International Journal on Culture, History, and Religion
https://ijchr.net | eISSN: 3028-1318
Volume 7 Special Issue 3 | doi: https://doi.org/10.63931/ijchr.v7iSI3.302

Article

The Cultural and Historical Dimensions of Generative AI in Higher Education: Impacts on Workforce Productivity and Job Satisfaction in a Philippine State University

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Abstract

This study investigates the cultural and historical contexts influencing the integration of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools into the daily professional routines of faculty and staff at Pangasinan State University. Using a qualitative, phenomenological approach, it examines AI's role in productivity, job satisfaction, workplace dynamics, and the preservation of academic values in a collectivist cultural setting deeply rooted in Philippine educational traditions. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) provided insights into the benefits, challenges, and ethical considerations surrounding AI adoption. Findings reveal that AI reduces workload, supports research, and improves workflow management, but raises concerns about job security, creative autonomy, and the erosion of culturally embedded mentorship roles. The study highlights the need for AI integration strategies that respect historical roles of educators as cultural transmitters, supported by institutional training, ethical guidelines, and policies. This research contributes to the discourse on AI in higher education by situating technological adoption within the socio-cultural and historical realities of state universities in the Philippines.

Keywords: *Generative AI, Higher Education, Philippine Culture, Academic History, Faculty Experiences, Job Satisfaction, AI Ethics, Institutional Policy*

Suggested citation:
Diadid-Reyes, J. (2025). The Cultural and Historical Dimensions of Generative AI in Higher Education: Impacts on Workforce Productivity and Job Satisfaction in a Philippine State University. *International Journal on Culture, History, and Religion, 7*(SI3), 44-59. https://doi.org/10.63931/ijchr.v7iSI3.302

Introduction

The rapid advancement of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping higher education worldwide, yet its integration in the Philippine context is inseparable from the country's cultural values and educational history. Historically, the Philippine state university system emerged from colonial and post-colonial reforms, positioning educators as cultural stewards and knowledge transmitters (Constantino, 1970; Joaquin, 2011). Within this legacy, teaching is not merely a profession, but a socio-cultural duty tied to community building and moral guidance.

In the 1970s, early AI applications such as PLATO and intelligent tutoring systems began transforming education globally (Woolf, 2021), but Philippine adoption remained slow due to infrastructure and budget constraints. Today, fueled by digital transformation initiatives and pandemic-induced shifts to online learning, AI has entered classrooms and administrative offices, often in ways shaped by Filipino collectivism, emphasizing cooperation, interpersonal harmony, and shared responsibility (Hofstede Insights, 2023).

Existing research acknowledges both the potential and risks of AI in education. Generative AI can enhance productivity, automate repetitive tasks, and provide personalized content (Luckin et al., 2018; Holmes, Bialik, & Fadel, 2019). Studies such as Popenici and Kerr (2017) emphasize its transformative potential, while Zawacki-Richter et al. (2019) warn of its tendency to overlook the educator's role in shaping learning experiences.

In the Philippine context, literature on digital learning adoption (Simbulan, 2020; Dela Cruz & Del Mundo, 2022) highlights structural inequities, with state universities often trailing behind private institutions in technological infrastructure. Research on teacher identity (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004) and educational cultural values (Bernardo, 2004) shows that Filipino educators see themselves as moral and cultural guides, roles threatened by over-reliance on AI.

Ethical concerns are also prominent in literature, ranging from academic integrity to algorithmic bias (Selwyn, 2019; Crawford, 2021). Moreover, Hofstede's cultural dimensions suggest that collectivist societies like the Philippines may adopt AI differently, valuing its role in collaborative tasks while resisting its potential to reduce interpersonal engagement.

At Pangasinan State University, generative AI tools now assist with lesson planning, grading, literature reviews, administrative reporting, faculty and staff reporting on time savings, better research support, and improved task management. Nevertheless, tensions persist: some view AI as an ally, while others worry about

displacing the humanistic and culturally embedded mentorship that has defined Philippine higher education for generations.

This study fills a gap in AI research by exploring these experiences in a state university context, where resource limitations, institutional history, and local cultural values intersect with technological innovation. While global studies focus on AI's technical potential, few have examined how it interacts with cultural-historical educational traditions in the Global South.

Research Objectives

1. To explore faculty and staff experiences with generative AI tools in their daily work routines and their perceptions of AI's impact on productivity and efficiency.
2. To examine how generative AI influences job satisfaction, professional roles, and workplace dynamics among university employees.
3. To identify the challenges, ethical concerns, and adaptive strategies faculty and staff employ in integrating generative AI tools into academic and administrative tasks.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative case study design to provide an in-depth understanding of how faculty and staff at Pangasinan State University integrate generative AI tools into their professional practices. The case study approach was chosen because it allows for a holistic exploration of a bounded system, in this case, a Philippine state university's academic and administrative environment, while capturing the interplay between technology adoption, institutional culture, and historical educational traditions. Purposive sampling was used to identify participants with direct experience with generative AI in their daily work, including academic personnel such as faculty members, research coordinators, instructional designers, and administrative staff such as registrars, data managers, and office secretaries. This ensured a broad representation of perspectives from different functional areas.

Data collection involved semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). Semi-structured interviews encouraged participants to share personal reflections on AI integration, providing detailed accounts of changes in their work processes, decision-making, and perceptions of professional identity. FGDs, on the other hand, facilitated collective dialogue and the exchange of insights in a group setting. This approach aligns with Filipino cultural values of *pakikipagkapwa* (shared

identity) and bayanihan (communal cooperation). Questions were also framed within a historical context, prompting participants to compare current AI adoption with past technological transitions such as the shift from manual typewriters to computers or the early adoption of internet-based systems.

All interviews and FGDs were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using thematic analysis. The coding process was iterative, beginning with open coding to identify emerging ideas and then axial coding to connect patterns to the broader cultural-historical context. The findings were interpreted by relevant cultural frameworks and scholarly literature on AI in education. To ensure trustworthiness, member-checking was conducted by sharing summaries of findings with participants for validation, and triangulation was applied by cross-referencing interview and FGD data with institutional records, including AI policy drafts, training attendance logs, and workflow documents. Reflexivity was maintained through continuous self-examination of the researcher's role, particularly in interpreting AI integration within the cultural and historical heritage. Ethical clearance was secured from the university's research ethics committee, and all participants provided informed consent, with confidentiality and anonymity strictly maintained.

Results and Findings

Reshaping Academic Work Within the Cultural and Historical Context of Philippine State Universities

The findings from this study reveal two interrelated themes that capture how generative AI is reshaping academic work within the cultural and historical context of Philippine state universities. First, AI is widely recognized as a timesaving and efficiency-boosting tool, streamlining tasks such as lesson planning, report drafting, summarizing academic texts, and automating routine communications. This increased efficiency not only lightens workloads but also enables faculty and staff to devote more time to higher-value activities such as mentoring students, engaging in community outreach, and integrating local cultural heritage into teaching, aligning with long-standing Filipino values of bayanihan (community cooperation) and the educator's traditional role as a cultural steward. Second, AI's role in enhancing research and content generation has empowered faculty to process information more quickly, conduct literature reviews efficiently, and develop research outputs with greater ease, thus bridging modern technological advances with the academic mission of preserving and promoting local histories and indigenous knowledge systems (Dela Crus et al., 2025). However, these benefits are tempered by the recognition that human judgment, cultural sensitivity, and historical accuracy remain essential, underscoring the need for

critical oversight in AI integration. Together, these themes illustrate that while generative AI offers significant advantages in productivity and research, its optimal use in higher education must harmonize technological innovation with preserving cultural identity and historical integrity.

AI as a Timesaving and Efficiency-Boosting Tool

Faculty and staff reported that generative AI has significantly improved their work efficiency by automating repetitive and time-consuming tasks. These included drafting reports, summarizing academic articles, creating lecture materials, generating initial drafts of study guides, and automating emails. In the context of Philippine state universities, these tasks have traditionally been carried out manually, requiring considerable time and effort, particularly in institutions with limited administrative support and heavy teaching loads.

Many participants described AI as a transformative addition to their work routines. A faculty member (P3) explained:

"Generative AI has been a game-changer in my daily workload. I used to spend hours drafting lesson plans and student feedback, but now AI-assisted tools generate drafts that I can refine, cutting my prep time in half."

Another faculty member (P12) reflected on how this efficiency aligns with their long-standing commitment to quality teaching:

"As an Instructor III for seven years, I have constantly sought ways to improve my teaching effectiveness while balancing my workload. As generative AI technologies became accessible, I implemented them progressively into my workflow. I utilize AI to assist in creating preliminary idea summaries and review questions for study guides. After that, I thoroughly modify these resources, ensuring they align with the course content and learning objectives. This has helped me create more comprehensive study materials in less time."

From a cultural perspective, this time-saving capacity resonates deeply with the Filipino value of bayanihan, communal cooperation, and mutual aid. By freeing up faculty time from administrative burdens, AI allows educators to invest more energy into mentoring, community engagement, and cultural preservation efforts, which are deeply embedded in the historical role of teachers in Philippine society (Manera et al., 2025). Historically, educators have been knowledge transmitters and custodians of cultural memory, integrating local traditions, oral histories, and moral values into their lessons. Therefore, AI's efficiency-enhancing potential can serve as a modern extension of this role, enabling faculty to devote more attention to culturally responsive teaching.

This theme highlights that generative AI is perceived as more than a technological convenience; it is an efficiency enabler that helps faculty and staff

balance modern academic demands with their enduring responsibility to preserve cultural identity and historical consciousness in education.

AI's Role in Enhancing Research and Content Generation

Several faculty members noted that generative AI tools have facilitated research by assisting in literature reviews, data analysis, and academic writing. AI has made it possible to process vast amounts of information quickly, providing summaries of complex research articles, suggesting relevant citations, and even producing initial drafts of research papers. This capability has particular significance in state universities, where faculty often face large teaching loads and limited research funding, making efficiency in scholarly work crucial.

A faculty researcher (P5) shared:

"I was initially skeptical, but AI has helped streamline my research process. It summarizes long academic papers quickly, helping me identify key points faster than traditional methods."

Another researcher (P15) emphasized the long-term benefit:

"I have used AI tools in my academic research and content creation procedures as an Assistant Professor to improve productivity, originality, and overall quality of my work. AI tools have made it much easier to find relevant academic articles and stay current based on my field of interest.

From a historical and cultural perspective, research in Philippine higher education has always carried the dual mission of contributing to global scholarship (Caliboso et al.,2025) while safeguarding local knowledge systems. Generative AI, when used critically, can accelerate the process of documenting indigenous practices, regional histories, and cultural heritage. For example, faculty can use AI to sift through archives, transcribe oral histories, and organize ethnographic data, which are otherwise labor-intensive tasks (Navasca et al, 2025).

However, participants expressed the need for cultural and ethical caution. While AI can process historical records and cultural texts quickly, there is a risk of misinterpretation or oversimplification, particularly when dealing with nuanced cultural concepts or indigenous terminologies that may not have direct translations. This aligns with broader concerns about AI's limitations in accurately representing culturally specific knowledge, which, if unchecked, could inadvertently distort historical narratives.

Thus, while AI enhances efficiency in research and content creation, it must be employed with critical human oversight, ensuring that historical accuracy, cultural sensitivity, and academic integrity remain at the forefront of scholarly work.

The Influence of Generative AI on Job Satisfaction, Professional Roles, and Workplace Dynamics

Integrating generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Philippine higher education reshapes productivity, efficiency, and cultural and historical dimensions of academic work. In state universities, where faculty and staff have long served as custodians of scholarly knowledge and local heritage, AI tools are being adopted to automate routine tasks, enhance research processes, and improve communication. This technological shift mirrors earlier milestones in the country's academic history, such as the introduction of mechanized typewriters, overhead projectors, and early computing laboratories, which each prompted changes in workplace routines and professional roles. However, the Philippines' deeply rooted collectivist values, such as *bayanihan* (communal cooperation) and *pakikipagkapwa* (shared identity), shape how AI is perceived and integrated. While many educators view AI as a supportive partner that frees time for culturally meaningful, student-centered engagement, others express concern that overreliance may dilute the mentor's traditional role as a transmitter of culture, history, and values. Within this evolving environment, workplace dynamics are shifting toward AI-mediated collaboration, raising questions about balancing technological efficiency with preserving interpersonal relationships and the historical mission of education in the Philippines. This study examines these intersections, exploring how generative AI influences job satisfaction, professional identity, and collaboration in a way that reflects the nation's cultural ethos and historical educational traditions.

AI as a Supportive Tool vs. Job Displacement Fears

Faculty and staff expressed optimism and apprehension about AI's role in shaping their job satisfaction and professional identity. From a cultural perspective, Philippine higher education has long positioned educators as *tagapagturo* (mentors) and *tagapagmana ng kultura* (keepers of culture), entrusted with transmitting not only academic knowledge but also local traditions, values, and histories to future generations. While AI was praised for easing workloads, participants voiced concern that excessive reliance on it could erode the deep human, relational, and culturally grounded aspects of teaching.

A faculty member (P2) reflected:

"AI helps me manage my workload, but I worry that institutions might rely more on AI than human educators if it becomes too advanced. Teaching is more than delivering content; it is about mentoring and interaction, which AI cannot replace."

This statement resonates with the historical role of teachers in the Philippines, where the classroom is also a venue for preserving oral traditions, integrating regional history, and nurturing *pakikipagkapwa* (shared identity). On the other hand, some participants saw AI as a partner rather than a threat. An administrative staff member (P8) remarked:

"Rather than replacing jobs, I see AI as an assistant that helps me work smarter. It allows me to focus on tasks that require human judgment while automating repetitive processes."

In both views, the tension lies in balancing technological advancement with preserving human expertise, ethical responsibility, and the educator's cultural role. This theme suggests that while AI contributes to job satisfaction through workload reduction, it also raises critical issues about safeguarding historically rooted educational values.

Changing Workplace Dynamics and Collaboration

Participants observed that AI adoption had transformed workplace relationships and operational structures. Historically, teamwork in Philippine universities has been grounded in bayanihan, the spirit of collective effort, often extending beyond formal job roles to achieve shared institutional goals. Integrating AI tools has introduced new forms of collaboration among faculty and staff and between humans and AI-powered systems.

A university administrator (P6) explained:

"We are seeing a shift in how teams collaborate. AI helps streamline communication, allowing faculty and staff to work together more efficiently. Nevertheless, we must ensure that AI enhances human interactions rather than replaces them."

From a historical lens, technological change in universities, whether the introduction of typewriters in the 1950s or early computing labs in the 1980s, has always required a period of cultural adaptation. In this current wave, AI's capacity to centralize information, automate scheduling, and support cross-departmental projects mirrors past transitions but on a larger and faster scale. Participants emphasized that while AI has improved workflow efficiency, sustaining strong interpersonal collaboration remains essential to maintaining the university's cultural identity and community-oriented mission.

This theme underscores the evolving workplace culture: AI tools are becoming mediators of efficiency, but there is a collective awareness that they must complement rather than diminish interpersonal and culturally meaningful collaboration. In a Philippine higher education setting, where history, tradition, and community values

are integral to institutional identity, AI integration must be managed to respect and reinforce these foundations.

Challenges, Ethical Concerns, and Adaptive Strategies for AI Integration in the Context of Culture and History

The integration of generative AI into state universities, such as Pangasinan State University, is a technological transition and a cultural and historical shift in how academic work is performed. Historically, Filipino educators and administrators have acted as custodians of both scholarly and cultural knowledge, embodying values such as *bayanihan* (communal unity) and *pakikipagkapwa* (shared identity). The introduction of AI disrupts long-standing traditions of manual academic labor, rooted in patience, diligence, and interpersonal mentorship, by replacing or accelerating processes once done entirely by human effort (Picpican-Camiring et al, 2025). While this change offers efficiency, it also raises deep-seated concerns about preserving cultural integrity and the ethical foundations of education.

Ethical Concerns, Data Privacy, Accuracy, and Academic Integrity

From a cultural perspective, respect for intellectual honesty and integrity has been integral to the Filipino academic tradition. Participants voiced concern that AI-generated inaccuracies and biases could undermine not only academic quality but also the moral responsibility of educators as transmitters of truthful knowledge. A faculty member (P4) shared:

"AI is useful, but it sometimes produces inaccurate or biased information. I always double-check its outputs, especially when using it for academic materials."

Historically, the Philippine educational system has strongly emphasized the trust between teacher and student, with the teacher serving as a moral and cultural guide. The risk of AI enabling plagiarism or eroding authentic student effort, highlighted by P9's statement that some students misuse AI for assignments, threatens these long-held values. The ethical challenge is not just technical but about safeguarding education's historical role in building intellectual and moral character.

The Need for Faculty and Staff AI Training and Institutional Support

Culturally, Filipino educators value mentoring and skill transmission, often rooted in apprenticeship-like models from earlier educational practices. Participants pointed out that without structured AI training, many felt left to navigate this shift independently, creating a disconnect between institutional innovation and faculty readiness. As P1 described:

"We were introduced to AI tools but had no structured training. I had to learn on my own, which was frustrating. Institutions need to provide proper guidance on AI usage."

Historically, technological transitions, such as the adoption of computers in the 1990s, were accompanied by community-based learning sessions where more experienced users mentored peers. The lack of such collaborative cultural mechanisms in AI adoption risks creating uneven skill development and hesitancy in usage. Therefore, institutional investment in AI literacy is not only a practical need but a continuation of the historical practice of collective learning.

Adaptive Strategies for Responsible AI Integration

The findings on adaptive strategies for responsible AI integration reveal that faculty and staff at Pangasinan State University are approaching AI adoption through a blend of technological pragmatism and deeply rooted cultural-historical values in Philippine education. Participants consistently framed AI as a supportive instrument rather than a replacement for the educator's role, aligning with the long-standing cultural perception of teachers as gurus, trusted conveyors of knowledge and moral guidance. This echoes the Filipino value of *pakikipagkapwa*, where human connection, empathy, and moral discernment remain central to the educational process, even in technologically mediated environments.

One of the dominant strategies reported was combining AI with human judgment, ensuring that outputs not only meet standards of factual accuracy but also resonate with cultural appropriateness. This reflects historical patterns in Philippine academia, where foreign-introduced educational tools, whether during the Spanish colonial period, the American occupation, or the postwar modernization era, were always adapted to fit local contexts rather than adopted wholesale. Participants also emphasized using AI as an assistant rather than a decision-maker, thereby preserving the educator's authority in shaping curriculum, evaluating student work, and guiding ethical discourse.

Policy development emerged as another key adaptive measure, with participants calling for institutional guidelines that harmonize AI adoption with ethical standards and cultural norms. This was tied to recognizing the historical mission of Philippine universities, not merely as centers of technical skill development, but as custodians of cultural heritage and social responsibility. Similarly, transparency in AI-generated content was highlighted as a modern extension of historical academic values such as honesty and accountability, which have long been embedded in Filipino educational ethics.

Conclusively, culturally grounded AI training was seen as critical. Participants noted that effective AI literacy programs should incorporate examples and scenarios relevant to Philippine contexts, integrating local languages, indigenous knowledge systems, and national historical narratives. This approach ensures that AI use in the university boosts efficiency and reinforces the cultural identity and historical consciousness of both educators and students.

These strategies show that AI integration in Pangasinan State University is not a purely technical shift but a culturally mediated process that seeks to harmonize technological innovation with Philippine higher education's enduring values, historical roles, and societal responsibilities.

Interpretation in Cultural-Historical Context

The findings reveal that while generative AI offers notable efficiency gains and operational improvements, its integration in Philippine higher education must be deeply informed by the nation's cultural heritage and historical educational experiences. In the Philippines, teaching has never been a purely technical activity; it has been a cultural mission rooted in values such as *pakikipagkapwa* (shared humanity), *bayanihan* (communal unity), and *utang na loob* (gratitude and reciprocity). Historically, educators in both indigenous learning systems and formal colonial-era schools were entrusted with shaping intellectual capacity, moral character, and cultural identity. These legacy positions the teacher not just as a conveyor of information, but as a custodian of tradition, language, and community cohesion.

Against this backdrop, adopting AI must be more than a technological shift; it must be a culturally sensitive transformation. Without adequate ethical safeguards, there is a risk of eroding the mentor–student bond, which has historically been a channel for transmitting knowledge and the shared narratives that reinforce Filipino identity. For instance, from pre-colonial *panday* (artisans) and *babaylan* (spiritual leaders) as community teachers, to the Spanish-era maestro who taught reading alongside religious and moral instruction, the educator's role has always been intertwined with cultural preservation. AI integration disregarding this history could inadvertently reduce learning to a transactional exchange, detaching it from its cultural and moral roots.

Conversely, when approached with cultural and historical awareness, AI can serve as a modern embodiment of bayanihan. By automating repetitive administrative tasks, AI can free educators to focus on mentorship, cultural storytelling, and collaborative learning, mirroring the cooperative spirit that has long been a cornerstone of Filipino community life. This mirrors past transitions in educational

technology, such as the introduction of radio, television, and multimedia tools, which were most effective when localized and aligned with community values.

Ultimately, the responsible adoption of AI in state universities should position technology as a culturally attuned partner, not a replacement for human educators. It should uphold the historical mission of Philippine education: to nurture both intellectual competence and cultural rootedness. In doing so, AI can become an efficient tool and an ally in sustaining the intertwined legacies of learning, heritage, and national identity.

Discussion of the Results and Findings

The results reveal that generative AI is reshaping academic work in Philippine state universities in ways that intersect deeply with the country's cultural heritage and historical educational traditions. Participants widely acknowledged AI's capacity to enhance efficiency by streamlining lesson planning, drafting reports, summarizing texts, and generating initial research outputs. These time-saving benefits enable faculty and staff to focus on higher-value tasks such as mentoring students, engaging in cultural outreach, and integrating local history and heritage into classroom instruction. This shift aligns with the long-standing Filipino concept of *bayanihan* (communal unity) and *pakikipagkapwa* (shared identity), where collaborative and community-focused values are central to the educator's role. Historically, teachers in the Philippines have served as conveyors of academic knowledge and cultural bearers, preserving oral traditions, local languages, and historical narratives in the classroom.

In research, AI has been instrumental in accelerating literature reviews, processing large datasets, and improving access to scholarly materials, which are critical in state universities where resources are often limited. This capability holds cultural and historical significance, as Philippine higher education has traditionally balanced global academic contributions with safeguarding indigenous knowledge systems and regional histories. AI's ability to support the documentation of folklore, heritage practices, and local history provides new opportunities for cultural preservation. However, participants noted that AI risks distorting historical facts and misinterpreting nuanced cultural concepts without culturally sensitive oversight, particularly those without direct translations.

Workplace dynamics are also transforming. The integration of AI has facilitated faster communication, improved coordination, and more efficient collaboration, echoing previous technological transitions in the Philippines, from typewriters to early computer labs, each of which reshaped professional roles and interactions. Nevertheless, faculty and staff emphasized that technological efficiency should not

replace the relational and mentorship-driven aspects of education, which are rooted in the historical role of the educator as *tagapagturo* (mentor) and *tagapagmana ng kultura* (keeper of culture). Concerns over job displacement, academic integrity, and the erosion of traditional educator-student bonds highlight the importance of developing policies and training programs that blend technological literacy with cultural and historical awareness.

Conclusions

Integrating generative AI into Philippine state universities is more than a technological upgrade; it is a cultural and historical turning point in the nation's educational narrative. While AI offers clear benefits in boosting productivity, enhancing research capabilities, and improving institutional operations, its adoption must be guided by the values and historical mission that have shaped Philippine education for centuries. From the *babaylan* and *panday* as pre-colonial educators, to the Spanish-era maestros who integrated moral and cultural instruction into lessons, to modern-day professors who embed heritage and history in their curricula, the Filipino educator's role has always been inseparable from cultural preservation.

To sustain this tradition in the age of AI, integration must be accompanied by structured training, ethical safeguards, and culturally grounded policies. AI should function as a partner that supports, rather than replaces, the human educator, ensuring that the mentor-student relationship, a vital channel for transmitting heritage and values, remains intact. By freeing educators from repetitive administrative work, AI can enhance their capacity to serve as cultural stewards, historians, and moral guides. When adopted with cultural sensitivity and historical consciousness, AI can become a modern expression of bayanihan, empowering Philippine higher education to uphold its twin missions of advancing academic excellence and preserving the nation's identity.

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