Beyond Boolean: Student Perception of Generative AI – Assisted Literature Reviews

Section 1: Contribution Details

No.	Contribution	Detail
2	Authors Name(s)	**Sixolile Nkonyeni; Ivy Segoe**
4	Title of Submission:	**Beyond Boolean: Student Perception of Generative AI – Assisted Literature Reviews**
5	Sub-Theme(s) of Submission:	**AI literacy programs in the region**
6	Keywords of Submission:	**Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), Literature review, Academic libraries, Postgraduate students, Research support services**

Section 2: Abstract Text

The emergence of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools is fundamentally transforming how academic libraries support literature review processes. As these tools become increasingly sophisticated in their ability to synthesise and analyse scholarly literature, understanding how postgraduate students perceive and utilise them for literature reviews is crucial for academic libraries to develop appropriate support services and literacy programs.

While extensive research exists on traditional literature review methodologies and library support services, there is limited understanding of how postgraduate students perceive and integrate GenAI tools into their literature review workflows. This knowledge gap hinders libraries' ability to effectively adapt their services and support structures to meet emerging user needs.

This study aimed to investigate postgraduate students' perceptions of using GenAI tools for literature reviews, with a specific focus on identifying areas where academic libraries can provide targeted support and guidance. The research examined how students navigate the intersection of traditional library resources and emerging AI technologies in their research processes.

Using a qualitative research design, the researcher distributed open-ended online surveys to 63 postgraduate students with direct experience with generative AI tools. The study employed purposive sampling to select individuals who could provide informed perspectives on GenAI's role in scholarly work. Thematic analysis was conducted using AtlasTi software, allowing for a systematic exploration of participants' experiences and attitudes.

Key findings revealed that while students predominantly viewed GenAI tools as valuable aids for initial literature exploration and synthesis, they expressed significant concerns about accuracy, comprehensiveness, and the ethical implications of AI-assisted research. The research identified critical insights into how these tools might be effectively and ethically integrated with traditional library resources and research methodologies.

These findings have important implications for academic libraries' evolving role in supporting research practices. The results suggest a pressing need for libraries to develop specialised training programs, create guidelines for responsible AI use in literature reviews, and establish new service

models that bridge the gap between traditional research support and AI-enhanced methodologies. This research provides valuable insights for libraries seeking to adapt their services to support the emerging needs of researchers in an AI-transformed academic landscape.