

CHAPTER 2

INNOVATIONS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Inclusive Teaching Using Microsoft Copilot Agents: A Review of Opportunities, Challenges, and Student Perceptions

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Citation:

Mazur, I. (2026). Inclusive Teaching Using Microsoft Copilot Agents: A Review of Opportunities, Challenges, and Student Perceptions. *Pedagogy and Education Management Review*, (2 (24), 30–41. <https://doi.org/10.36690/2733-2039-2026-2-30-41>

Received: June 05, 2026

Approved: June 29, 2026

Published: June 30, 2026



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Abstract. Inclusive teaching has become an important priority in higher education because universities are expected to support students with different abilities, learning needs, linguistic backgrounds, socio-economic conditions, and levels of digital readiness. The ongoing development of generative artificial intelligence and Microsoft Copilot Agents support students with different abilities, learning needs, linguistic backgrounds, but also raises concerns about privacy, accuracy, bias, academic integrity, and unequal access. This article aims to investigate the potential of Microsoft Copilot Agents for inclusive teaching in higher education, with a particular focus on pedagogical opportunities, implementation challenges, and student perceptions of generative AI-supported learning. The study applies a qualitative review methodology based on literature synthesis, document analysis, and conceptual modelling. The selection of sources prioritized academic relevance, methodological clarity, recency, citation value, and direct connection with the topic. The article also uses verified institutional sources related to Microsoft Copilot Agents and responsible AI in education. The results show that Copilot Agents may support inclusive teaching through differentiated explanations, multilingual assistance, accessibility-oriented content transformation, formative practice, self-regulated learning, low-stigma help-seeking, and administrative navigation. Nevertheless, the review highlights risks related to inaccurate outputs, algorithmic bias, data privacy, unequal AI literacy, overreliance on AI, teacher workload, and unclear boundaries between learning support and academic misconduct. Microsoft Copilot Agents should be implemented as supervised pedagogical scaffolds rather than replacements for teachers or human support systems. Their inclusive value depends on institutional governance, accessibility planning, teacher training, student AI literacy, verified knowledge sources, and continuous monitoring of equity outcomes. Future research should empirically examine student perceptions and learning outcomes associated with Copilot Agents across disciplines, countries, and student groups, including students with disabilities, international students, first-generation students, working students, and learners with different levels of digital competence.

Keywords: inclusive teaching; Microsoft Copilot Agents; generative AI; higher education; accessibility; student perceptions; AI literacy; educational technology; Universal Design for Learning; educational management.

JEL Classification: I21; I23; I24; I28; O33

Formulas: 0; **fig.:** 1; **tabl.:** 4; **bibl.:** 13

Introduction. Inclusive teaching has become a key priority in contemporary higher education because universities are expected to support students with different abilities, learning needs, cultural backgrounds, language competences, socio-economic conditions, and levels of digital readiness. Inclusive teaching is not limited to access to educational content. It also involves differentiated instruction, accessible learning materials, formative feedback, student agency, psychological safety, flexible learning pathways, and institutional support for students who may experience barriers to participation and academic success.

At the same time, higher education is undergoing rapid transformation under the influence of generative artificial intelligence. AI-based tools are increasingly used for academic writing support, feedback, tutoring, translation, administrative communication, learning analytics, and student guidance. Within this broader transformation, Microsoft Copilot Agents represent a new type of AI-supported educational tool. Microsoft describes agents in Microsoft 365 Copilot as AI assistants that can extend Copilot by integrating organizational knowledge, data sources, actions, and workflows into Microsoft 365 applications (Microsoft, 2026a). Microsoft also explains that agents may support business or education processes and may range from simple prompt-and-response agents to more advanced autonomous agents (Microsoft, 2026b).

The educational potential of Copilot Agents lies in their ability to provide personalized explanations, generate practice tasks, summarize complex materials, support multilingual learners, guide students through institutional procedures, and help teachers create more accessible and differentiated learning environments. The Study and Learn Agent is especially relevant to this discussion because Microsoft presents it as a first-party AI agent in Microsoft 365 Copilot designed to support guided conversations, interactive activities, immediate feedback, and learner-centred engagement (Microsoft Education Team, 2026).

However, the use of Copilot Agents in inclusive teaching also creates serious challenges. These include algorithmic bias, inaccurate or fabricated responses, overreliance on AI-generated support, privacy risks, academic integrity concerns, unequal access to advanced AI tools, and differences in students' AI literacy. UNESCO emphasizes that generative AI in education requires a human-centred approach, regulation, protection of privacy, development of institutional capacity, and long-term educational policy planning (Miao & Holmes, 2023). Therefore, the central issue is not whether Copilot Agents can be used in higher education, but how they can be implemented in ways that support inclusion, fairness, accessibility, and learning quality.

This article analyses inclusive teaching using Microsoft Copilot Agents through a review of opportunities, challenges, and student perceptions. It contributes to the educational management discussion by connecting

inclusive pedagogy, generative AI, Microsoft Copilot Agents, student experience, and institutional governance into one analytical framework.

Literature Review. The growing integration of artificial intelligence into higher education has generated a substantial body of scholarly research. Zawacki-Richter, Marin, Bond, and Gouverneur (2019) provided one of the most influential systematic reviews of AI applications in higher education. Their study findings showed that AI in higher education was often discussed in relation to profiling and prediction, assessment and evaluation, adaptive systems, and intelligent tutoring systems. At the same time, the authors emphasized that many studies were technologically driven, while pedagogical and ethical dimensions remained insufficiently developed (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). This observation remains relevant for the study of Copilot Agents because agent-based AI systems should not be analysed only as technological innovations but also as pedagogical and institutional tools.

Crompton and Burke (2023) systematically reviewed the literature on artificial intelligence in higher education and identified 138 relevant articles published between 2016 and 2022. Their review showed that students were the most common intended users of AI applications, while fewer studies focused on teachers, institutional leaders, or educational managers (Crompton & Burke, 2023). This imbalance is important for inclusive teaching because the successful use of AI requires not only student-facing tools but also teacher preparation, curriculum integration, accessibility planning, and institutional governance. If AI tools are introduced without pedagogical design and institutional responsibility, their inclusive potential may remain limited.

The emergence of generative AI has intensified the debate about technology-supported learning. Batista, Mesquita, and Carnaz (2024) synthesized recent empirical studies on generative AI in higher education and concluded that generative AI affects teaching, learning, assessment, academic integrity, institutional practice, and student support. Their systematic review shows that generative AI can enhance learning through personalization, feedback, and content generation, but it also raises challenges related to reliability, ethics, assessment, and teacher readiness (Batista et al., 2024). Qian (2025) similarly emphasized that pedagogical applications of generative AI in higher education require careful instructional design because AI tools can support learning only when they are integrated into meaningful teaching strategies rather than used as independent substitutes for human instruction.

Student perceptions are central to the success of AI-supported inclusive teaching. Chan and Hu (2023) examined university learners' perspectives on generative AI in higher education using a survey of 399 undergraduate and postgraduate students in Hong Kong. The findings indicated that students generally held positive attitudes toward generative AI, especially in relation

to personalized learning support, writing assistance, brainstorming, and research support. At the same time, students identified several concerns, including the accuracy of AI-generated information, data privacy, ethical issues, and the possible long-term implications of generative AI for educational and career outcomes (Chan & Hu, 2023). This dual perception is important because students may simultaneously value AI assistance and fear its consequences.

Almassaad, Alajlan, and Alebaikan (2024) analysed student perceptions of generative AI through the Technology Acceptance Model and Task-Technology Fit framework. Their findings show that students' adoption of generative AI is influenced by perceived usefulness, task relevance, trust, perceived risk, and institutional context (Almassaad et al., 2024). This means that student acceptance of Copilot Agents will depend not only on technical availability but also on whether students understand how to use them responsibly, trust their outputs, and believe that AI use is fair and academically acceptable.

The relationship between AI and inclusive education requires a specific pedagogical lens. Inclusive teaching is closely connected with Universal Design for Learning, which emphasizes multiple means of engagement, representation, and action or expression (CAST, 2024). From this perspective, Copilot Agents may support inclusion by generating alternative explanations, producing summaries, creating practice questions, supporting multilingual learners, assisting students with planning, and offering low-stigma help. These functions may benefit students with disabilities, international students, first-generation students, neurodiverse learners, working students, and students with uneven prior preparation.

Recent research on AI and inclusive education also shows that AI can enhance accessibility when it helps adapt materials, provide alternative formats, reduce administrative burdens, and support personalized learning. Melo-Lopez, Molina-Garcia, and Ruiz-Palmero (2025) found that AI may support inclusive education through adapted materials, image descriptions, audio transcripts, and personalized support, but they also stressed that implementation must be guided by ethical and pedagogical principles (Melo-Lopez et al., 2025). This is especially relevant for Copilot Agents because they can be connected to institutional digital environments and may therefore influence not only individual learning but also broader educational services.

Despite the growing number of studies on AI and generative AI in higher education, several research gaps remain. First, most studies examine general generative AI tools rather than Microsoft Copilot Agents as institutionally embedded AI assistants operating within Microsoft 365 environments. Second, limited research analyses Copilot Agents specifically through the lens of inclusive teaching, accessibility, disability support, multilingual learning, and student belonging. Third, student perception studies often focus on usefulness, risk, and acceptance, but less attention is

paid to whether different student groups experience AI tools equally. Fourth, there is insufficient empirical evidence on how Copilot Agents affect educational equity, learning confidence, retention, and academic progress. Fifth, institutional governance models for Copilot Agents remain underdeveloped, especially regarding data privacy, access control, academic integrity, teacher workload, and responsible AI literacy.

This article addresses these gaps by developing an integrated review of Microsoft Copilot Agents as tools for inclusive teaching. It connects AI-supported pedagogy, student perceptions, institutional governance, accessibility, and educational-management implications within one conceptual framework.

Aims. The aim of this article is to analyse the potential of Microsoft Copilot Agents for inclusive teaching in higher education, with particular attention to opportunities, challenges, and student perceptions.

The objectives of the article are: to explain the role of Microsoft Copilot Agents in AI-supported teaching and learning; to identify the main opportunities of Copilot Agents for inclusive teaching; to analyse the challenges and risks associated with Copilot Agents in higher education; to systematize student perceptions of generative AI and relate them to Copilot Agent adoption; to develop a conceptual model of inclusive teaching using Microsoft Copilot Agents; to propose an implementation framework for universities and educational managers; and to define future research directions for empirical studies on Copilot Agents and inclusive education.

Methodology. This article applies a qualitative review methodology based on literature synthesis, document analysis, and conceptual modelling. The study combines peer-reviewed academic literature on artificial intelligence in higher education, generative AI, student perceptions, inclusive teaching, educational technology, accessibility, and digital learning with verified institutional sources related to Microsoft Copilot Agents and responsible AI in education.

The literature review was organized around four analytical categories: AI in higher education; generative AI and student perceptions; inclusive teaching and accessibility; and institutional governance of AI. The selection of sources prioritized academic relevance, methodological clarity, recency, citation value, and direct connection with the research topic.

The conceptual part of the methodology develops an inclusive teaching framework for Microsoft Copilot Agents. The model treats Copilot Agents as mediating tools between institutional digital infrastructure, teacher pedagogical design, and student learning needs. The framework does not assume that AI automatically produces inclusion. Instead, it analyses inclusion as the result of interaction between technology design, teacher guidance, student agency, accessibility, digital literacy, ethical rules, and institutional governance.

The article is a review and conceptual study. It does not present original

survey data. Statistical evidence from prior studies is used to support interpretation of student perceptions and AI adoption trends.

Results. Microsoft Copilot Agents can be understood as specialized AI assistants that support defined tasks, knowledge domains, and workflows within Microsoft 365 environments. In higher education, such agents may be configured for course guidance, study support, academic advising, library assistance, accessibility support, writing development, assessment preparation, student services, and institutional communication. Their inclusive value depends on their use as pedagogical scaffolds rather than as replacements for teachers.

Table 1. Potential roles of Microsoft Copilot Agents in inclusive teaching

Inclusive teaching need	Possible Copilot Agent function	Educational value
Differentiated explanation	Explains the same concept in simple, advanced, step-by-step, or example-based formats	Supports students with different prior knowledge and learning pace
Multilingual support	Provides vocabulary explanations, summaries, and language scaffolding	Supports international and multilingual students
Accessibility	Reformats content, summarizes long texts, supports planning, and creates alternative representations	Supports students with disabilities, attention difficulties, or cognitive-load barriers
Self-regulated learning	Creates study plans, revision prompts, practice questions, and learning checklists	Supports independent learning and executive functioning
Low-stigma help	Allows students to ask repeated or basic questions privately	Supports students who are reluctant to ask questions in class
Administrative inclusion	Guides students through deadlines, procedures, services, and institutional resources	Supports first-generation, working, and non-traditional students
Feedback preparation	Helps students understand rubrics, revise drafts, and prepare questions for teachers	Supports formative learning and reflective revision

Source: developed by the author based on Microsoft (2026a), Microsoft Education Team (2026), CAST (2024), Chan and Hu (2023), and Crompton and Burke (2023).

Table 1 shows that Copilot Agents may support inclusive teaching through personalization, accessibility, multilingual assistance, learning autonomy, and institutional navigation. However, these benefits depend on careful pedagogical and institutional design. A poorly configured agent may provide inaccurate answers, ignore accessibility needs, or reproduce bias.

Opportunities for inclusive teaching. The first major opportunity lies in personalized learning support. Copilot Agents can provide explanations adapted to the student's current level of understanding. They can simplify complex concepts, generate examples, create step-by-step guidance, and offer practice activities. This is important for students who require repeated explanation or additional time to master academic content.

The second opportunity is accessibility. Copilot Agents can help transform dense academic materials into summaries, checklists, concept

maps, alternative explanations, and study questions. This can reduce cognitive overload and support students who experience barriers related to disability, attention, language, or unfamiliarity with academic discourse. This opportunity is consistent with inclusive education research, which emphasizes the importance of adapted materials and multiple forms of representation (CAST, 2024; Melo-Lopez et al., 2025).

The third opportunity is multilingual and intercultural support. In internationalized universities, students often learn in a second or third language. Copilot Agents may support vocabulary development, language clarification, translation of difficult terms, and culturally responsive explanation. This does not replace language learning, but it may reduce barriers to participation.

The fourth opportunity is formative learning. Copilot Agents can help students practise before assessment by generating self-check questions, revision plans, and feedback prompts. This can support students who need more opportunities to practise before high-stakes tasks. However, this requires clear academic integrity rules because students must understand the difference between AI-supported learning and unauthorized AI-generated submission.

The fifth opportunity is institutional navigation. Students often face barriers not only in learning content but also in understanding administrative procedures, deadlines, forms, services, and support systems. A university-specific Copilot Agent could help students locate relevant information and reduce dependence on informal knowledge networks.

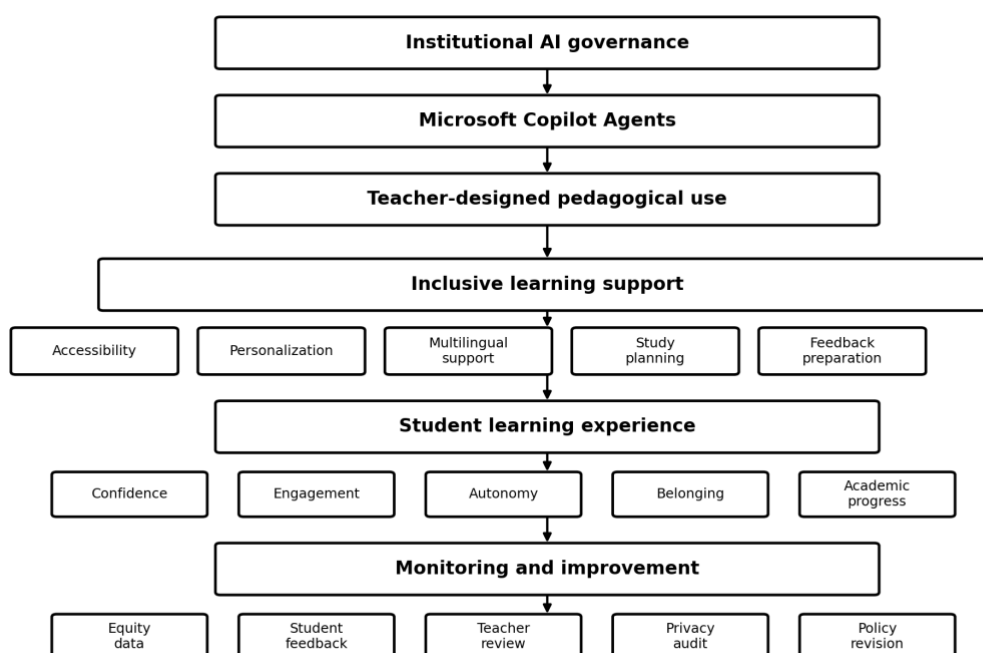


Figure 1. Inclusive teaching model using Microsoft Copilot Agents

Source: developed by the author based on Zawacki-Richter et al. (2019), Crompton and Burke (2023), Miao and Holmes (2023), Microsoft (2026a), and Microsoft Education Team (2026).

Figure 1 demonstrates that Copilot Agents should be embedded in a broader institutional process. The process begins with governance and teacher design, moves through inclusive learning support, affects student experience, and requires continuous monitoring and improvement.

Challenges and risks. The use of Copilot Agents in inclusive teaching creates several challenges. The first is accuracy. Generative AI systems can produce fluent but incorrect responses. For students who already experience academic uncertainty, inaccurate guidance may be especially harmful because they may rely on the agent when they lack confidence or prior knowledge.

The second challenge is bias. AI systems may reproduce linguistic, cultural, gender, disability-related, or socio-economic bias. Inclusive teaching requires universities to evaluate AI outputs and ensure that agents do not disadvantage specific student groups.

The third challenge is privacy and data governance. Copilot Agents may operate within institutional digital environments and may interact with course materials, student information, administrative documents, or learning data. Universities must define what data agents can access, how interactions are stored, who can review them, and how student privacy is protected.

The fourth challenge is unequal access. If Copilot Agents are available only to some students or require advanced AI literacy, they may deepen educational inequality. Inclusive implementation requires equal access, training, and support for students with different levels of digital competence.

The fifth challenge is academic integrity. Copilot Agents can support formative learning, but they can also be used to generate unauthorized academic work. Therefore, universities need transparent policies that distinguish allowed AI-supported learning from misconduct.

Table 2. Opportunities and challenges of Microsoft Copilot Agents in inclusive teaching

Dimension	Opportunity	Challenge
Accessibility	Alternative explanations, summaries, study formats, and accessible representations	Inaccurate, incomplete, or oversimplified outputs
Equity	Support for students with diverse learning needs	Unequal access and differences in AI literacy
Engagement	Interactive and low-stigma support	Overreliance on AI assistance
Feedback	Formative revision and self-checking	Confusion between feedback and authorship
Teaching workload	Support for routine guidance and frequently asked questions	Need for teacher review and agent maintenance
Governance	Integration with institutional knowledge and learning environments	Data privacy, access-control, and accountability risks
Student support	Academic and administrative navigation	Risk of replacing human support with automated responses

Source: systematized by the author based on Zawacki-Richter et al. (2019), Chan and Hu (2023), Batista et al. (2024), Miao and Holmes (2023), and Microsoft (2026a).

Table 2 shows that each opportunity has a corresponding risk. Therefore, Copilot Agents should be implemented through balanced governance rather than simple technological adoption.

Student perceptions and acceptance. Student perceptions are central to the successful use of Copilot Agents. Existing research shows that students often recognize the usefulness of generative AI but also express concerns about trust, privacy, academic integrity, and learning quality. Chan and Hu (2023) found that students had generally positive attitudes toward generative AI in teaching and learning, but also identified concerns related to accuracy, privacy, ethics, and long-term personal development. Almassaad et al. (2024) showed that student acceptance of generative AI depends on perceived usefulness, task fit, trust, and perceived risk.

Student perceptions can be organized around six dimensions: usefulness, trust, fairness, privacy, autonomy, and belonging.

Table 3. Student perception dimensions relevant to Copilot Agent adoption

Student perception dimension	Positive perception	Negative perception
Usefulness	The agent helps explain, summarize, practise, and plan learning	The agent gives generic, irrelevant, or inaccurate answers
Trust	The agent is connected to verified course or institutional materials	The agent may hallucinate or misrepresent content
Fairness	All students have equal access and training	Some students have better access, stronger AI literacy, or paid tools
Privacy	The institution clearly explains data use and protection	Students fear surveillance or misuse of interaction data
Autonomy	The agent supports self-regulated learning	The agent creates dependence and weakens critical thinking
Belonging	The agent reduces shame in asking basic questions	The agent replaces human interaction and emotional support

Source: developed by the author based on Chan and Hu (2023), Almassaad et al. (2024), Crompton and Burke (2023), and Miao and Holmes (2023).

Table 3 shows that student perceptions are not only technological. Students evaluate AI tools through pedagogical, ethical, social, and institutional criteria. This means that universities should introduce Copilot Agents with clear communication, training, transparency, and feedback channels.

Implementation framework for universities. Universities should avoid introducing Copilot Agents as isolated digital tools. Instead, implementation should follow an educational-management framework that connects AI policy, inclusive pedagogy, teacher training, student support, and continuous evaluation.

Table 4 demonstrates that inclusive AI use requires more than access to technology. It requires governance, accessibility planning, teacher development, student AI literacy, monitoring, and evidence-based

evaluation.

Table 4. Implementation framework for inclusive Copilot Agent use

Stage	Institutional action	Expected result
Policy design	Define allowed uses, privacy rules, academic integrity boundaries, and responsibility for AI outputs	Clear governance and accountability
Accessibility planning	Ensure compatibility with inclusive teaching, disability support, and universal design principles	Equitable access and reduced learning barriers
Teacher training	Train faculty to design prompts, review outputs, and integrate agents pedagogically	Pedagogical quality and reduced misuse
Student AI literacy	Provide training on responsible use, verification, citation, and limitations	Informed and ethical student use
Agent design	Connect agents to verified course or institutional materials	Higher reliability and contextual accuracy
Monitoring	Collect student feedback and review equity effects	Continuous improvement and risk reduction
Evaluation	Assess learning outcomes, engagement, inclusion indicators, and student satisfaction	Evidence-based scaling

Source: developed by the author based on Miao and Holmes (2023), CAST (2024), Batista et al. (2024), Qian (2025), and Microsoft (2026a).

Discussion. The results of this review indicate that Microsoft Copilot Agents have significant potential to support inclusive teaching, but this potential is conditional. The strongest inclusive value of Copilot Agents lies in personalized explanation, accessibility support, multilingual assistance, formative practice, low-stigma help, and institutional navigation. These functions can support students who may otherwise face barriers in traditional teaching environments.

At the same time, Copilot Agents should not be treated as neutral or automatically inclusive technologies. Their impact depends on data governance, pedagogical design, teacher supervision, student AI literacy, and institutional policy. If implemented without clear rules, Copilot Agents may reproduce bias, provide inaccurate guidance, create unequal advantages, or weaken academic integrity.

The literature shows that students usually perceive generative AI as useful but risky (Almassaad et al., 2024; Chan & Hu, 2023). This means that universities should avoid two extreme approaches: complete prohibition and uncontrolled adoption. A more effective approach is guided integration, where students are taught how to use AI critically, ethically, and transparently.

The findings also show that inclusive teaching with Copilot Agents requires institutional alignment. AI agents should be connected to curriculum design, accessibility policy, assessment rules, student support, privacy regulation, and faculty development. Without such alignment, Copilot Agents may increase administrative complexity rather than improve learning outcomes.

From an educational-management perspective, Copilot Agents should be implemented as supervised pedagogical scaffolds. Their role is to support, not replace, teachers and student-support professionals. Human judgement remains essential in interpreting student needs, providing emotional support, evaluating learning, and ensuring fairness.

Conclusions. Microsoft Copilot Agents can become valuable tools for inclusive teaching in higher education if they are implemented responsibly and pedagogically. Their main opportunities include personalized explanation, accessibility support, multilingual assistance, formative learning, study planning, feedback preparation, and administrative guidance. These functions can help universities support diverse learners and reduce barriers to participation.

However, Copilot Agents also create challenges related to accuracy, bias, privacy, unequal access, academic integrity, teacher workload, and student overreliance. Therefore, their inclusive value depends on institutional governance, teacher training, student AI literacy, accessibility planning, and continuous monitoring.

The article concludes that Copilot Agents should not replace teachers or human support systems. Instead, they should function as supervised pedagogical scaffolds within inclusive educational ecosystems. Universities should establish clear institutional AI governance policies, provide equal access, train teachers and students, connect agents to verified materials, and evaluate equity outcomes.

Future research should empirically examine student perceptions of Microsoft Copilot Agents across disciplines, countries, and student groups. Further studies should investigate the effects of Copilot Agents on students with disabilities, international students, first-generation students, working students, and learners with different levels of digital competence. Longitudinal research is also needed to assess whether Copilot Agents improve academic confidence, engagement, retention, belonging, and learning outcomes.

Conflict of interest. The author declares that the research was conducted without any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Funding. The author declare that the publication of this article was funded by the author. The research was conducted without separate funding.

Ethics statement. All procedures performed in this study complied with institutional and international ethical standards.

Generative AI statement. The author declare that no Generative AI was used in the preparation of this manuscript unless otherwise explicitly stated in the manuscript.

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