

Masterthesis: “Where Should I Study and What? The Role of Generative AI in Making Career Decisions”

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Motivation and Aim of the Thesis

Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT are increasingly used by prospective students to gather information, compare universities, and explore future career paths. While prior research has examined digital information search and decision support systems, we know comparatively little about how and why students rely on generative AI when making high-stakes educational decisions—such as choosing a field of study or selecting a university for their Master’s degree.

This thesis investigates the role of generative AI in shaping academic and early career decisions. In particular, it asks: How do prospective Master’s students use generative AI in their decision-making processes, and what motivations, perceptions, and contextual factors drive this usage? The study will employ an empirical survey among Bachelor’s students who are currently deciding on, or have recently decided on, their Master’s program. The survey will examine usage patterns (e.g., frequency, types of prompts), perceived usefulness, trust in AI-generated advice, comparison with other information sources, and the influence of AI on final decisions.

The objective of the thesis is to provide empirical insights into the mechanisms and implications of generative AI-supported decision-making in the context of higher education choices. Specifically, the study aims to (1) identify patterns of generative AI usage in educational decision processes, (2) explain why students rely on—or refrain from relying on—AI systems, and (3) assess the perceived impact of AI on decision quality, confidence, and satisfaction. By doing so, the thesis contributes to the emerging literature on Human-AI interaction, digital decision support, and technology-enabled career decision-making, while offering practical implications for universities and policymakers.

Requirements

- Strong interest in the topic
- Strong analytic and conceptual skillset
- Structured way of working