

GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION: A SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRAK

Abstrak: Studi mengenai Generative AI di pendidikan tinggi lebih banyak mengkaji aspek teknologi, pedagogi, dan etika, sementara implikasinya terhadap fungsi-fungsi sosial pendidikan belum banyak menjadi fokus penelitian. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mensintesis peran *Generative AI* dalam pelaksanaan fungsi-fungsi sosial pendidikan di perguruan tinggi berdasarkan perspektif Talcott Parsons. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan *Integrative Literature Review* dengan menganalisis artikel *peer-reviewed* yang dipublikasikan pada periode 2023–2026. Teknik analisis menggunakan thematic synthesis melalui tahapan *data extraction*, *coding*, *categorization*, *comparison*, dan *theme development* untuk mengidentifikasi pola, persamaan, perbedaan, dan kesenjangan temuan antarstudi. Hasil sintesis menunjukkan bahwa Generative AI berperan dalam dua fungsi utama pendidikan, yaitu fungsi sosialisasi dan fungsi alokasi peran. Pada fungsi sosialisasi, Generative AI berkontribusi dalam memperluas akses terhadap pengetahuan, mendukung pembelajaran yang dipersonalisasi, memperkuat literasi AI dan literasi digital, serta mentransformasikan praktik akademik dan proses internalisasi nilai-nilai akademik. Sementara itu, pada fungsi alokasi peran, Generative AI berkontribusi terhadap pengembangan kompetensi digital, penguatan kemampuan berpikir kritis, pengembangan literasi AI sebagai kompetensi profesional, serta peningkatan kesiapan mahasiswa menghadapi pasar kerja yang semakin terdigitalisasi.

Kata Kunci: Kecerdasan Buatan; Sosiologi Pendidikan; Pendidikan Tinggi; Fungsi Pendidikan.

Abstract: Studies on Generative AI in higher education primarily examine aspects of technology, pedagogy, and ethics, while its implications for the social functions of education have not yet been a major focus of research. This study aims to synthesize the role of Generative AI in the implementation of social functions of education in higher education based on the perspective of Talcott Parsons. The research uses an Integrative Literature Review approach by analyzing peer-reviewed articles published in the period 2023–2026. The analysis technique uses thematic synthesis through the stages of data extraction, coding, categorization, comparison, and theme development to identify patterns, similarities, differences, and gaps in findings across studies. The synthesis results show that Generative AI plays a role in two main educational functions, namely the socialization function and the role allocation function. In the socialization function, Generative AI contributes to expanding access to knowledge, supporting personalized learning, strengthening AI and digital literacy, and transforming academic practices and the internalization of academic values. Meanwhile, in the role allocation function, Generative AI contributes to the development of digital competencies, strengthening critical thinking skills, developing AI literacy as a professional competency, and enhancing students' readiness to face an increasingly digitalized job market.

Keywords: Generative Artificial Intelligence; Sociology of Education; Higher Education; Educational Functions.



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A. INTRODUCTION

The development of generative artificial intelligence (Generative AI) technology in recent years has fundamentally changed the way higher education conducts teaching, research, and assessment processes. Since large generative language models began to be widely used, academic interest in the use of Generative AI in higher education environments has increased exponentially, as evidenced by the surge in the number of scientific publications discussing this topic (Chiu, 2024). Various systematic reviews show that Generative AI is now widely used to support teaching, learning, research, and assessment activities across various disciplines (Batista et al., 2024; Ogunleye et al., 2024). This phenomenon marks what some researchers refer to as a turning point in the history of higher education, as this technology not only serves as an administrative aid but also begins to influence the way knowledge is produced, validated, and distributed within educational institutions (Kalaitzidis, 2026).

The existing studies so far have largely focused on the technical and pedagogical dimensions of integrating Generative AI, such as the effectiveness of Generative AI in supporting learning assessments (Khlaif et al., 2024; Weng et al., 2024), the redesign of assessment practices in the era of Generative AI (Khlaif et al., 2025), and the perceptions of lecturers and students regarding the use of these tools (Chan & Tsi, 2024; Lee et al., 2024). These studies make significant contributions to understanding how Generative AI can be effectively and responsibly utilized in educational practices. However, these studies generally have not placed this phenomenon within a broader sociological framework, namely how the presence of Generative AI affects the role of higher education as a social institution. As a result, the understanding of Generative AI is still dominated by technological and pedagogical perspectives, while its implications for the fundamental functions of education as a social institution have not been comprehensively synthesized. However, understanding these changes is important to explain how higher education adapts in fulfilling its role amidst the transformation of digital society.

In the perspective of the sociology of education, higher education does not merely function as a place for the transfer of knowledge, but also performs more fundamental social functions for the continuity of society (Lischka-Schmidt, 2023; Van De Werfhorst & Solga, 2025). Talcott Parsons, through his structural-functionalist theory, posited that educational institutions perform two main functions, namely the function of socialization and the function of role allocation (Lischka-Schmidt, 2023). The function of socialization is related to the process of internalizing values, norms, knowledge, and skills needed by individuals to participate effectively in society, while the function of role allocation is related to the process of selecting and placing individuals into social positions and jobs according to their competencies (Werfhorst & Solga, 2025). This framework is relevant for

understanding the impact of Generative AI because the technology has the potential to change both the way knowledge and values are internalized by students, and the way competencies and job readiness are formed and assessed by educational institutions (Batista et al., 2024; Chiu, 2024; Kalaitzidis, 2026). Thus, Talcott Parsons' perspective allows Generative AI to be understood not merely as an educational technology innovation, but as a social phenomenon that has the potential to transform the way higher education performs its functions of socialization and role allocation in society (Chiu, 2024; Lischka-Schmidt, 2023). This perspective provides a conceptual foundation for explaining the changes in the relationships between students, lecturers, knowledge, and the demands of the workforce in the era of artificial intelligence.

Several recent studies provide initial indications of how Generative AI affects both functions, although they have not yet explicitly used the Parsons' functionalism framework. On the side of the socialization function, research shows that Generative AI expands students' access to knowledge sources (Thüs et al., 2024), supports personalized learning (Pallant et al., 2026; Sajja et al., 2026), and encourages the development of AI literacy and digital literacy as new forms of academic literacy (Gu & Ericson, 2025; Yan et al., 2025). On the other hand, the presence of Generative AI also poses challenges to academic integrity and the process of internalizing scientific values, as shown by various studies on academic integrity (Bittle & El-Gayar, 2025; Kofinas et al., 2025).

On the role allocation function side, research shows that Generative AI contributes to the development of digital competencies and the employability of students (Nartey, 2024), while at the same time raising concerns about changes in job structures and the potential displacement of several entry-level job roles in the labor market increasingly involving AI (Rudolph et al., 2023). Higher education institutions are required to adjust their curricula and learning approaches so that graduates possess career readiness relevant to the ever-changing demands of the digital job market (Barthakur et al., 2026). Although various studies have explained the diverse implications of Generative AI on learning and the development of student competencies, these findings are still scattered across various standalone issues and have not yet been integrated into a sociological framework of education that can comprehensively explain how Generative AI affects educational functions.

The Indonesian context demonstrates the growing integration of Generative AI into higher education, particularly in students' academic and learning activities (Margono et al., 2024; Rahiem, 2026). The use of AI in Indonesian higher education is not limited to supporting academic tasks and learning processes but has also contributed to changes in academic practices while raising concerns about academic integrity and the need for institutional regulation (Margono et al., 2024). More recent research has also identified diverse patterns of Generative AI use and its effects on students' learning

experiences in Indonesia. These developments suggest that the use of AI in higher education should be understood not only as a technological and pedagogical issue but also as part of broader social and institutional changes within higher education (Alshahrani et al., 2024; Low et al., 2026). More specifically, Generative AI has increasingly become embedded in processes of academic socialization by shaping how students develop disciplinary knowledge, understand academic conventions, and engage in academic practices (Tan, 2025). These developments highlight the need to examine Generative AI beyond its technological, pedagogical, and ethical dimensions. This study therefore conceptualizes Generative AI as a social phenomenon and synthesizes its implications for educational functions through Talcott Parsons' perspective, focusing on socialization and role allocation in higher education.

Based on the above description, this research aims to synthesize the literature on the role of Generative Artificial Intelligence in the implementation of educational functions in higher education through the perspective of Talcott Parsons' sociology of education. Specifically, this research aims to answer two research questions: (1) how does Generative AI play a role in the implementation of higher education socialization functions; and (2) how does Generative AI play a role in the implementation of higher education role allocation functions. Through an Integrative Literature Review of articles published in the period 2023–2026, this research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of educational sociology in understanding the role of Generative AI in the implementation of higher education functions in the era of artificial intelligence, while also providing input for higher education institutions in integrating Generative AI without neglecting the social functions of education.

B. METHOD

This research uses the Integrative Literature Review (ILR) approach to identify, evaluate, and synthesize research findings on the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Generative AI) in higher education. This approach was chosen because it allows for the integration of research findings with diverse methodological designs, including quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and conceptual articles, thereby producing a more comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon compared to reviews that focus solely on one type of research design (Snyder, 2019; Torraco, 2005; Whitemore & Knafl, 2005). In the context of this research, ILR is considered relevant because the study of Generative AI is still developing dynamically and encompasses aspects of technology, pedagogy, and social implications that require cross-perspective synthesis.

Literature was obtained through searches conducted in Google Scholar and seven international publisher databases: ScienceDirect (Elsevier), SpringerLink, Emerald Insight, Taylor & Francis Online, Wiley Online

Library, and MDPI. The literature search was conducted using combinations of keywords related to Generative AI, higher education, educational functions, and graduate competencies, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Database Search Strategies and Search Syntax

Database	Search syntax
Google Scholar	"generative AI" AND "higher education" AND (socialization OR "role allocation")
ScienceDirect	("generative AI" OR "generative artificial intelligence") AND ("higher education" OR university) AND (socialization OR "role allocation" OR employability)
SpringerLink	("generative AI" OR "generative artificial intelligence") AND ("higher education") AND ("AI literacy" OR "digital literacy" OR employability)
Emerald Insight	("generative AI" AND "higher education") AND (socialization OR employability OR "academic integrity")
Taylor & Francis	("generative AI" OR "generative artificial intelligence") AND ("higher education") AND ("role allocation" OR "AI literacy" OR employability)
Wiley Online Library	("generative AI" AND "higher education") AND ("academic integrity" OR "AI literacy" OR employability)
MDPI	("generative AI" OR "generative artificial intelligence") AND ("higher education") AND (learning OR assessment OR literacy OR employability)

The search was conducted in June until July, 2026, and the results were limited to publications from 2023 to 2026. The search was limited to articles published during the period 2023–2026 because this period represents the early phase of the development of research on Generative Artificial Intelligence in higher education after this technology began to be widely adopted in learning, research, and assessment activities (Batista et al., 2024; Chiu, 2024; Jensen et al., 2025; Ogunleye et al., 2024).

Literature selection was conducted in stages through identification, screening, and content evaluation of the articles. Inclusion criteria include: (1) peer-reviewed journal articles, proceedings, or research reports published in the period 2023–2026; (2) discussing the utilization or impact of Generative AI in the context of higher education; and (3) having a connection to the educational functions according to Talcott Parsons, specifically the functions of socialization and role allocation. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria include: (1) articles that only discuss primary and secondary education; (2) opinion articles, editorials, or comments without empirical basis or adequate conceptual review; (3) articles not available in English; and (4) duplicate articles. Based on the selection process, 45 articles that met the criteria for analysis were obtained. Out of the 45 articles that met the inclusion criteria, 32 articles were directly related to the two functions of education according to Talcott Parsons and became the basis for the thematic synthesis.

Meanwhile, the other 13 articles were used to strengthen the conceptual foundation, research context, and discussion on the development of Generative AI in higher education, as shown in Figure 1.

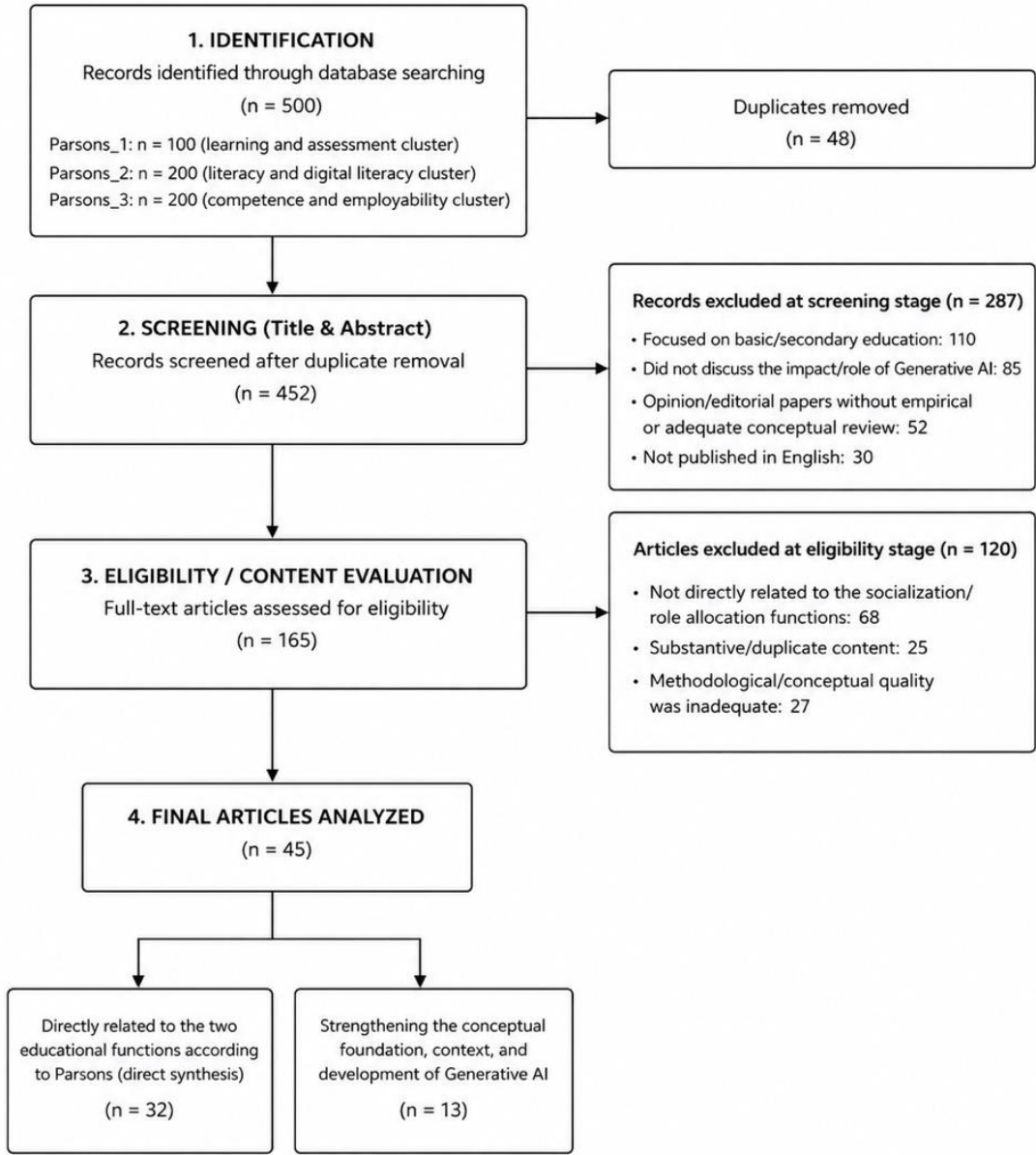


Figure 1. Literature Selection Flowchart

Data analysis was conducted using thematic synthesis (Thomas & Harden, 2008). Each article is read thoroughly to identify the main findings, followed by a coding and grouping process into themes with similar meanings. Subsequently, these themes are synthesized based on two educational functions according to Talcott Parsons, namely the socialization function and the role allocation function, resulting in a conceptual understanding of how Generative AI transforms the functions of higher education in the digital society.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In summary, the literature synthesis in this study identifies eight main themes divided into two educational functions according to Parsons. In the function of socialization, the identified themes are: (1) the expansion of access to knowledge, mediated by the ability of Generative AI to simplify and distribute scientific information; (2) personalized learning, mediated by the adaptive capabilities of generative systems in responding to individual learning needs; (3) the strengthening of AI literacy and digital literacy, which emerge as a new form of academic literacy that students must internalize; and (4) the transformation of academic practices and the internalization of values, reflected in the renegotiation of academic integrity norms.

In the role allocation function, the identified themes are: (1) the development of digital competencies, which are a basic prerequisite for students' job readiness; (2) the strengthening and simultaneously challenging of critical thinking skills, which are ambivalent depending on the pattern of Generative AI usage by students; (3) AI literacy as a new asset in the job market, which is increasingly becoming an explicit qualification sought by employers; and (4) readiness to face the structural transformation of the digital job market, which demands higher education to continuously adjust the curriculum to changing industry needs. These eight themes are interconnected and affirm that Generative AI operates as a cross-functional force that comprehensively influences higher education, not only in pedagogical aspects but also in deeper structural and institutional value dimensions.

1. Generative AI in the Socialization in Higher Education

The socialization function in Parsons' view refers to the process of internalizing knowledge, values, norms, and skills that enable individuals to participate effectively in social life. A synthesis of the reviewed literature shows that Generative AI influences this function thru four main pathways: expanding access to knowledge, personalized learning, strengthening AI and digital literacy, and transforming academic practices and the process of internalizing scientific values, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Literature Synthesis on Generative AI and the Socialization Function in Higher Education

Theme	Authors	Synthesis of Findings
Expanding Access to Knowledge	(Lee et al., 2024; Sanz-Tejeda et al., 2026; Y. Tang, 2026; Thüs et al., 2024)	Generative AI expands students' access to scholarly literature, facilitates collaborative knowledge construction, and enhances the comprehension of complex academic information. However, these benefits are influenced by disparities in cultural and economic capital, potentially exacerbating inequalities in access to educational resources.

Theme	Authors	Synthesis of Findings
Personalized Learning	(Dong et al., 2026; Pallant et al., 2026; Sajja et al., 2026; Waluyo & Kusumastuti, 2024)	Generative AI supports personalized learning by adapting educational experiences to students' individual needs, enhancing learning engagement, and strengthening knowledge construction through more individualized learning experiences.
AI Literacy and Digital Literacy	(Abrams & Hanghøj, 2026; Gu & Ericson, 2025; Wang et al., 2026; Yan et al., 2025)	AI literacy has emerged as a new academic competency encompassing technical, reflective, and critical abilities to effectively use and evaluate Generative AI outputs within diverse social and cultural contexts.
Academic Practices and the Internalization of Academic Values	(Bittle & El-Gayar, 2025; Jensen et al., 2025; Kofinas et al., 2025; Rahiem, 2026)	Generative AI reshapes academic practices by challenging academic integrity, authentic assessment, and the internalization of scholarly values, thereby requiring the adaptation of pedagogical strategies and institutional policies.

As shown in Table 1, the analyzed literature is grouped into four main themes that collectively represent the changes in the function of higher education socialization in the era of Generative AI. These four themes are interconnected and indicate that the socialization process no longer occurs solely thru interactions between lecturers, students, and educational institutions, but is also mediated by Generative AI technology. In this context, Generative AI serves as a source of knowledge, a learning partner, and a medium that shapes academic practices and the process of value internalization. The following description explains each theme in more detail based on the synthesis of previous research findings.

2. Generative AI in Role Allocation Function in Higher Education

The role allocation function according to Talcott Parsons is related to the educational process of preparing and placing individuals in various social positions according to their competencies. The synthesis of the analyzed articles shows that Generative Artificial Intelligence (Generative AI) influences the implementation of this function thru four main tendencies, namely the development of digital competencies, the strengthening of critical thinking, AI literacy as a new asset in the job market, and the enhancement of students' readiness to face the transformation of the digital job market. The four themes are the result of a synthesis of various studies examining the implications of Generative AI on the development of competencies and the readiness of higher education graduates.

Table 3. Literature Synthesis on Generative AI and the Role Allocation Function of Higher Education

Theme	Authors	Synthesis of Findings
Development of Digital Competencies	(Nartey, 2024, 2026; Smith et al., 2025)	The literature indicates that Generative AI promotes the development of digital competencies as a core graduate capability. The integration of AI into higher education curricula should be implemented systematically and accompanied by ethical governance to ensure that students develop not only technical proficiency but also professional responsibility in the use of AI technologies in the workplace.
Strengthening Critical Thinking	(Guarda et al., 2026; Premkumar et al., 2024; K.-S. Tang et al., 2026; Wegerif & Casebourne, 2026)	Generative AI has the potential to strengthen students' critical thinking when used in reflective, dialogic, and critical questioning-based learning environments. Conversely, passive reliance on AI-generated outputs may reduce students' independent thinking. Therefore, fostering critical thinking has become an essential competency for navigating the AI era.
AI Literacy as Human Capital for the Labour Market	(Barthakur et al., 2026; Bluemelhuber & Langer, 2026; Daniel et al., 2025; Li & Awang, 2026)	AI literacy has emerged as a new form of professional competency encompassing the ability to effectively utilize Generative AI, learning analytics, and other digital skills aligned with labour market demands. These competencies constitute an important form of human capital for enhancing graduates' competitiveness in the era of digital transformation.
Readiness for the Digital Labour Market	(Asad & Ajaz, 2024; Bowles & Kruger, 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023; Yuqian et al., 2026)	Generative AI is reshaping occupational structures and competency requirements across multiple sectors. Consequently, higher education institutions are expected to prepare students to adapt to these changes by strengthening employability, promoting lifelong learning and upskilling, and enhancing graduates' readiness for an AI-driven labour market.

The summary of the synthesis results is presented in Table 2. As shown in Table 2, most studies view that Generative AI not only affects the learning process but also changes the mechanisms of higher education in preparing students to enter the workforce. These changes are reflected in the development of digital competencies and AI literacy as new professional

competencies, the increasing need for critical thinking skills, and the demand to prepare graduates to face the transformation of the job market based on artificial intelligence. These findings indicate that the allocation function of higher education roles is being redefined in line with the changing characteristics of competencies required in the digital society. The following description explains each theme based on the synthesis of previous research findings.

3. A Sociology of Education Perspective on the Educational Functions of Higher Education in the Era of Generative AI

Sociological Implications of Education on Generative AI for the Functions of Education in Higher Education The synthesis of these two functions shows that Generative AI does not affect the function of socialization and the function of role allocation separately, but rather in an interconnected manner. The socialization process that occurs thru the expansion of knowledge access, personalization of learning, strengthening of AI literacy, and internalization of academic values essentially forms the foundation of competencies that then serve as the basis for the role allocation function, which is the determination of students' positions in the social structure and labor market after graduation. For example, AI literacy developed thru the socialization process (Abrams & Hanghøj, 2026; Gu & Ericson, 2025), ultimately becomes a digital asset that determines graduates' competitiveness in the labor market (Barthakur et al., 2026; Bluemelhuber & Langer, 2026).

However, the synthesis of the literature also reveals structural tensions that need to be addressed. The previous research shows that the benefits of Generative AI in the socialization process are not evenly distributed due to differences in cultural capital among students, potentially reinforcing the reproduction of social inequalities rather than alleviating them—a phenomenon that classical education sociologists have long identified as the latent function of education in reproducing social class structures (Y. Tang, 2026). The others reinforce this concern by showing that the gap in access to Generative AI in higher education institutions in developing countries is more due to governance and digital literacy factors rather than just limitations in technical infrastructure, implying that the role allocation function is also at risk of reproducing global inequalities between higher education institutions in developed and developing countries (Simiyu et al., 2026).

In addition to these tensions, the literature indicates that the emergence of Generative AI has prompted higher education institutions to reconsider the meaning of knowledge and competence in the digital era. Rather than functioning solely as a technological innovation, Generative AI has introduced new epistemological questions regarding how knowledge is produced, validated, and disseminated within higher education. At the same time, although the technology demonstrates considerable transformative

potential, the current body of empirical evidence remains relatively limited. Consequently, assertions that Generative AI has fundamentally transformed higher education should be interpreted with caution until further empirical research becomes available (Kalaitzidis, 2026; O'Dea, 2024).

From the perspective of Parsons' structural functionalism, these developments can be understood as a process of institutional adaptation in response to significant technological change. As a social institution, higher education is required to adjust the ways in which it performs its socialization and role allocation functions to remain responsive to a society increasingly shaped by Generative AI. This adaptation extends beyond the integration of new technologies into teaching and learning, encompassing the redesign of assessment practices, the development of ethical governance, and the establishment of new institutional norms that balance technological innovation with academic integrity (Owoseni et al., 2024; Qadhi et al., 2024).

Overall, the findings suggest that Generative AI functions as a transformative force influencing the implementation of the two core educational functions of higher education. Within the socialization function, its role extends beyond facilitating knowledge transmission to fostering AI literacy, digital competencies, and the internalization of new academic values. Within the role allocation function, Generative AI contributes to redefining the competencies required for graduate employability and preparing students for an increasingly AI-driven labour market. These two functions are closely interconnected, indicating that the sociological implications of Generative AI should be understood through the interaction between socialization and role allocation rather than by examining each function in isolation.

Theoretically, this research enriches the application of Parsons' structural-functionalism framework in analyzing contemporary educational technology phenomena. Within the broader AGIL theory framework developed by Parsons—which includes the functions of adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency—the functions of socialization and role allocation in education are actually derivatives of the functions of latency and integration. Higher education performs the function of latency by passing on cultural values and knowledge to new generations (socialization), while simultaneously performing the function of integration by placing individuals in appropriate positions within the social structure (role allocation). The presence of Generative AI, as shown by the literature synthesis above, indicates that these two functions now operate within a new sociotechnical environment, where the boundary between "human-generated" and "machine-generated" knowledge becomes increasingly blurred (Chen, 2025; Kalaitzidis, 2026). This phenomenon as the shift of Generative AI from merely being a "tool" to becoming the "epistemic infrastructure" of education, a system that also shapes how knowledge is validated and trusted within academic institutions

Another theoretical implication that can be drawn is the need to expand Parsons' concept of the socialization function to include technological literacy as one form of knowledge and values that individuals need to internalize. When Parsons first formulated his theory, the literacy that was the focus of educational institutions was still limited to reading-writing literacy and the scientific literacy of certain disciplines. The synthesis of literature in this study shows that AI literacy has now become an integral part of the higher education socialization process (Abrams & Hanghøj, 2026; Gu & Ericson, 2025; Wang et al., 2026), thus the classical functionalism framework needs to be updated to accommodate this new reality without losing its clarity as a sociological analytical tool.

In addition to theoretical contributions, the findings of this research also have several practical implications for higher education administrators and education policymakers. First, considering that the benefits of Generative AI for socialization functions are not evenly distributed (Simiyu et al., 2026; Y. Tang, 2026), the policy for integrating Generative AI needs to be accompanied by inclusive digital literacy programs, especially for students from less fortunate socio-economic backgrounds, so that the promised expansion of knowledge access by this technology can be truly felt evenly. Second, considering the challenges to academic integrity posed by Generative AI (Bittle & El-Gayar, 2025; Kofinas et al., 2025), higher education institutions need to fundamentally redesign their assessment systems, not just by adding AI detection tools to existing assessment systems. Other research suggest an assessment approach that emphasizes the thinking process of students (for example, thru process portfolios, reflections, or oral presentations) rather than just the final written product, as one of the strategies to maintain the validity of assessments amidst the ease of access to generative tools (Khlaif et al., 2025). Third, regarding the function of role allocation, higher education institutions need to proactively revise their curricula to align with the competencies demanded by the job market in the era of Generative AI (Barthakur et al., 2026; Bluemelhuber & Langer, 2026). This includes not only teaching technical skills using generative tools but also strengthening competencies that are relatively more difficult for AI to replace, such as critical thinking, creativity, and human collaboration skills (Bowles & Kruger, 2023; Premkumar et al., 2024). Fourth, in the context of Indonesia specifically, The patterns of Generative AI usage in higher education institutions indicate the need for national policies that consider the digital infrastructure gaps between regions, so that the benefits of Generative AI for the functions of socialization and allocation of roles in higher education are not only enjoyed by students in large and urban universities but also by students in regional universities with limited technological infrastructure (Rahiem, 2026).

It should be emphasized that the use of Parsons' structural-functionalism framework in this research is not intended to overlook other, more critical

perspectives in the sociology of education. Several conflict theory sociologists have long criticized the functionalist approach for being too focused on consensus and social harmony, and for paying insufficient attention to how educational institutions can reproduce structural inequalities between social classes. This perspective is consistent with the findings of the present study, which reveal that the benefits of Generative AI are not distributed equally across higher education contexts but are shaped by differences in access to social, cultural, and technological resources (Simiyu et al., 2026; Y. Tang, 2026).

Thus, this research positions itself moderately: Parsons' functionalism framework is used as an analytical entry point to identify the manifest functions of higher education (socialization and role allocation), but the findings emerging from the literature synthesis indicate the need to complement this functionalist analysis with attention to latent functions and potential dysfunctions, particularly concerning the reproduction of social inequalities that may occur if the integration of Generative AI in higher education is not managed fairly. Such a combined approach aligns with the development of contemporary sociology of education, which tends not to dichotomously oppose functionalism and conflict theory, but rather views both as complementary lenses for understanding the complex realities of education.

D. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMEDATION

This research presents a synthesis of the literature on the impact of Generative AI on educational functions in higher education thru the lens of educational sociology, particularly the educational function framework of Talcott Parsons. Based on an Integrative Literature Review of several studies published between 2023 and 2026, it can be concluded that Generative AI significantly influences two main functions of higher education, namely the socialization function and the role allocation function. In the socialization function, Generative AI contributes to expanding students' access to knowledge, supporting more personalized learning, encouraging the strengthening of AI literacy and digital literacy as a new form of academic literacy, and prompting a re-negotiation of academic practices and scientific values, particularly regarding academic integrity. In the role allocation function, Generative AI contributes to the development of students' digital competencies, both strengthening and challenging critical thinking abilities, the formation of AI literacy as a new asset in job market competition, and the urgent need for higher education to prepare students for the structural transformation of the digital job market.

These findings affirm that Generative AI is not just an ordinary educational technology, but a transformative force reshaping how higher education fulfills its social role in the digital society. However, the literature synthesis also reveals that the benefits of Generative AI are not evenly

distributed and have the potential to reinforce existing social inequalities if not carefully managed by educational institutions or policymakers. Therefore, higher education institutions need to formulate policies for the integration of Generative AI that not only focus on pedagogical efficiency and job readiness but also consider equitable access, the strengthening of critical literacy, and the preservation of academic values that form the foundation of public trust in educational institutions. This research has several limitations that need to be considered in the development of future studies. First, as a literature review, this research does not produce new empirical data, but rather synthesizes findings from existing studies, so the quality of the conclusions heavily depends on the methodological quality of the studies referenced. Second, most of the literature reviewed comes from the context of developed countries, so generalizing the findings to the context of higher education in developing countries, including Indonesia, needs to be done with caution. Third, considering the rapid development of Generative AI technology, the findings in this research need to be continuously updated in line with the emergence of new studies in the future.

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