VERIFICATION OF GENERATIVE AI OUTPUTS BY PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ERROR EXPERIENCE, TRUST, AND REPORTED PRACTICES

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Abstract

This study examined how primary school teachers' experience of working with generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) outputs, their reported verification practices, trust in AI-generated information, and their final prioritisation of professional risks and opportunities were related within the same survey context. A cross-sectional survey was conducted among primary school teachers, with analyses focused on respondents who reported using AI tools in their professional practice. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis, while responses to two final open-ended questions were examined through inductive content coding. The findings showed that more frequent experience of detecting errors in AI-generated outputs was related to more frequent verification and to lower reported use of AI-generated materials without in-depth checking. Trust in AI-generated information was more strongly related to the reported use of such materials without thorough verification. Perceived efficiency was not related to verification frequency, although it showed a weaker relationship with the use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification. In the final open-ended responses, teachers most frequently prioritised time saving and efficiency as professional opportunities, while reduced critical or independent thinking and unreliable information were the most frequently identified risks. The results showed that error experience, trust, verification practices, and final open-ended prioritisation represented related but non-interchangeable aspects of teachers' self-reported professional experience with GenAI.

Keywords: generative artificial intelligence; primary school teachers; verification; trust; AI-generated information; professional practice.

1. Introduction

Generative artificial intelligence is becoming increasingly integrated into teachers' professional practice, while patterns of use, levels of preparedness, and ways of engaging with AI-generated outputs remain heterogeneous. A systematic review by Ayubian et al. (2026) highlighted the fragmented nature of the evidence on teachers' adoption of GenAI, competence, professional development, and socio-technical experience. Empirical studies of K-12 teachers likewise show variation in preparedness, purposes of use, and barriers to integration (Cheah et al., 2025).

In teachers' professional work, GenAI is associated with a range of practical opportunities, including lesson preparation, creation and adaptation of teaching materials, differentiation, idea generation, and time saving. At the same time, studies of K-12 and K-3 teachers report concerns related to inaccurate outputs, academic integrity, privacy, overreliance on technology, and cognitive offloading (Blundell et al., 2026; Hall et al., 2026; Tao et al., 2026). These findings indicate that professional use of GenAI cannot be reduced to perceived usefulness or willingness to adopt the technology.

Responsible professional engagement with AI extends beyond technical use. The UNESCO AI Competency Framework for Teachers situates a human-centred mindset, ethics of AI, AI foundations and applications, AI pedagogy, and AI for professional learning as interconnected dimensions of teachers' AI competence (Miao & Cukurova, 2024). Particular attention is required when teachers work with AI-generated outputs. Generative systems may produce plausible but inaccurate or erroneous information, making verification a distinct component of interaction with the technology. Yan et al. (2026) examined information verification behaviour in relation to dimensions of GenAI literacy and identified statistically significant relationships

between selected literacy dimensions and verification behaviour. However, that study was conducted with a general user sample and did not focus on the professional practices of primary school teachers.

Research on teachers has also addressed trust, perceived risk, and patterns of professional engagement with GenAI. Fuchs and Lenzgeiger (2026), in a study of primary school teachers, examined risk, trust, professional development needs, and profiles of GenAI engagement. Viberg et al. (2025) analysed factors associated with teachers' trust in AI across six countries.

A complementary line of research has moved beyond self-reports to the direct examination of teacher–AI interaction. Choi et al. (2026) identified differences in how teachers worked with AI-generated content during lesson design, including variation in the extent to which outputs were critically adapted rather than accepted with minimal revision.

Existing research therefore addresses professional opportunities and risks of GenAI, trust in the technology, information verification, AI literacy, and particular forms of teacher interaction with generated outputs. Less attention has been paid to how, within the same study of primary school teachers, experience of detecting erroneous GenAI outputs, reported verification practices, trust in AI-generated information, and the professional opportunities and risks prioritised by teachers relate to one another. Of particular interest is whether the risks and opportunities selected in final open-ended responses reproduce the structured indicators or provide a different level of information about teachers' self-reported professional experience.

The present study was designed to examine these relationships by combining two levels of survey data. The structured section captured experience of detecting errors, frequency of verification, actions taken after an error was identified, trust in AI-generated information, and agreement with the need for verification. After completing this section, respondents were asked in open-ended form to identify the most significant risks and the most useful professional opportunities of AI. Because these questions followed the structured section, the responses were not treated as independent measures of AI literacy or risk awareness, but as a final prioritisation of selected aspects of the technology after respondents had considered their own reported experience and practices.

The aim of the study was to examine how primary school teachers' experience of working with generative AI outputs, their reported verification practices, trust in AI-generated information, and their final prioritisation of the technology's most significant risks and professional opportunities relate to one another in professional practice.

The study addressed the following research question: How are primary school teachers' experience of working with generative AI outputs, their reported verification practices, trust in AI-generated information, and the risks and opportunities they identify as most significant after completing the structured questionnaire section related to one another?

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Study design and participants

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design and was conducted between 13 March and 26 September 2026. A total of 157 primary school teachers participated in the study. Of these, 106 participants (67.5%) had more than 20 years of teaching experience, 28 (17.8%) had 11-20 years of experience, 14 (8.9%) had up to 5 years, and 9 (5.7%) had 6-10 years of teaching experience. Ninety participants (57.3%) worked in rural schools and 67 (42.7%) in urban schools.

Seventy-five respondents (47.8%) reported having completed training in digital literacy or the use of artificial intelligence, 51 (32.5%) reported partial participation in such training, and 31 (19.7%) had not received such training.

Of the total sample, 143 participants (91.1%) reported using AI tools in their professional practice. Analyses involving direct experience with generative AI outputs were therefore conducted using this subsample. The sample was not considered representative of the overall population of primary school teachers in Ukraine; accordingly, the findings were interpreted within the boundaries of the study sample.

2.2. Research instrument and variables

Data were collected using an author-developed questionnaire consisting of 24 items. The questionnaire covered participants' professional characteristics, previous training in digital literacy and AI, frequency and purposes of AI use, verification practices, experience of detecting errors in AI-generated outputs, trust in AI-generated information, and perceived professional needs, risks, and opportunities associated with AI use.

The present study focused on variables directly related to the verification of generative AI outputs. These included experience of detecting errors, frequency of information verification, actions taken after identifying an error, agreement with the need to verify AI-generated information using other sources, use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification, and trust in AI-generated information.

Experience of detecting errors was measured using four response categories ranging from never to often. Frequency of verification was measured using four categories ranging from never to always. Three statements concerning trust in AI-generated information, the need for verification, and the use of AI-generated materials without in-depth checking were rated on a five-point Likert scale.

2.3. Open-ended questions

Two open-ended questions were placed at the end of the structured section of the questionnaire. Participants were asked to identify the most significant risks of using AI in education and the most useful opportunities provided by AI for teachers' professional work.

Before responding to these questions, participants had already completed items concerning their own AI-use practices, verification of generated information, experience of errors, trust in AI outputs, independent analysis, and professional needs. The open-ended responses were therefore not treated as independent measures of AI literacy, critical thinking competence, or risk awareness. Instead, they were interpreted as a final prioritisation of perceived risks and professional opportunities following completion of the structured questionnaire section.

This design made it possible to distinguish between two levels of data: structured self-reports of experience and professional practice, and the risks and opportunities that participants subsequently chose to prioritise in their own words.

2.4. Analysis of open-ended responses

An inductive content-coding procedure was applied to the responses to Questions 23 and 24. First, the full set of responses was reviewed without a predetermined coding framework. Recurrent meaning units were identified and used to generate initial codes, which were subsequently consolidated into broader thematic categories. After the boundaries of the categories had been refined, the entire dataset was coded again using the final coding scheme. Multiple coding was permitted when a single response contained more than one distinct meaning unit. Consequently, the cumulative percentages across categories could exceed 100%. Blank, technical, or substantively uninformative responses were excluded from the thematic analysis.

For Question 23, 143 entries were recorded, of which 111 contained substantive responses and were included in the thematic analysis. For Question 24, 120 of the 143 entries were classified as substantive and included in the analysis.
The presence or absence of a particular category in an open-ended response was not interpreted as evidence of the presence or absence of the corresponding knowledge, awareness, or professional competence.

2.5. Statistical analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to summarise participant characteristics and the main study variables. Absolute frequencies and percentages were reported for categorical variables.
Associations between ordinal variables were examined using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (ρ). The primary analyses examined the relationships between:

- experience of detecting errors in AI-generated outputs and frequency of verification;
- experience of detecting errors and reported use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification;
- agreement with the need to verify AI-generated information and reported verification frequency;
- trust in AI-generated information and reported use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification.
- Two additional exploratory analyses examined the relationship between perceived efficiency of AI and verification frequency, and the relationship between perceived efficiency and reported use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification.

For the six Spearman correlation tests reported in Table 1, p-values were adjusted using the Holm method to control the family-wise Type I error rate. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$. In addition to statistical significance, the direction and magnitude of the correlation coefficients were considered when interpreting the findings. Non-significant results directly relevant to the research question were retained in the analysis to avoid selective reporting of statistically significant findings.
Given the cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported data, all identified relationships were interpreted as associations rather than causal effects. The findings were therefore not used to infer causal relationships or directly observed teacher behaviour beyond participants' reported practices.

2.6. Ethical considerations

Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous. Information regarding the voluntary nature of participation and the anonymity of the survey was provided in the introductory section of the questionnaire before completion. No personally identifiable information was collected.

3. Results

3.1. Experience of AI errors and verification practices

Among the 143 respondents who reported using AI in their professional practice, 132 (92.3%) had encountered errors in AI-generated responses at least once. Errors were reported *sometimes* by 82 participants (57.3%), *rarely* by 29 (20.3%), and *often* by 21 (14.7%), while 11 respondents (7.7%) indicated that they had never detected errors in AI-generated outputs.

Verification of AI-generated information was also common. Sixty-six respondents (46.2%) reported that they *always* verified information obtained from AI, 39 (27.3%) did so *often*, 35 (24.5%) *sometimes*, and 3 (2.1%) *never*. Thus, 105 of the 143 AI users (73.4%) reported verifying AI-generated information always or often.

When an error was detected, the most frequently reported response was checking the information against other sources, selected by 100 respondents (69.9%). Sixty-two participants (43.4%) reported editing the AI-generated response, 26 (18.2%) indicated that they did not use the material, and 9 (6.3%) reported that they sometimes used the material without additional verification. As multiple responses were allowed, percentages exceed 100%.

A statistically significant positive association was found between the reported frequency of detecting errors and the frequency of verification, **Spearman's $\rho = 0.424$, $p < 0.001$**. Respondents who reported detecting errors more frequently also tended to report more frequent verification of AI-generated information.

A significant inverse association was also observed between experience of detecting errors and the reported use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification, **$\rho = -0.338$, $p < 0.001$**. More frequent experience of errors was therefore associated with lower agreement with the statement that AI-generated materials were sometimes used without thorough checking.

3.2. Perceived need for verification, trust, and reported practices

Most AI users expressed agreement with the need to verify AI-generated information using other sources. One hundred respondents (69.9%) selected either 4 or 5 on the five-point Likert scale, 35 (24.5%) selected the midpoint, and 8 (5.6%) selected 1 or 2.

Agreement with the need for verification was positively associated with reported verification frequency, $\rho = 0.272$, $p = 0.003$. Although the association was weaker than that observed for direct experience of detecting errors, respondents who more strongly endorsed the need for verification tended to report more frequent checking of AI-generated information.

Trust in AI-generated information showed a different pattern. Forty-seven respondents (32.9%) agreed or strongly agreed that they often trusted information generated by AI, 62 (43.4%) selected the midpoint, and 34 (23.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

A comparatively strong positive association was found between trust in AI-generated information and reported use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification, **$\rho = 0.569$, $p < 0.001$**. Higher levels of reported trust were therefore associated with a greater tendency to use AI-generated materials without thorough checking.

By contrast, perceived efficiency was not associated with verification frequency. Agreement with the statement that AI enabled faster completion of professional tasks showed no statistically significant association with the frequency of verification, $\rho = -0.026$, $p = 0.756$. However, perceived efficiency was weakly associated with reported use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification, $\rho = 0.255$, $p = 0.004$.

3.3. Prioritised risks and professional opportunities

The two open-ended questions placed at the end of the structured questionnaire section were analysed as a final prioritisation of perceived risks and professional opportunities.

For the question concerning risks, 111 substantive responses were included in the thematic analysis. Because multiple coding was allowed, one response could contribute to more than one category.

The most frequently prioritised risk was the reduction of critical or independent thinking, identified in 58 responses (52.3%). This was followed by inaccurate, misleading, or erroneous information, identified in 44 responses (39.6%). Dependence on AI, passivity, or unreflective

use was identified in 20 responses (18.0%), while academic integrity and copyright concerns appeared in 18 responses (16.2%). Privacy and personal data concerns were identified in 11 responses (9.9%).

Less frequently prioritised themes included loss of creativity or individual approach (6.3%), psychological, social, or educational consequences (6.3%), algorithmic bias (2.7%), displacement of professional roles or employment (1.8%), and digital inequality (0.9%).

For the question concerning professional opportunities, 120 substantive responses were included in the analysis. The most frequently prioritised opportunity was time saving, speed, or increased efficiency, identified in 60 responses (50.0%). Creation or adaptation of teaching and didactic materials was identified in 38 responses (31.7%), while the creation of tasks, exercises, or tests appeared in 33 responses (27.5%).

Other frequently identified opportunities included information search and access (20.8%), generation of ideas and creative solutions (20.0%), visualisation and multimedia production (15.0%), lesson planning and preparation (12.5%), and automation of routine or administrative work (12.5%). Personalisation, differentiation, and support for inclusive teaching were identified in 10 responses (8.3%), while feedback, assessment, and learning analytics were identified in 9 responses (7.5%).

The open-ended responses identified the aspects of AI use that respondents chose to prioritise after completing the preceding structured items. Efficiency emerged as the most frequently prioritised professional opportunity, whereas reduced critical or independent thinking and unreliable information were the most frequently prioritised risks.

Table 1. Associations between error experience, verification-related judgements, and reported practices among AI users (N = 143)

Variables	**Spearman's ρ**	**Holm-adjusted p-value**
Experience of detecting AI errors × frequency of verification	0.424	< 0.001
Experience of detecting AI errors × use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification	−0.338	< 0.001
Agreement with the need to verify AI-generated information × frequency of verification	0.272	0.003
Trust in AI-generated information × use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification	0.569	< 0.001
Perceived efficiency of AI × frequency of verification	−0.026	0.756
Perceived efficiency of AI × use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification	0.255	0.004

Note. P-values were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Holm method.

The strongest association was observed between trust in AI-generated information and reported use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification ($\rho = 0.569$, $p < 0.001$). Experience of detecting errors was moderately associated with more frequent verification ($\rho = 0.424$, $p < 0.001$) and with lower reported use of materials without in-depth checking ($\rho = -0.338$, $p < 0.001$). By contrast, perceived efficiency showed no meaningful association with verification frequency.

4. Discussion

Within the study sample, the reported frequency of detecting errors in generative AI outputs was statistically related to the reported frequency of verifying those outputs. More frequent experience of detecting errors was also associated with lower agreement with the statement that AI-generated materials were used without in-depth verification. Given the cross-sectional design of the study, these relationships do not allow the direction of causality to be established. The findings indicate only that experience of encountering erroneous outputs and reported verification practices were not statistically independent within this sample. This pattern is broadly consistent with research linking dimensions of GenAI literacy to information verification behaviour, although the constructs and samples are not directly comparable (Yan et al., 2026).

Agreement with the need to verify AI-generated results using other sources was also related to the reported frequency of verification. The strength of this relationship was lower than that observed between experience of detecting errors and verification frequency. Comparison of these relationships does not provide grounds for concluding that direct experience of errors is more important than acknowledging the need for verification. It only shows that these indicators were related to reported verification practice in different ways.

The strongest statistical relationship among the analysed indicators was found between trust in AI-generated information and the use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification. Higher agreement with the statement concerning trust in AI-generated information was accompanied by higher agreement with the statement concerning the use of AI-generated materials without thorough checking. This finding is consistent with research treating trust as a context-dependent feature of teacher–AI interaction. Viberg et al. (2025) examined factors associated with teachers' trust in AI across six countries, while Ocak and Caskurlu (2026) explored how trust and distrust relate to teachers' ethical interpretations of transparency, fairness, accountability, and inclusiveness. However, the present data do not allow us to determine whether trust precedes less intensive verification or develops through prior experience with the technology.

The non-significant result concerning the practical usefulness of AI is also relevant to the interpretation of the findings. Agreement with the statement that AI enables faster completion of professional tasks was not related to the frequency of verification. Within this sample, there is therefore no basis for concluding that a positive evaluation of AI efficiency is accompanied by less frequent verification. In the present data, the practical usefulness of the technology and the frequency of verification did not form a direct statistical opposition.

At the same time, a weak positive statistical relationship was found between agreement that AI enables faster completion of professional tasks and the use of AI-generated materials without in-depth verification. Given the limited strength of this relationship and the self-reported nature of the data, this result should be treated as supplementary. It is not sufficient to conclude that an orientation toward saving time leads to less thorough verification of AI-generated materials. Further examination of this relationship requires other research designs, including observation of professional task performance under different time constraints.

A separate level of data was obtained from open-ended Questions 23 and 24. Their placement at the end of the questionnaire, after a series of structured items concerning AI use, errors, verification, trust, and professional needs, determined how these responses were interpreted. They were not treated as independent measures of risk awareness, AI literacy, or the development of relevant competencies. Rather, they reflected those aspects of AI use that respondents themselves identified as most significant after completing the structured part of the questionnaire.

In this final open-ended prioritisation, the most frequently identified professional opportunity was time saving and increased work efficiency. The most frequently prioritised risks were reduced critical or independent thinking and unreliable information. In thematic terms, these responses correspond to issues already identified in contemporary research on teachers' professional use of GenAI (Blundell et al., 2026; Hall et al., 2026; Tao et al., 2026). In the present study, however, the relevance of these findings lies not only in the frequency of individual categories but also in their relationship with the structured questionnaire indicators. The open-ended responses and the structured indicators represented different forms of self-reported data. The structured items captured respondents' reported experience, judgements, and practices in relation to predefined aspects of AI use, whereas the open-ended questions captured the aspects that respondents chose to prioritise in their own words after completing the structured section. These two levels of data were therefore treated as analytically distinct rather than interchangeable. The present study does not establish whether, or to what extent, the content of the preceding structured items influenced the subsequent open-ended prioritisation.

Taken together, the study distinguished several related but conceptually different aspects of work with generative AI: experience of detecting errors, reported verification practices, trust in AI-generated information, acknowledgement of the need for verification, and final open-ended prioritisation of opportunities and risks. These indicators were not designed as components of a single composite measure and were therefore interpreted separately.

The practical implications of the findings also require cautious formulation. The study identified statistical relationships between error experience, trust, and specific verification practices, but it did not evaluate the effectiveness of particular professional development models. The findings may provide a basis for further testing of training situations in which teachers work with accurate, partially correct, and erroneous GenAI outputs, compare them with other sources, and justify decisions to accept, revise, or reject the generated material.

The study has several limitations. Its cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported practices preclude causal inference and do not establish how teachers behave when verifying AI outputs in actual professional tasks. The sample was not representative of primary school teachers in Ukraine and was weighted toward highly experienced teachers, with 67.5% reporting more than 20 years of teaching experience. In addition, because the open-ended questions followed the structured section, the preceding items may have influenced which risks and opportunities respondents subsequently prioritised. These features should be considered when interpreting the findings and their transferability to other teacher populations.

A promising direction for further research is to move from self-reported data to direct observation of how teachers work with AI-generated outputs. Such studies could record the frequency of consultation with additional sources, verification strategies, revision of generated materials, justification of decisions to accept or reject particular outputs, and the time devoted to verification. Longitudinal or experimental designs would also make it possible to examine whether verification practices change following direct experience with erroneous AI outputs or after specifically designed professional development.

The findings do not characterise a general level of "criticality" in primary school teachers' use of generative AI. Rather, they demonstrate specific statistical relationships among error experience, trust in AI-generated information, acknowledgement of the need for verification, and reported verification practices within the study sample. The open-ended responses, in turn, show which risks and professional opportunities respondents prioritised after completing the structured section of the questionnaire. The combination of these two levels of data constitutes the analytical specificity of the present study.

5. Conclusions

The study showed that the verification practices of **primary school teachers** when working with generative AI cannot be described through a single indicator. Experience of detecting errors, trust in AI-generated information, acknowledgement of the need for verification, and reported verification practices showed different patterns of statistical relationships and should not be treated as interchangeable characteristics of professional experience.
The open-ended questions placed after the structured section of the questionnaire provided an additional analytical layer. They showed which opportunities and risks **primary school teachers** prioritised after reflecting on their own experience of working with AI. The differences between these responses and the structured indicators support treating them as a distinct level of data rather than as a direct measure of relevant knowledge or competencies.
The findings support the need for further research on GenAI verification that goes beyond self-reported data and includes direct observation of the professional actions of **primary school teachers**. A promising direction is to examine how teachers verify, revise, accept, or reject generative AI outputs in specific professional situations.

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