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Governing Generative AI in UAE Humanities Research: Ethics, Academic Integrity, and Institutional Readiness

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of generative artificial intelligence (AI) has transformed higher education and academic research worldwide, particularly in humanities disciplines that depend heavily on interpretation, critical reasoning, and intellectual originality. While large language models (LLMs) offer substantial opportunities for research support and productivity, they also introduce complex ethical and governance challenges related to plagiarism, fabricated references, authorship ambiguity, algorithmic bias, and the reliability of AI-generated scholarly content. Despite accelerating adoption, universities continue to face significant governance gaps in regulating responsible AI use within humanities research. This study investigates stakeholders' perceptions of ethical risks, academic integrity concerns, and institutional governance needs associated with generative AI in humanities research within UAE higher education institutions. Employing a mixed-methods descriptive-analytical design, the study combines quantitative statistical analysis (N = 275) with qualitative thematic analysis of open-ended responses to examine perceived governance deficiencies, ethical responsibility, transparency practices, and institutional preparedness. The findings reveal high levels of concern regarding plagiarism, hallucinated references, weakened research originality, and the absence of clear institutional policies governing AI-assisted academic work. The results further demonstrate significant positive relationships between governance awareness, ethical responsibility, and concerns related to academic integrity and epistemic reliability. Qualitative findings reinforce the perceived need for transparent institutional regulations, AI literacy development, human oversight mechanisms, and standardized ethical guidelines. A central finding is the identification of a **governance gap**: participants report strong awareness of AI-related risks while perceiving only moderate institutional preparedness to address them. The study contributes to responsible AI governance literature by (a) extending it to humanities-specific contexts, (b) identifying the awareness-preparedness governance gap within UAE higher education, and (c) proposing the **Responsible Governance Model for Generative AI in Humanities Research** – an eight-dimension institutional framework, presented as a proposal grounded in stakeholder perceptions, balancing technological innovation with academic integrity.

Keywords: Generative AI, Responsible AI Governance, Academic Integrity, Humanities Research, Higher Education Governance, Digital Humanities, Institutional Governance, UAE Higher Education

Introduction

Generative AI in Higher Education: Opportunity and Disruption

Since the public release of ChatGPT in late 2022, large language models (LLMs) and AI-assisted writing systems have rapidly entered universities, research institutions, and scholarly publishing across disciplines. These technologies are used for literature summarization, idea generation, writing support, language editing, and coding assistance,

reshaping traditional forms of knowledge production (Kasneci et al., 2023; Tlili et al., 2023). Generative AI differs fundamentally from earlier educational technologies: it autonomously produces coherent scholarly text, imitates human writing styles, and generates references, simultaneously enhancing productivity and disrupting established academic norms (Dwivedi et al., 2023; Cotton et al., 2023).

The Academic Integrity Challenge

The accessibility of AI-assisted writing has intensified concerns about plagiarism, fabricated references, authorship ambiguity, misinformation, and declining epistemic reliability (Eaton, 2023). Critically, AI systems frequently produce **hallucinated references** – non-existent citations that mimic legitimate sources while lacking factual validity (Emsley, 2023). Because AI-generated output can appear intellectually credible while containing inaccurate or unverifiable information, it challenges foundational principles of citation transparency and source verification. Generative AI also complicates authorship, blurring the boundary between human intellectual contribution and machine-generated production (Mhlanga, 2023). UNESCO (2023) emphasizes that these developments transform academic integrity from a student-centered plagiarism issue into a broader institutional governance challenge involving research ethics and epistemic trust.

Responsible AI Governance and Its Gap in Universities

Responsible AI frameworks – OECD (2019), UNESCO (2021) – emphasize transparency, explainability, fairness, accountability, and human oversight. Human-centered AI approaches further stress preserving human intellectual agency and ethical supervision rather than replacing human reasoning (Crawford, 2021). Despite international attention, universities worldwide adopt fragmented, inconsistent approaches to generative AI, often lacking comprehensive frameworks defining acceptable use, disclosure requirements, and accountability mechanisms (Chan & Hu, 2023; Floridi & Cowls, 2022). Weak governance contributes to inconsistent enforcement and hidden AI-assisted practices (Dwivedi et al., 2023).

Why Humanities Research Is Uniquely Vulnerable

Humanities scholarship relies heavily on interpretation, contextual reasoning, and discursive originality. Generative AI can produce sophisticated interpretive and argumentative text that superficially resembles authentic scholarly reasoning while lacking genuine intentionality or contextual understanding (Bender et al., 2021). This creates ambiguity about originality and epistemic legitimacy. Because interpretive scholarship involves nuanced cultural, philosophical, ethical, and historical analysis that cannot be reduced to predictive language generation, excessive reliance on AI may weaken critical thinking, diminish scholarly creativity, and threaten epistemic authenticity (Crawford, 2021). Humanities therefore requires governance approaches sensitive to its interpretive characteristics rather than generalized technical regulations.

The UAE Context

The UAE is strategically relevant: its National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence 2031 aims to integrate AI across education and governance while promoting responsible development (UAE Government, 2023). UAE universities increasingly adopt AI-enhanced learning environments, yet rapid modernization intensifies concerns about academic integrity and governance preparedness. This context provides a valuable setting for examining how rapidly modernizing systems balance innovation, digital transformation, and institutional governance.

Research Problem, Questions, and Objectives

Research problem: Despite rapid AI adoption, universities lack comprehensive governance frameworks for responsible AI use in humanities research. Existing policies remain fragmented and insufficiently adapted to the ethical/epistemological challenges of AI-assisted scholarship. Limited empirical understanding exists of how stakeholders *perceive* ethical risks and governance deficiencies.

Research questions

1. How do stakeholders perceive the major ethical risks of generative AI use in humanities research?
2. How do university stakeholders perceive current governance deficiencies related to AI-assisted academic work?
3. Which institutional mechanisms do stakeholders perceive as necessary for responsible AI governance?
4. How can universities balance technological innovation with academic integrity and ethical responsibility?

Objectives: (i) identify perceived ethical risks; (ii) examine perceptions of governance deficiencies in UAE HEIs; (iii) analyze relationships between governance awareness, ethical responsibility, and academic integrity concerns; (iv) develop a governance framework for AI-assisted humanities research grounded in stakeholder perceptions.

Contribution

This study contributes by extending responsible AI governance into humanities-specific contexts, providing mixed-methods evidence on stakeholder perceptions within UAE universities, identifying the awareness-preparedness governance gap, and proposing an empirically informed governance framework for AI-assisted humanities research.

Literature Review and Research Gap

Generative AI and Digital Knowledge Production

Generative AI represents a shift in digital knowledge production: unlike information-access technologies, AI systems actively participate in content production, reshaping assumptions about authorship, expertise, and scholarly labor (Dwivedi et al., 2023).

Scholarship recognizes both potential – adaptive tutoring, automated feedback, literature review support, accessibility (Tlili et al., 2023) – and concern. Crawford (2021) argues AI systems are socio-technical, reshaping power relations and knowledge structures; Bender et al. (2021) caution that LLMs operate via statistical prediction rather than genuine understanding, raising questions about epistemic quality. Increasingly, generative AI is framed as enabling hybrid human-AI knowledge environments, raising questions about the boundary between augmentation and replacement.

Academic Integrity and AI-Generated Content

Generative AI complicates traditional misconduct frameworks (plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, improper citation) by enabling users to produce apparently original content through AI-assisted generation (Eaton, 2023). Key concerns include hallucinated references (Emsley, 2023), ghost authorship, and declining research reliability (Cotton et al., 2023; Mhlanga, 2023). Because AI systems operate through predictive modeling rather than conceptual understanding, scholars question the interpretive validity of AI-generated outputs (Bender et al., 2021). UNESCO (2023) warns AI may facilitate misinformation and reduced transparency. The literature increasingly frames academic integrity as an institutional governance challenge requiring proactive regulatory structures, not merely punitive detection (Chan & Hu, 2023).

Ethical Risks in Humanities Research

Humanities scholarship – grounded in interpretation, contextual understanding, and discursive reflexivity – faces distinctive risks. **Interpretive authenticity** is threatened when AI imitates scholarly discourse without genuine intentionality or cultural sensitivity (Crawford, 2021). **Epistemic trust** erodes when fluent but inaccurate content is relied upon in disciplines requiring contextual accuracy. Overdependence on AI-assisted writing may encourage superficial engagement and reduce reflective reasoning and originality (Kasneci et al., 2023). Crucially, humanities addresses ethical, cultural, and philosophical questions that cannot be reduced to predictive text generation. Governance must therefore account for humanities' distinctive epistemology rather than applying generalized technical regulation.

Institutional Governance of AI

Institutional governance concerns policies, regulatory procedures, ethical standards, accountability mechanisms, and oversight structures (Floridi & Cowls, 2022). Many universities lack coherent AI strategies, with fragmented, outdated policies producing uncertainty (Chan & Hu, 2023). Effective governance requires moving beyond reactive responses toward frameworks grounded in transparency and human oversight (OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021), including disclosure mechanisms, ethics committees, AI literacy programs, and governance structures (Dwivedi et al., 2023). Limited research addresses how governance operates specifically within humanities contexts.

Responsible AI Frameworks

Responsible AI frameworks (OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021) emphasize transparent, accountable, fair, explainable systems aligned with human values. Human-centered AI prioritizes human agency and autonomy (Crawford, 2021). Responsible innovation theory adds anticipatory governance and stakeholder participation (Stilgoe, Owen, & Macnaghten, 2013). However, limited research operationalizes these principles within humanities research governance.

Research Gap

Four gaps motivate this study:

1. **Empirical gap:** Most AI-governance-in-education research remains conceptual/descriptive; limited empirical work examines stakeholder perceptions of governance deficiencies.
2. **Humanities-specific gap:** Research often treats higher education as homogeneous, neglecting humanities' distinctive interpretive and ethical characteristics.
3. **Contextual gap:** Limited empirical research examines responsible AI governance within UAE higher education despite its regional leadership in AI.
4. **Integration gap:** AI ethics scholarship and institutional governance studies are weakly integrated; few studies operationalize responsible AI principles within practical higher education governance models.

Theoretical Framework

This study integrates responsible AI principles, human-centered AI, academic integrity theory, and institutional governance into a unified framework explaining how universities can regulate ethical AI integration in humanities research while preserving scholarly authenticity.

Responsible AI principles (OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021) provide the governance spine: *transparency* (understanding when/how AI contributes to outputs), *accountability* (assigning responsibility for AI-assisted outcomes), *explainability* (understanding AI's reasoning), and *human oversight* (AI supporting rather than replacing human judgment). In humanities research, these are non-optional safeguards given AI's persuasive fluency.

Human-centered AI (Crawford, 2021) emphasizes augmentation over replacement, preserving human agency and ethical supervision. This matters especially in humanities, where inquiry depends on interpretation, contextual understanding, and reflexivity that cannot be delegated to predictive systems (Bender et al., 2021).

Academic integrity theory (Eaton, 2023) supplies the ethical dimension: research authenticity, ethical scholarship, and intellectual accountability. In AI-mediated environments, integrity increasingly involves disclosure responsibilities and validation of AI-generated content rather than assumption of algorithmic accuracy.

Institutional governance theory (Stilgoe et al., 2013) contributes regulatory governance, organizational accountability, and policy implementation. Effective governance requires moving from policy statements to operational, consistently enforced frameworks (Chan & Hu, 2023).

Conceptual model. Five constructs guide the empirical investigation: *Ethical Risks*, *Academic Integrity Concerns*, *Governance Awareness*, *Institutional Preparedness*, and *Responsible AI Perceptions*. Results explore the relationships among these constructs, with particular attention to the hypothesized gap between awareness and preparedness.

Methodology

Design and Context

A mixed-methods descriptive-analytical design was adopted to address both measurable perceptions and interpretive concerns (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). The study was conducted within UAE higher education institutions, focusing on humanities-oriented academic and research environments, a strategically relevant context given the UAE's AI Strategy 2031 and rapid digital transformation (UAE Government, 2023).

Population, Sample, and Instrument

The target population comprised undergraduate students, postgraduate students, researchers, and academic affiliates engaged in humanities-related research. **Convenience sampling** yielded **N = 275 valid responses** – appropriate for exploratory research on an emerging phenomenon (Cohen et al., 2018), though generalizability is limited (see Section 9).

A purpose-designed questionnaire, developed from the literature (Dwivedi et al., 2023; UNESCO, 2023), comprised five-point Likert-scale closed items across five dimensions – *Ethical Risks*, *Academic Integrity*, *Governance Deficiencies*, *AI Literacy*, and *Institutional Readiness* – plus open-ended items on governance expectations and ethical concerns.

Validity, Reliability, and Analysis

Content validity was established through expert review and pilot testing. Reliability was assessed via Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 1951), reporting coefficients for each construct and the overall instrument (Table 2). Quantitative analysis comprised descriptive statistics (means, SDs; Table 3), reliability analysis, and correlation analysis among key constructs (Table 4), with statistical significance assessed at $p < 0.05$. Qualitative data were analyzed via thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006): open coding → axial coding → theme generation → interpretation with representative participant quotations.

Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary; respondents were informed of the study's purpose. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained; no personally identifiable information

was collected or reported; responses were analyzed in aggregate. The study adhered to principles of transparency, informed participation, responsible data handling, and ethical reporting.

Results

Participant Demographics

The final sample comprised N = 275 valid responses. Table 1 reports the demographic distribution across academic status, institutional affiliation, and prior AI familiarity. The sample included undergraduate students, postgraduate students, researchers, and faculty/affiliates, with varying levels of prior AI-familiarity – enabling capture of diverse perspectives.

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the five questionnaire dimensions exceeded the acceptable threshold ($\alpha \geq 0.70$), confirming internal consistency (Table 2).

Descriptive Findings by Construct

Ethical Risks. Participants perceived high ethical risk, with the strongest concerns regarding fabricated references/hallucinated citations and weakened independent analytical reasoning. Elevated means indicate widespread awareness of AI's potential negative implications, consistent with literature on hallucinated citations and epistemic reliability (Emsley, 2023; Eaton, 2023).

Academic Integrity Concerns. Participants perceived high concern about authorship ambiguity, intellectual originality, and the difficulty of distinguishing human- from AI-generated content. These perceptions align with research on AI's disruptive impact on integrity frameworks (Cotton et al., 2023).

Governance Awareness. Participants demonstrated relatively high governance awareness, recognizing the importance of institutional regulation, disclosure policies, and oversight – reflecting global emphasis on responsible AI (OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

Institutional Preparedness. Participants perceived only *moderate* institutional preparedness, expressing uncertainty about universities' readiness to regulate AI through comprehensive policies and implementation mechanisms.

AI Benefits. Despite concerns, participants strongly recognized AI's potential for idea generation, writing efficiency, information retrieval, and language refinement (Kasneci et al., 2023), indicating a nuanced dual perception rather than a one-sided threat narrative.

The governance gap. The contrast between high governance awareness and moderate institutional preparedness constitutes the study's central finding.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis (Table 4) revealed statistically significant positive relationships among the key constructs:

- **Governance awareness and academic integrity concerns:** higher awareness associated with stronger concern about plagiarism, fabricated references, and research authenticity.
- **Governance awareness and ethical responsibility:** higher awareness associated with stronger support for accountability, disclosure policies, and regulatory oversight.
- **Academic integrity concerns and institutional preparedness:** greater concern associated with stronger emphasis on institutional readiness.

These findings indicate that the constructs function as interconnected rather than isolated dimensions of stakeholder perception, and are consistent with the proposed framework's assumptions.

Qualitative Thematic Findings

Five major themes emerged via thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). **Themes were induced from participant responses** and are reported here independently of the a priori constructs, with coding reliability checked via iterative review.

Theme 1 – Academic integrity concerns. The most prominent theme: fears of plagiarism, fabricated references, citation inaccuracy, and weakened originality. Participants worried excessive AI reliance could reduce independent scholarly engagement and critical thinking. *Representative: "The biggest concern is the production of academically convincing but inaccurate references." "AI may weaken authentic academic effort if students become overly dependent on automated writing."*

Theme 2 – Governance and regulation. Strong calls for clear institutional policies on disclosure, ethical guidelines, and oversight, reflecting perceived absence of sufficient frameworks. *Representative: "Universities need clear governance policies rather than leaving AI use entirely undefined."*

Theme 3 – Ethical risks. Concerns about misinformation, algorithmic bias, hallucinated references, and erosion of scholarly originality, partly rooted in skepticism about delegating intellectual tasks to predictive systems.

Theme 4 – Educational benefits. Recognition of AI's usefulness for idea generation, language support, and productivity, when used responsibly within regulated environments.

Theme 5 – Transparency and disclosure. Repeated calls for requiring researchers and students to disclose the extent of AI usage to preserve intellectual accountability.

Integrated Findings

Quantitative and qualitative results converge: high perceived concern about ethical risks/integrity/governance deficiencies was reinforced by narratives of plagiarism, fabricated references, and weak policies; strong governance awareness was supported by calls for accountability and disclosure. Dual perceptions of benefit and risk support the interpretation of generative AI as both opportunity and governance challenge.

Discussion

Academic Integrity as a Governance Challenge

Consistent with international literature, participants perceived AI as structurally transforming—not merely threatening—academic integrity (Cotton et al., 2023; Eaton, 2023). The difficulty of distinguishing authentic human scholarship from AI-generated content, combined with hallucinated references (Bender et al., 2021; Emsley, 2023), challenges conventional frameworks designed for direct plagiarism. The findings suggest integrity can no longer be treated as solely a student-conduct issue but is increasingly an institutional governance matter involving disclosure standards, accountability, and responsible integration — a shift corroborating recent scholarship (Chan & Hu, 2023).

The Governance Gap: Awareness Without Capacity

The central finding is a **governance gap**: strong perceived awareness and concern paired with only moderate perceived institutional preparedness. This gap likely reflects several structural factors observable in rapidly modernizing systems: policy lag relative to technological acceleration, fragmented faculty-level responses rather than coherent university strategies (Dwivedi et al., 2023), and the absence of AI literacy programs and implementation mechanisms. Importantly, whether this gap reflects *transitional adaptation* or *persistent structural deficiency* cannot be determined from cross-sectional data (Section 9). This finding extends AI governance literature by identifying the awareness-preparedness dissociation as a specific, addressable institutional risk.

Humanities: A Distinctive Governance Terrain

Participants perceived humanities research as especially vulnerable: concerns about interpretive authenticity, weakened originality, and epistemic reliability echo arguments that humanities cannot be governed by generalized technical regulation (Crawford, 2021; Bender et al., 2021). Because humanities addresses ethical, cultural, and philosophical questions irreducible to language prediction, participants' perceived erosion of human interpretive agency suggests discipline-sensitive governance is warranted (Section 7).

Responsible Governance and Human-Centered Integration

Participants consistently endorsed transparency, human oversight, and institutional accountability—principles central to OECD (2019) and UNESCO (2021). Notably, participants simultaneously recognized AI's benefits and rejected fully autonomous AI-assisted scholarship, supporting augmentation-oriented, human-centered governance

(Crawford, 2021). The dual perception suggests governance should enable responsible use rather than prohibit AI outright.

The UAE Context and Institutional Readiness

In this rapidly modernizing context, participants recognized national commitment to AI (UAE Government, 2023) but perceived institutional governance as still adapting. This transitional position suggests UAE institutions could become regional leaders in responsible AI governance if governance maturity develops alongside technological innovation.

Proposed Framework: Responsible Governance Model for Generative AI in Humanities Research

*Framing note: The following model is proposed as an institutional scaffold **informed by** stakeholder perceptions, not as an independently validated framework. Components should be treated as evidence-based proposals subject to empirical testing.*

The model integrates eight interrelated dimensions grounded in the findings and international principles (OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021):

AI Disclosure Policies. Clear institutional policies requiring researchers and students to disclose the extent and nature of AI usage, defining acceptable assistance, mandatory disclosure, and prohibited uses. *Directly supported by the transparency theme and perceived integrity concerns.*

Human Oversight Requirements. AI as augmentation, not replacement. Researchers must validate AI outputs, verify references, and evaluate interpretive accuracy. *Supported by participants' rejection of autonomous AI-assisted scholarship.*

Ethical Use Standards. Explicit guidelines addressing plagiarism risks, ghost authorship, fabricated references, and unauthorized AI-assisted writing, promoting scholarly honesty and responsible research culture. *Responds to perceived ethical ambiguity.*

Citation and Transparency Regulations. Mandatory human verification of AI-generated references and disclosure of AI-assisted editing, summarization, translation, and idea generation. *Directly responds to fabricated-reference concerns.*

AI Literacy and Faculty Training. Programs on responsible use, hallucination awareness, reference verification, and humanities-specific ethical concerns. *Responds to moderate perceived preparedness.*

Institutional Accountability Mechanisms. Monitoring systems, reporting procedures, compliance review, and consistent governance across departments. *Addresses perceived governance fragmentation.*

Governance Committees and Oversight Structures. Interdisciplinary committees (faculty, ethics, EdTech, policy) for policy development, review, and risk assessment. *Addresses need for coordinated oversight.*

Responsible Research Practices. Preserving scholarly authenticity, critical reasoning, and methodological transparency; integrating governance principles into research ethics training and postgraduate supervision. *Sustains human-centered scholarship.*

Theoretical Contribution

This study advances five literatures:

1. **Responsible AI literature:** extending it into humanities research, conceptualizing responsible governance as both institutional and epistemological, and integrating awareness, preparedness, integrity, and ethics into one framework.
2. **Higher education governance:** reframing AI as a strategic institutional challenge and identifying the awareness-preparedness governance gap.
3. **Academic integrity scholarship:** reconceptualizing integrity in the age of AI-mediated production as a governance issue introducing the concept of AI-mediated academic integrity.
4. **Humanities research ethics:** positioning humanities ethics as central to AI governance debates through a focus on interpretive authenticity and epistemic trust.
5. **AI governance theory:** contributing a discipline-sensitive, empirically informed model of institutional AI governance emphasizing adaptive structures and governance legitimacy.

Limitations

Findings should be interpreted with caution due to several limitations:

- **UAE-specific context:** institutional conditions differ across regulatory, cultural, and technological environments (OECD, 2019); generalizability is limited.
- **Self-reported perceptions:** responses may reflect subjective interpretation, social desirability bias, and varying AI familiarity (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018); findings establish *perceived* rather than objectively measured institutional conditions.
- **Cross-sectional design:** data capture one temporal moment in a rapidly evolving landscape; causal conclusions are not possible (Saunders et al., 2019).
- **Institutional and disciplinary scope:** not all UAE institutions/categories were examined; the humanities focus limits applicability to engineering, medicine, business, and computational sciences (Crawford, 2021).
- **Perception vs. efficacy:** the study measures perceptions and readiness, not actual misconduct cases or governance effectiveness; the proposed framework's efficacy remains to be tested.
- **Rapidly evolving technology:** governance and technology are in flux; some perceived deficiencies may reflect transitional adaptation rather than permanent structural limitations (UNESCO, 2023).

Future Research

Future work should include: comparative international studies across national/cultural contexts; longitudinal studies of governance evolution; policy-effectiveness studies measuring disclosure compliance and integrity outcomes; experimental evaluation of governance models; AI-literacy intervention effectiveness; discipline-sensitive comparisons across academic domains; investigation of epistemic trust and scholarly authority; and interdisciplinary scholarship on the sociological/philosophical implications of AI-mediated knowledge production.

Policy Implications

Universities should treat AI governance as a strategic priority – developing comprehensive policies on disclosure, acceptable use, citation verification, and ethics; investing in AI literacy; and establishing interdisciplinary governance committees that adopt human-centered approaches.

Ministries of higher education should develop national frameworks establishing minimum standards for responsible AI use, support national AI literacy initiatives, and encourage inter-institutional coordination to reduce fragmentation (OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021).

Research ethics committees should expand review frameworks to cover AI-assisted scholarship, establishing expectations regarding source verification, disclosure, and researcher accountability (Eaton, 2023), while remaining adaptive to rapid technological change.

AI governance units may serve as institutional coordination centers for policy development, training, compliance monitoring, and interdisciplinary collaboration, reducing governance fragmentation (Dwivedi et al., 2023).

Academic policymakers should avoid purely restrictive approaches, prioritize responsible integration and accountability, remain sensitive to disciplinary differences, and treat AI governance as a long-term structural transformation (Crawford, 2021).

Conclusion

This study examined stakeholders' *perceptions* of ethical risks, academic integrity challenges, governance deficiencies, and institutional preparedness associated with generative AI in humanities research within UAE higher education. Using a mixed-methods design (N = 275), it found that participants perceive generative AI simultaneously as a significant educational opportunity and a major governance challenge. High concern about plagiarism, fabricated references, and weakened originality coexists with strong recognition of AI's benefits.

The central finding is a **governance gap**: strong perceived awareness paired with only moderate institutional preparedness. Humanities research was perceived as especially

vulnerable due to its interpretive and ethical foundations. The study proposes the eight-dimension **Responsible Governance Model for Generative AI in Humanities Research** as an evidence-informed scaffold balancing innovation with academic integrity.

Universities increasingly function as governance institutions responsible for regulating intelligent technologies within academic environments. The future sustainability of AI-assisted scholarship will depend on whether universities develop frameworks capable of preserving human-centered knowledge production while enabling responsible innovation. The question facing higher education is not whether generative AI should be integrated, but how it can be integrated ethically, transparently, and responsibly while safeguarding the intellectual and ethical foundations of scholarly inquiry.

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