



PERCEPTIONS OF LECTURERS ON INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY INTO EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES AT THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, KANDY

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This survey was carried out to investigate the views and opinions on incorporating technology for effective education. Technology is merely a tool, but the teacher plays the most crucial role in inspiring students to foster collaboration and work effectively. Therefore, the main research questions of the study focused on the use of technology in traditional classrooms and the integration of technology in lectures: 1. What are the perceptions of lecturers regarding the use of technology in traditional classrooms? 2. How do lecturers at the American College of Higher Education, Kandy, enhance their knowledge through the use of digital technologies and digital literacy? 3. How has technology influenced the lecture room practices and curriculum development at the ACHE, Kandy? The target group for this survey consisted of 35 randomly selected full-time and part-time lecturers teaching various subjects at the ACHE, Sri Lanka, Kandy, branch. Due to the design of the survey and the nature of the data collected, a mixed data collection approach was adopted. A structured questionnaire was administered primarily to obtain data, with individual interviews and the study of prior work also providing data for the survey. In this survey, attention was paid to the following tools used in lecture rooms: Projectors, smartboards, presentation slides, online assessments or quizzes, educational videos or YouTube, video conferencing tools, AI tools, and content creation tools like Canva and Padlet; learning management systems, for example, the CloudSmartsSchool System, the learning management system used by the college for Diploma Programs, Higher National Diploma Programs, Foundation Programs, and Lincoln University College Malaysia Degree Programs; and the "Blackboard" platform, i.e., the learning management system provided by Keiser University USA for Keiser University associate degree programs, which represents a new experience for ACHE colleges. The survey concluded that lecturers prefer to use technology to deliver lectures. However, the survey revealed that the difficulties encountered when using technology tools can be addressed through workshops or similar training programs. The use of learning management systems such as CloudSmartsSchool systems, Blackboard, and other learning management systems can further facilitate the use of existing technology tools and methods for effective education.

Keywords: Blackboard, CloudSmartsSchool System, Digital Technology, Digital Literacy

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INTRODUCTION

Bill Gates once stated, “Technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is most important.” Teachers, therefore, play a pivotal role in the effective use of technology, making their technological knowledge essential. In a world of constant updates, teachers must adapt to maintain both technical and subject-related understanding.

This study explores lecturers’ perceptions of technology use in education, aiming to identify advantages, challenges, and strategies for better integration. ACHE, a leading Sri Lankan higher education institution for nearly 30 years, offers courses ranging from certificates to postgraduate programs across branches in Colombo, Kandy, Galle, Negombo, and Kurunegala. The survey targeted 35 full- and part-time lecturers at ACHE Kandy.

The main research questions were:

1. How do lecturers perceive technology in traditional classrooms?
2. How do they enhance knowledge through digital tools and literacy?
3. How has technology influenced lecture practices and curriculum development?

The study focused on projectors, smartboards, presentation slides, online quizzes, educational videos, video conferencing, AI tools, Canva, Padlet, and LMS platforms—Cloudschool for diploma and higher diploma programs and Blackboard for associate degrees via Kaiser University.

METHODOLOGY

A mixed-method approach was employed. A structured Google Form questionnaire with open- and closed-ended questions was used, complemented by interviews and prior literature. Data on teaching experiences, LMS adaptation, and technological usage were collected.



Quantitative analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 27.0.1, with descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, and frequencies. Qualitative responses were thematically coded to identify patterns and insights.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

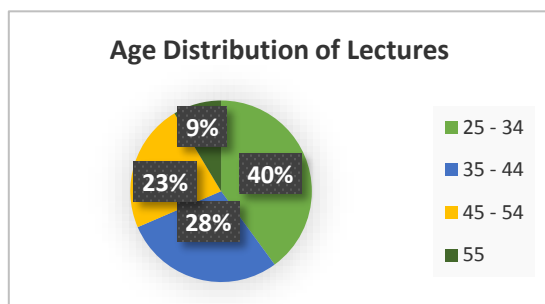


Figure 1: Age distribution of Lectures

Technology Usage:

All lecturers reported using at least one technological tool and an LMS. While usage frequency varied slightly, most used technology consistently to enhance learning outcomes, student engagement, and evaluation.

Metric	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Technology Use (Yes/No)	1.00	0.000	Uniform usage
LMS Use (Yes/No)	1.00	0.000	Uniform usage
Regular Use	1.40	0.881	Most use regularly

Impact on Learning:

- Technology enhances student engagement (mean = 4.11) and supports diverse learning styles (mean = 4.11).
- Tools foster interest, understanding, and evaluation, though a few educators rely on traditional methods.

Support Mechanisms:

Hands-on workshops were most preferred, followed by manuals, mentoring, tutorials, and reliable infrastructure.



Support	Incremental %	Interpretation
Workshops	41.6	Preferred
Manuals	16.7	Practical guidance
Mentoring	8.3	Peer support
Tutorials	11.1	Self-paced learning
Reliable internet/power	16.7	Infrastructure support

Challenges and Strategies:

Major barriers included lack of training, time constraints, technical issues, limited software access, and student digital literacy. Recommended strategies were peer best practice exchange, professional development, infrastructure improvements, IT support, and user-friendly platforms.

Challenge	Incremental %	Strategy
Lack of training	16.7	Professional development
Time constraints	30.0	Peer collaboration
Technical issues	20.0	Better infrastructure
Limited access	15.0	LMS support
Student disinterest	15.5	Interactive learning

Student Experiences (Thematic Analysis):

- **Enhanced Interactivity:** Quizzes and discussions improved engagement.
- **Visual & Multimedia Support:** Videos and platforms aid understanding.
- **Increased Motivation:** Digital tools made learning enjoyable.
- **Active Participation:** Platforms enabled student-centered learning.
- **Accessibility & Adaptability:** Tools accommodated diverse learners and remote learning.
- **Comprehension & Digital Literacy:** Students gained understanding and confidence.
- **Technical Challenges:** Minor issues highlight the need for reliable infrastructure.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The study confirms a positive environment for technology integration. Lecturers favor using technology in courses but emphasize continuous professional development and peer collaboration to overcome challenges. LMS platforms like Blackboard and Cloudschool facilitate effective use of technology, provided institutions ensure infrastructure, training, and ongoing support.



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