

Survey Report

Enhancing Learning Experiences Through Understanding Law Student Perspectives on Technology



CONTEXT

In today's educational landscape, the traditional, textbook and lecture centered classroom has given way to a more technologically integrated environment. Technology has evolved into an indispensable tool, revolutionizing the learning process. This transformation has been driven by the recognition that technology can enhance engagement, accessibility, and outcomes for students. From interactive digital textbooks to virtual reality simulations, educators are leveraging technology to create more dynamic and personalized learning experiences. This shift has not only changed how students learn but also how teachers teach, requiring new skills and approaches to instruction. As technology continues to advance, its role in education will likely become even more central, shaping the future of learning in many ways.

In response to the changing educational landscape, Manupatra conducted a survey to delve into students' usage patterns, preferences, and perceived challenges regarding technology in education. This initiative seeks to offer actionable insights to educators and institutions, aiding them in optimizing technology strategies and support systems. By doing so, the survey aims to enhance learning experiences in today's digital age, ensuring that students' needs are met effectively.



The survey sought insights in the following areas:

- **Types of Technology Used:** Students were asked to select the technologies they use for academic purposes from a list including computers, smartphones, tablets, e-readers, interactive whiteboards, audio/video recording devices, and an option for others.
- **Frequency of Use:** Options ranged from daily use to never, allowing for an assessment of how integral technology is to their academic routine.
- **Technologies Found Most Helpful:** This question allowed students to select all applicable options from a list of specific technologies like learning management systems, online collaboration tools, digital textbooks, educational apps, virtual labs, online research databases, digital note-taking tools, cloud storage services, and online learning platforms, plus an option for others for tools not listed.
- **Familiarity with Online Research Databases:** A list of prominent research databases was provided, asking students to indicate which ones they were familiar with, including options for other databases not listed.
- **Effectiveness of Technology Integration:** Students rated the overall effectiveness of technology integration in their learning experience at their institution on a five-point scale from very effective to not existent.
- **Adequacy of Training and Support:** The survey gauged students' opinions on whether their institution provides sufficient training and support for effectively utilizing technology in their studies, with options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.
- **Necessity of Tech Proficiency:** This question sought students' views on whether being proficient with technology is essential for competency in today's world, with options for yes, no, or unsure.
- **Suggestions for Improvement:** An open text box was provided for students to offer their suggestions on how to improve the integration of technology in their academic experience.



The survey utilized a combination of qualitative and quantitative questions to provide a comprehensive view. Structured around eight key questions, it covered a broad spectrum of topics related to use of technology in academics. These questions spanned a wide range of areas, each one aimed at shedding light on student experiences, preferences, and challenges with the usage of technology in learning.

Participant Demographics:

Participants were asked to share their name, college name, year of study, email, and phone number. This was done to ensure a diverse and representative sample of the student population, encompassing various educational levels and disciplines.

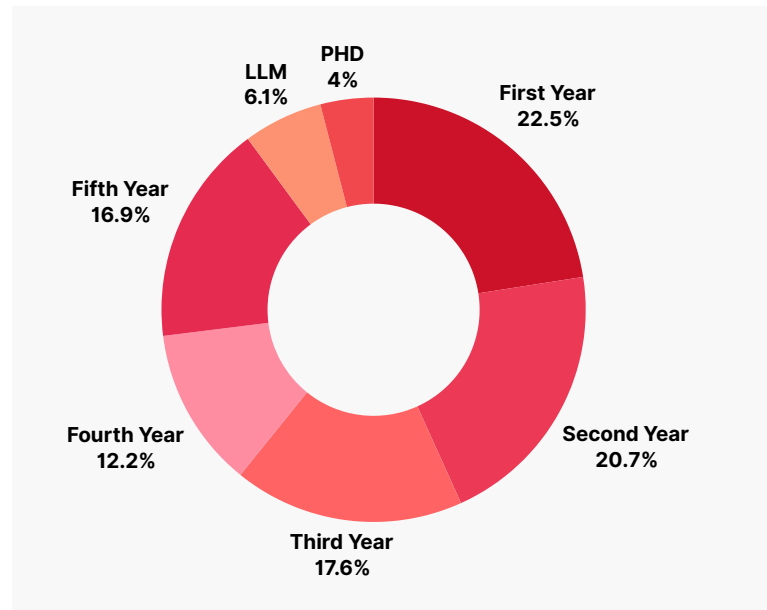
Distribution and Collection:

The survey was distributed online, leveraging social media, email, and institutional platforms to reach a broader audience. By using various modes of distribution, the survey was made easily accessible to law students.

The collection period spanned two weeks, giving students ample time to see it and answer at their own pace. This timeframe aimed to maximize participation within a reasonable window.

Responses to the survey were provided by law students enrolled in various programs and academic years across different law schools.

43% of the participants are in the early stages of their law school education. These students, at the beginning of their legal education, provide insights into how technology is influencing their learning experiences as they start their academic journey. This data helps understand the impact of technology on the academic curriculum from the viewpoint of those who are just commencing their legal studies.



Frequency of Technology Use

The options students could choose from, ranged from daily to never, enabling an evaluation of how essential technology is to their academic routine.

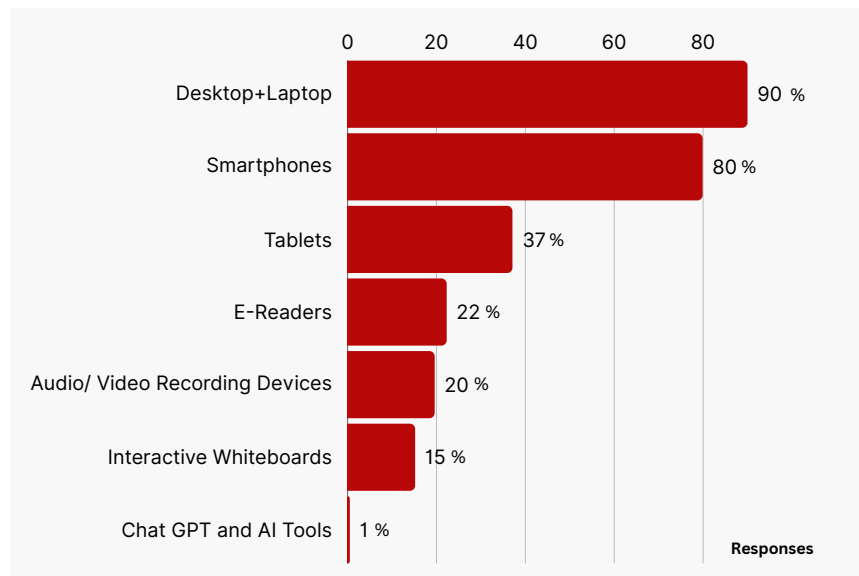


It was noted that 81.3% of students use technology for academic purposes on a daily basis. This demonstrates that the majority of students heavily depend on technology and online tools for their studies to enhance clarity and understanding. The percentage of students who do not use technology or use it rarely for academic purposes is comparatively very low. Therefore, it can be inferred that technology plays a significant role in students' lives.

Technology Preferences for Academic Use Among Students

Students were asked to indicate the technologies they utilize for academic purposes from a list that included computers, smartphones, tablets, e-readers, interactive whiteboards, audio/video recording devices, and an option for other to include options not listed.

Computers and smartphones emerge as the most favored devices among surveyed students for academic purposes, with preference rates of 88.8% and 79.9%, respectively. This indicates that these devices are likely the most commonly used for accessing educational materials, conducting research, and completing assignments.



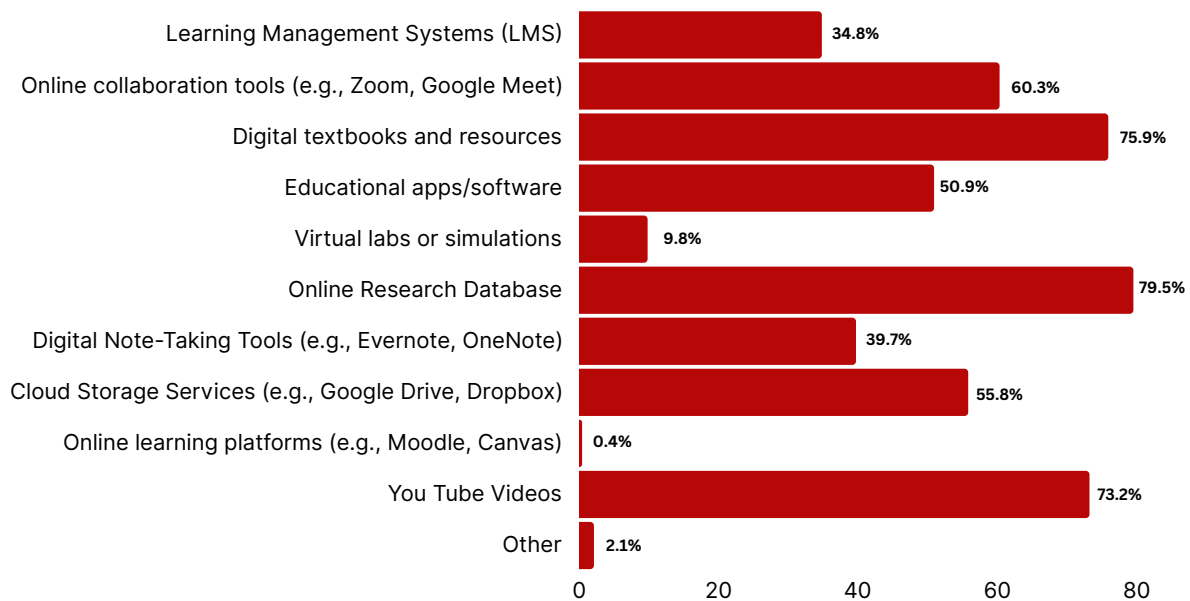
Tablets, e-readers, audio/video recording devices, and interactive whiteboards are also used by a smaller percentage of students (37.1%, 22.3%, 19.6%, and 15.2%, respectively). While these devices may not be as commonly used as computers and smartphones, their usage suggests that a significant portion of students find them beneficial for certain academic activities, such as reading digital textbooks or participating in multimedia presentations. This suggests that there may be opportunities to explore the integration of these devices to enhance the learning experiences of students who prefer these technologies.

The data indicates a clear need for awareness and training in Artificial Intelligence (AI), as only 0.4% of students reported being familiar with AI.



Key Technologies Enhancing Study Practices

Students could select any relevant options from a list of specific technologies, including learning management systems, online collaboration tools, digital textbooks, educational apps, virtual labs, online research databases, digital note-taking tools, cloud storage services, and online learning platforms. They also had the option to specify other tools not listed.



It can be deduced that students exhibit a diverse range of preferences in their use of technology for academic purposes. The high percentage of students (79.5%) relying on Online Research Databases indicates a strong dependence on digital resources for academic research and information gathering.

The significant use of Digital Textbooks and Resources (75.9%) suggests that students find digital materials to be convenient and accessible alternatives to traditional textbooks. Similarly, the popularity of YouTube videos (73.2%) for learning indicates a preference for multimedia content in the educational context.

The utilization of Online Collaboration Tools (60.3%) and Cloud Storage Services (50.9%) highlights the importance of collaboration and data storage in academic work. These tools likely facilitate group projects and provide a convenient way to access and store academic materials.

The use of Digital Note-taking Tools (39.7%) suggests that students are exploring new ways to enhance their learning experience, possibly by using digital tools to organize and consolidate their notes.

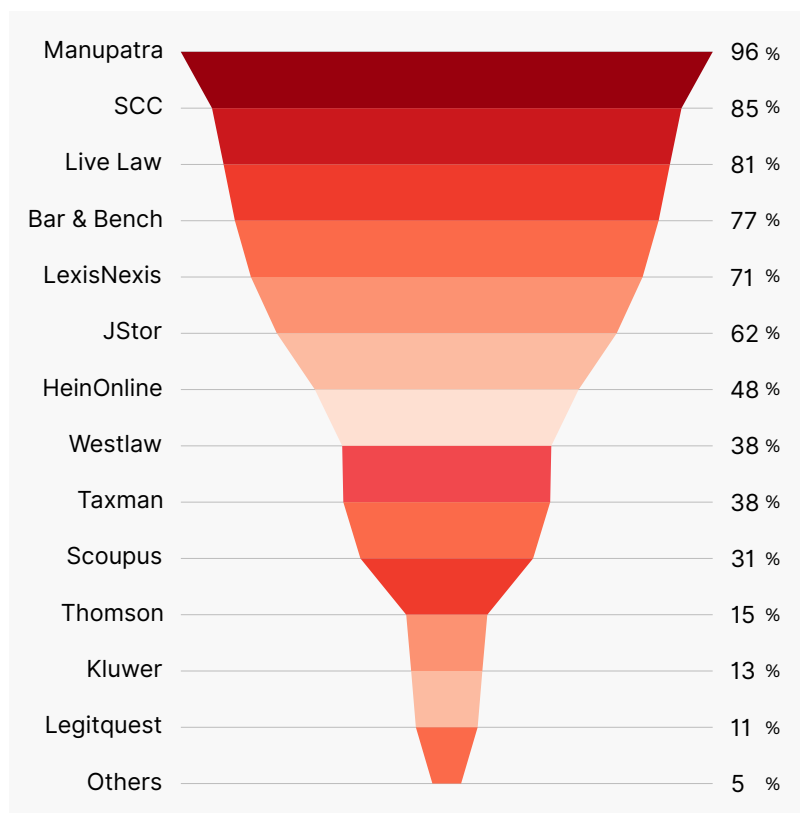
Overall, the data suggests a clear shift away from traditional books, with students increasingly relying on digital resources such as online databases, digital textbooks, and multimedia content for their academic needs. This trend underscores the growing importance of technology in education and the need for educators to adapt their teaching methods to accommodate these changing preferences.

Navigating Online Legal Research Databases: A Familiarity Study

Students were asked to indicate their familiarity with a list of prominent research databases, with options to specify other databases not listed. Manupatra (96.4%) emerged as the most popular and trusted database, followed by SCCOnline (85.6%) and LiveLaw (80.5%).

Other notable databases included Bar and Bench (76.4%), LexisNexis (71%), and Jstor (61.6%). Recognition percentages were lower for HeinOnline (47.8%), Westlaw (37.9%), Taxmann (37.5%), SCOPUS (31.3%), Thomson Reuters (14.7%), Kluwer (12.9%), and Legitquest (11.2%). Few students were familiar with databases like Casemine, AIR Online, and Law Trend.

The data suggests a leaning towards India-centric databases which is understandable given that the curriculum focuses on Indian Laws.

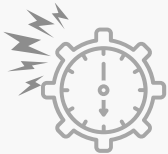


It also indicates that students are familiar with a variety of online research tools indicating a diverse use of resources for academic purposes. There is a strong trend towards the use of online research databases among students, highlighting the importance of these tools in modern legal education.

The data underscores the increasing reliance on digital resources for legal research and emphasizes the need for educational institutions to ensure access to a variety of online databases to support student learning.

Assessing the Impact of Technology Integration on Learning Experiences in Institutions

Students were asked to rate the overall effectiveness of technology integration in their learning experience at their institution on a five-point Likert scale from very effective to not existent.



50.4%

Very Effective



34.8%

Effective



14.8%

Neutral/ Ineffective

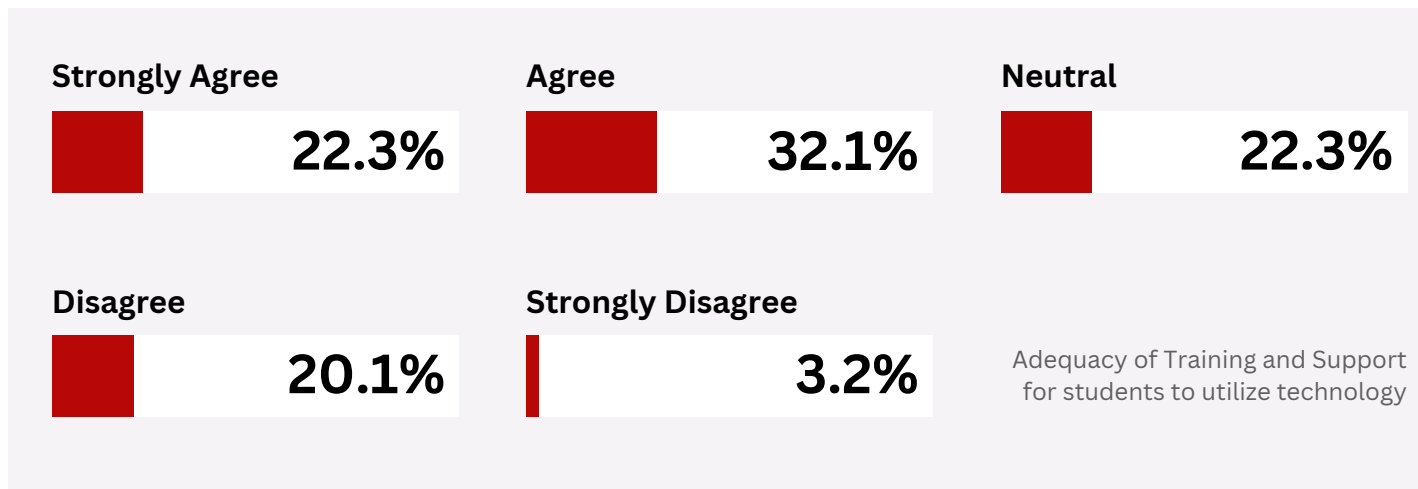
While there was an overwhelming majority of students who said technology integration at their institute was overall effective (85.2%), there is still a significant portion of students (14.8%) who disagree and are yet to see the effectiveness.

Institutions can take the following steps to address the concerns of students who perceive technology integration as ineffective and create a more conducive environment for effective technology use in academics.

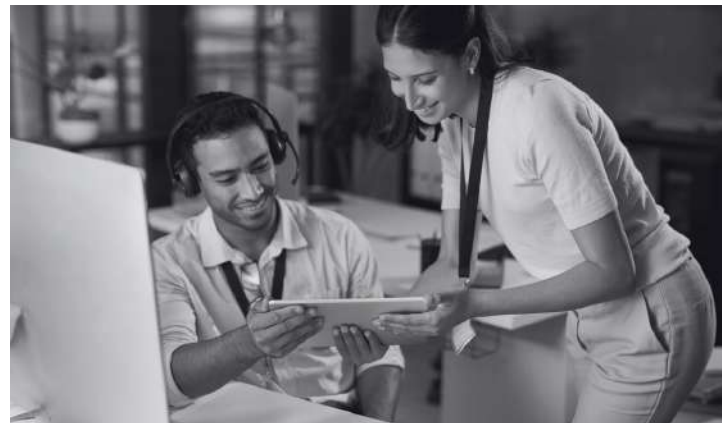
- Conduct a comprehensive review of current technology integration practices to identify areas for improvement.
- Provide additional training and support for both students and faculty to enhance their proficiency with technology tools.
- Seek feedback from students to understand their specific challenges and preferences regarding technology use in academics.
- Collaborate with technology experts to explore innovative ways to integrate technology into the curriculum.
- Establish clear guidelines and expectations for technology use to ensure consistency and effectiveness across all departments.
- Invest in updating and maintaining technology infrastructure to support seamless integration and accessibility for all students.
- Encourage collaboration and knowledge-sharing among students and faculty to maximize the benefits of technology integration.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of technology integration initiatives regularly to make informed decisions for future improvements.

Assessment of Institutional Support for Technology Utilization in Studies

The survey assessed students' perceptions of the adequacy of training and support provided by their institution for effectively using technology in their studies, using a Likert scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."



The data shows that a significant portion of students feel that their institutions are not providing adequate training and support for effectively using technology. Only 22.3% of students believe that enough assistance is provided, while 45.6% are either neutral or disagree with the level of support.



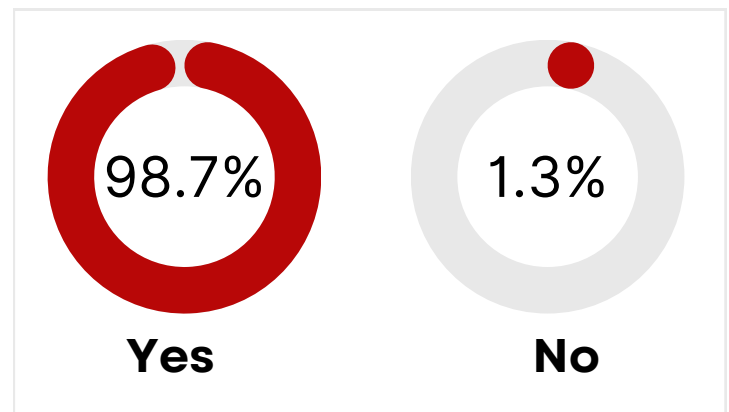
Suggestions:

- Develop and implement comprehensive training programs to familiarize students with various technologies and their applications in academic settings.
- Establish easily accessible support services, such as help desks or online resources, to address students' technology-related queries and issues.
- Regularly solicit feedback from students to understand their specific needs and challenges, allowing institutions to tailor their support accordingly.
- Encourage collaboration between students and faculty to leverage technology for improved learning experiences.
- Continuously assess and update technology training and support programs based on feedback and emerging technologies.

Is Technology Proficiency a critical skill for Today's Competency?

This question asked students for their opinions on whether being proficient in technology is a desired competency in today's world, providing options for yes, no, or unsure.

The survey shows that 98% of students recognize technology's pivotal role, emphasizing that technology proficiency is a key skill that needs to be honed. Embracing technology and exploring its potential to enhance student learning are crucial for long-term success. The educational institutions thus need to acknowledge and adapt to technological advancements which are required to train the students.



What can Institutes do?

- Integrate technology more deeply into the curriculum to familiarize students with its practical applications and benefits.
 - Provide specialized training programs to help students enhance their digital literacy skills
 - Invest in updating technological infrastructure to support innovative teaching methods and digital learning tools.
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- Create an environment that encourages students to explore and innovate with technology, fostering creativity and problem-solving skills.
 - Establish partnerships with tech companies to provide students with real-world experiences and opportunities to apply their skills.
 - Regularly assess and update technology-related programs and offerings to ensure they remain relevant and effective.

Conclusion

It is crucial for lawyers to stay updated with relevant technology to fulfill their duty of providing competent representation and meeting client needs, failure to do so may result in clients seeking representation elsewhere. Thus technology proficiency is no longer a "good-to-have" but a "must-have" skill for lawyers.

Students should start embracing technology early to familiarize themselves with tools and platforms that are prerequisites in the emerging professional world. This early exposure facilitates the development of tech proficiency, enhances adaptability, and fosters critical thinking in using technology for diverse tasks, preparing students for the digital demands ahead.

Suggested steps:

A comprehensive digital literacy program is the need of the day. This program should broadly cover the following, incorporating real-world examples and scenarios to help students apply their digital literacy skills in practical situations.

- **Internet Skills:** Educating students on how to use the internet safely and effectively, including searching for information, evaluating online sources, and understanding online privacy and security.
- **Productivity Tools:**
 - Word processors, spreadsheets, and presentation software.
 - Online Legal Research Databases
 - Document Management
- **Communication Skills:** Teaching students how to effectively communicate online, including email etiquette, online collaboration tools, and social media best practices.
- **Digital Citizenship:** Educating students on responsible and ethical behavior online, including understanding digital rights and responsibilities, cyberbullying prevention, and online etiquette.

Acknowledgments:

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