infrastructural limitations, digital literacy gaps and evolving institutional policies. While global research is expanding on AI in education, there is limited empirical data on how Social Studies undergraduates in Sub-Saharan Africa perceive and interact with these tools. As the educational sector continues to adapt to digital transformation, understanding students' experiences with AI becomes crucial for developing policies and practices that promote meaningful, ethical and contextually relevant learning.

Therefore, it is against this backdrop that this study investigated influence of Artificial Intelligence on academic performance among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the increasing use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in higher education, there is still a worrying lack of understanding about how undergraduate Social Studies students perceive the impact of these technologies on their academic performance, particularly in under-resourced and developing countries such as Nigeria. While AI programs like ChatGPT, Grammarly and Quill Bot are frequently utilized to improve writing, research, and learning efficiency, their unrestricted use presents severe problems. Educators and academic institutions are concerned about an increase in allegations of over-reliance, diminishing critical thinking abilities and ethical misconduct such as plagiarism and content manipulation. More worryingly, most existing studies focus solely on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines, leaving a huge study gap a field such as Social Studies, which demand higher-order reasoning, interpretive analysis and civic reflection. Ignoring how AI is influencing student behavior in such circumstances risks damaging the integrity of academic performance and the primary

aims of Social Studies education. This study, therefore, addresses a serious vacuum by evaluating students' awareness, usage patterns and views of AI's influence on academic performance in Social Studies programs, an investigation that is urgently needed to guide ethical, effective and discipline-sensitive AI integration.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate influence of Artificial Intelligence on academic performance among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. examine the influence of Artificial Intelligence on assignment completion among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi.

2. examine the influence of Artificial Intelligence on class participation among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi.

3. examine the influence of Artificial Intelligence on project work among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the influence of Artificial Intelligence on assignment completion among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

2. What is the influence of Artificial Intelligence on class participation among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

3. What is the influence of Artificial Intelligence on project work among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

Methods

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. This design agrees with Adzongo, (2022) who defined descriptive survey design as a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals on a large scale and it can be used when collecting information about peoples' attitude, opinions, habits or any of the variety of educational or social issues. Descriptive survey design was suitable for the study because the study involved the assessment of public opinion using questionnaire and sampling methods.

The population for this study comprised five hundred and forty-two (542) students from Faculty of Education Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi (Academic Office, 2025). The sample size for the study was 136 respondents drawn from 542 which represent 25% of Social Studies undergraduates in the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education. This was in line with Emaikwu (2016) who states that 2-25% of the total population is idea to represent the entire population.

A simple random sampling technique was employed to select the respondents because each respondent of the population has an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample. The instrument used for this study was a 15 items self-developed questionnaire titled; Social Studies Artificial Intelligence and Academic Performance Questionnaire (SSAIAPQ). Out of the 136 questionnaires distributed, 131 were correctly completed and returned, representing a valid response rate of 96.3%. This response rate was considered adequate for analysis in a descriptive survey. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation, based on a four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The decision rule was that any item with a mean score of 2.50 or above was considered accepted, while any item below 2.50 was rejected.

Results

Research Question One: What is the influence of Artificial Intelligence on assignment completion among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

TABLE 1: Analysis on Influence of Artificial Intelligence on Assignment Completion among Social Studies Undergraduates.

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev	Decision

1	AI tools help me paraphrase and summarize academic texts.	41	63	24	0	3.00	0.78	Accepted
2	I use AI such as ChatGPT or Grammarly to improve grammar and clarity in assignments.	47	61	21	0	3.09	0.76	Accepted
3	AI enables me to meet deadlines more easily.	51	54	24	0	3.10	0.79	Accepted
4	AI helps me structure and organize my assignments better.	52	57	22	0	3.14	0.77	Accepted
5	I feel more confident submitting assignments after using AI tools.	50	59	17	0	3.10	0.81	Accepted
	Cluster Mean ($\bar{X}$): 3.09							

Table 1 indicates that the mean scores for item 1-5 are: 3.00, 3.09, 3.10, 3.14 and 3.10 with the following corresponding standard deviations .78, .76, .79, .77 and .81. Respondents rated all items above the cut-off point of 2.50 with a cluster mean of 3.09. This indicates that Artificial Intelligence has influence on Assignment completion among Social Studies undergraduates at Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi.

Research Question Two: What is the influence of Artificial Intelligence on class participation among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

TABLE 2: Analysis on Influence of Artificial Intelligence on Class Participation among Social Studies Undergraduates

S/No	Items Descriptions	SA	A	D	SD	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev	Decision
6	AI Helps Me Understand Lecture Content Better Before Class.	48	60	28	0	3.37	0.66	Accepted
7	I Use AI Tools To Clarify Complex Social Studies Concepts.	52	62	22	0	3.44	0.60	Accepted
8	I Feel More Confident Participating in Class After Preparing With AI.	43	59	34	0	3.21	0.71	Accepted
9	AI Simulations Help Me Practice Class Discussions and Debates.	41	58	37	0	3.16	0.74	Accepted
10	AI Helps Me Contribute More Effectively to Group/Class Interactions.	45	60	31	0	3.25	0.70	Accepted
	Cluster Mean ($\bar{X}$): 3.29							

Table 2 indicates that the mean scores for item 6-10 are: 3.37, 3.44, 3.21, 3.16 and 3.25 with the following corresponding standard deviations .66, .60, .71, .74 and .70. Respondents rated all items above the cut-off point of 2.50 with a cluster mean of 3.086. This indicates that Artificial Intelligence has influence on class participation of Social

Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi.

Research Question Three: What is the influence of Artificial Intelligence on project work among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

TABLE 3: Analysis on Influence of Artificial Intelligence on Project Work among Social Studies Undergraduates

S/No	Items Description	SA	A	D	SD	Mean ($\overline{X}$)	Std. Dev	Decision
11	AI supports me in generating ideas for my project topics.	49	60	27	0	3.42	0.62	Accepted
12	I use AI tools to search for and summarize literature.	58	61	17	0	3.56	0.57	Accepted
13	AI helps me organize my findings into coherent project reports.	47	58	31	0	3.38	0.66	Accepted
14	AI-assisted mind maps improve my understanding of project structure.	46	55	35	0	3.35	0.69	Accepted
15	I collaborate with peers using AI tools to plan and edit project work.	44	56	36	0	3.29	0.71	Accepted
	Cluster Mean ($\overline{X}$): 3.40							

Table 3 indicates that the mean scores for item 10-15 are: 3.42, 3.56, 3.38, 3.35 and 3.29 with the following corresponding standard deviations .62, .57, .66, .69 and .71. Respondents rated all items above the cut-off point of 2.50 with a cluster mean of 3.086. This indicates that Artificial Intelligence has influence on project work among Social Studies undergraduates at Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings is structured around the three research questions. It is presented as follows.

Finding from this study revealed that Artificial Intelligence has influence on Assignment completion among Social Studies undergraduates of Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi. Respondents agreed that platforms like ChatGPT, Grammarly and Quill Bot help them paraphrase content, correct grammatical errors and structure their thoughts more effectively. The majority reported that Artificial Intelligence lowered their writing anxiety and enhanced their ability to achieve project deadlines. This perspective is consistent with the finding of Jang (2025), who found that generative AI tools help students organize difficult academic content and promote self-regulated writing habits. Granić (2025) found that AI-enabled feedback methods boost academic performance by allowing students to modify drafts without relying on instructors. However, this conclusion contradicts Abarzosa and Balaba's (2025) discovery that excessive use of AI for assignment completion may diminish students' cognitive effort and limit their growth of original thought. These concerns highlight the importance of AI literacy instruction in helping students grasp the difference between aid and academic dishonesty.

The study also found that Artificial Intelligence has an influence on class participation of Social Studies undergraduates at Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi. This suggests that AI tools help students participate more actively in class. Participants reported using artificial intelligence to clarify challenging lecture

materials, simulate discussions, and practise responses before participating in real-time academic conversations. This finding is consistent with Kapoor et al.'s (2025) discovery that AI provides scaffolding for students who struggle with conceptual understanding or lack confidence in speaking. AI tools educate students for more meaningful classroom participation by providing fast explanations and simpler summaries. This finding is also in nexus with Bermeo and Salazar's (2025) observation that AI increases class readiness, particularly in online and blended learning settings when students. -teacher interactions are limited. Nonetheless, this finding disagree with Rodríguez-Gallego and Ordóñez-Sierra (2024) who found that students may appear competent without developing true subject mastery if they depend on AI to interpret or answer course content. Despite these concerns, the present study suggests that students use AI mainly as a preparatory tool, not as a substitute for classroom learning.

Another finding revealed that Artificial Intelligence influences project work among Social Studies undergraduates at Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi. This means that AI assists students in managing time, organizing data and improving overall project quality. This finding is strongly confirmed by Hjálmarsdóttir (2024) who emphasized the importance of AI in proposal writing, content development, and aligning academic initiatives with institutional guidelines. Finding also corroborates with Pohn et al. (2025) who found that AI technologies promote collaborative learning by allowing students to co-create content and revise arguments more successfully in project-based settings. These advantages are especially valuable in Social Studies, where projects frequently need interdisciplinary research, critical analysis, and planned presentations. On the other hand, this finding contradicts Davidovitch and Wadmany's (2025) discovery that without ethical awareness, students may misuse AI in ways that jeopardise originality and authenticity. As AI becomes more accessible, the distinction between individual student effort and AI-generated output may blur. As a result, while students in this survey saw AI as improving overall project competency, there is a clear need for institutions to incorporate AI ethics and digital literacy into their research technique training.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that undergraduate Social Studies students at Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi, view Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a valuable tool that enhances their academic performance. AI was found to significantly support assignment completion by improving writing clarity, organization and confidence; enhance class participation by boosting preparedness and conceptual understanding and facilitate project work through idea generation, literature synthesis and collaborative organization. While these benefits affirm the transformative potential of AI in education, the study also underscores the need for guided, ethical and contextually relevant integration to prevent overreliance and preserve the development of critical thinking and academic integrity.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended thus:

1.   To improve assignment quality and promote independent academic writing skills, the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education at Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi should integrate AI writing tools like Grammarly, Quill Bot and ChatGPT into student support services and provide structured training on their ethical and effective use.

2.   Encourage students to use AI tools for pre-class assignments, such as material summaries or simulated debates, to improve conceptual understanding and confidence in the classroom.

3.   Embed AI-supported research planning, including literature review, data organization, and collaborative editing, into project-based courses. Emphasise originality and ethical use using project supervision and evaluation rubrics.

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