AI in Higher Ed: Hype, Harm, or Help

The perceptions and realities of AI among university leaders and students.

Spotlight on the Philippines

AI

In the constantly evolving landscape of higher education, the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI), its integration into technology and our daily life, and its use by students have brought incredible opportunities and complex challenges. As universities embrace this new age, understanding the unique viewpoints of students and university leadership—the key stakeholders—is vital in capitalising on the potential of AI while addressing possible ethical, pedagogical, and operational challenges.

Anthology conducted a global survey of more than 5,000 higher education leaders and current students in eleven countries to hear their thoughts about the opportunities, challenges, adoption, and impact of artificial intelligence. The study reveals insights highlighting the need for a collaborative approach regarding AI to help enrich the educational experience and ensure future-ready graduates.

This report focuses on the responses from students and university leaders in the Philippines, including where there are significant differences compared to their counterparts in other countries.

Students, Leaders, and Artificial Intelligence

Based on the survey results, students in the Philippines are among the least likely to be frequent users of generative AI, with 19% of students considering themselves frequent users—only statistically significantly higher in usage than students in the United Kingdom and in the United States. While an additional 27% consider themselves occasional users, this represents fewer than one in two students who at least occasionally use generative AI—lower than students in all other countries except the United Kingdom. Therefore, there appears to be some hesitation about using generative AI.

7 in 10 students in the Philippines expect their use of generative AI to increase in the next six months

However, more than seven in ten students in the Philippines expect their use of generative AI to increase in the next six months, indicating growing interest in using the tools. But overall, even with growing interest, students in the Philippines are not heavy users of AI. The highest reported usage of generative AI tools was by students in Australia and Brazil (35% and 32% rated themselves as frequent users, respectively). University leaders in the Philippines report being less familiar with generative AI than students, but with only a six percent

54% of leaders indicate that their use of generative AI is likely to increase somewhat or significantly in the next six months

difference. Thirteen percent of university leaders consider themselves to be frequent users of AI, while an additional 26% are occasional users. While not among the highest users of AI among university leaders surveyed, they rank fourth among the countries surveyed as occasional and frequent users of AI. Additionally, 54% of leaders indicate that their use of generative AI is likely to increase somewhat or significantly in the next six months. This speaks to the continued opportunity to increase the incorporation of AI tools, including generative AI, into university processes and the classroom.
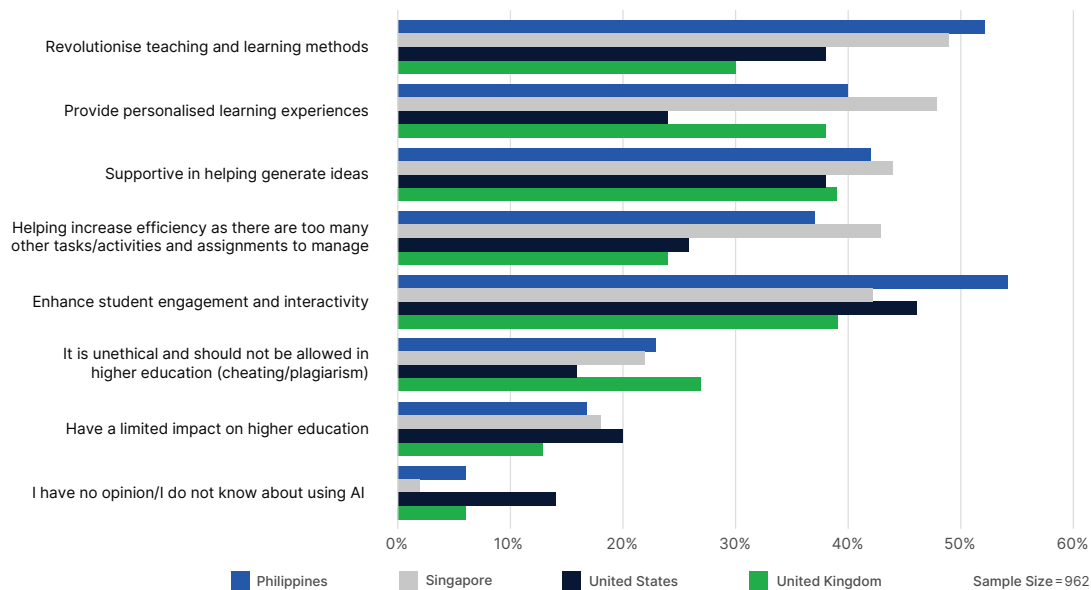
The Role of AI in Higher Education

When asked about opportunities related to AI and its potential role in higher education, students and leaders in the Philippines appear excited about the ways that AI, including generative AI, will impact higher education.

In fact, more than one in two students feel that AI will enhance student engagement and interactivity (54%), with nearly as many pointing to it helping to revolutionise teaching and learning methods (52%). Compared to other countries surveyed, students in the Philippines were most confident that AI would help to enhance student engagement and interactivity. This is notable, as these two areas are key in terms of potential for AI to change the student experience.

About four in ten students feel that AI will be supportive in helping generate ideas, provide personalised learning experiences, and help increase efficiency with tasks and assignments. At the same time, slightly less than one in four students feels that specifically generative AI is unethical and should not be allowed in higher education— in line with results from most other countries. Overwhelmingly though, students in the Philippines are positive about the impact AI will have on higher education. Perhaps interesting to note is that students in the Philippines are not as comfortable using AI chatbots to get quick answers to questions, with two in three stating that they are comfortable or very comfortable using chatbots, compared to more than three in four students from Australia, Brazil, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, and Singapore. There may still be an opportunity for universities to add chatbots to help better serve students.

Students' view of role of AI in higher education

What role do you think artificial intelligence (AI) will play in higher education? (Please select all that apply.)

Legend: Philippines, Singapore, United States, United Kingdom — Sample Size = 962

University leaders' view of role of AI in higher education

What role do you think artificial intelligence (AI) will play in higher education? (Please select all that apply.)
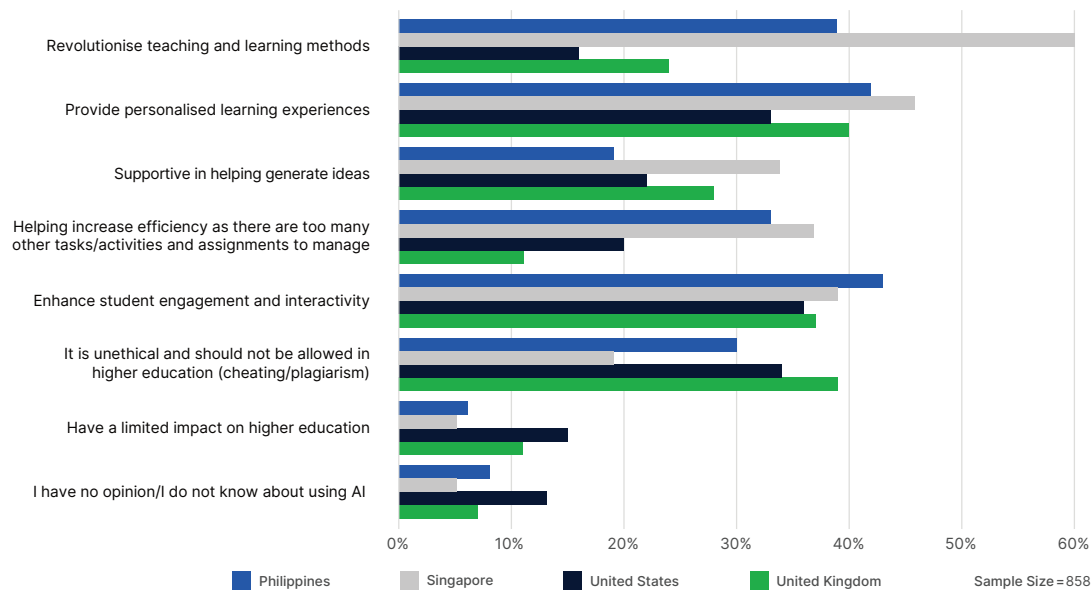
While it is to be expected that students more quickly adopt new technology, including generative AI, in this case, it is especially important that university leaders and faculty members familiarise themselves with this technology, as it presents new opportunities to adjust their approach to teaching.

As are the students in the Philippines, university leaders are a bit more hesitant regarding the role that AI will play in higher education when compared to their counterparts in other countries. About four in ten leaders point to AI being able to enhance student engagement and interactivity (43%), followed by AI providing personalised experiences (42%), and 39% who feel that AI will revolutionise teaching and learning methods. Leaders, therefore, have a different perception of AI than students, with a higher percentage pointing to AI creating personalised experiences than students indicated, and also a ten-point gap between student expectations of enhancement of the student experience, as well as the idea that AI will revolutionise teaching and learning methods. In addition, three in ten university leaders in the Philippines feel that generative AI is unethical and should not be allowed in higher education. On the other hand, only 6% of university leaders feel that AI will have a limited impact on higher education, compared to 16% of students—again demonstrating a difference in perception. These differences are, therefore, opportunities for continued conversation about the possibilities to seek to more closely align expectations of both students and university leaders regarding AI and its impact on higher education.

When asked to anticipate the most significant ways AI tools will impact higher education and university operations, nearly four in ten leaders pointed to the ability to use AI to assist in course building, while nearly one in three indicated that it could be helpful in expanding thinking by assisting with brainstorming. On the

other hand, nearly one in three also expressed concern that it may create new challenges in identifying plagiarism in assessment. While a high percentage see an opportunity for AI to help with course building, only two in ten leaders identified AI as a way to help draft assessment questions aligned to learning outcomes, or to use AI to query data to develop retention and student success campaigns. On the other hand, the second highest percentage of university leaders across all countries surveyed indicated they felt that AI would be helpful in increasing efficiencies with tasks and activities. This highlights varying perspectives on the most significant ways that AI tools will impact higher education in the Philippines and the opportunity for continued discussion.

Universities in the Philippines have generally taken a proactive approach to addressing the potential implications of AI, as 64% of leaders reported that their universities have rolled out a university-wide policy with respect to generative AI writing tools like ChatGPT, while 18% report working on one currently. Universities should continue to develop policies related to AI use at the institution to help faculty members and students understand how AI should or should not be used.

Based on these results, even though there is some hesitation in adopting generative AI and other AI tools, the Philippines are on a path to more broadly incorporate AI into higher education both from the student and university leader perspective. There are continued opportunities for reflection and conversation to more closely align expectations and to ensure that AI tools will meet the needs of students and the university in strengthening educational experience for students.

Opportunities

- Review ways that AI can help enhance the student experience based on student sentiment

- Consider and implement ways that AI can be used to enhance the educational experience both in and outside of the classroom

- Foster dialogue between and among students and university leaders around the opportunities AI presents, as well as potential drawbacks or other impacts

- Educate students on the use of AI and encourage its continued use where appropriate

Methodology

Data collection was conducted online among university leaders and students across eleven countries in August 2023, including Australia, Brazil, Mexico, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States. Separate questionnaires with similar questions were utilised to enable comparisons. To qualify, student respondents had to indicate that they were currently enrolled at a higher education institution and were pursuing a degree or diploma. University leader respondents had to indicate that they were currently senior leaders (dean, provost, rector, etc.) at a higher education institution. In total, 2,617 university leaders and 2,728 students qualified for and completed the survey. In the Philippines, 255 students and 253 university leaders responded to the survey.

About Anthology

Anthology delivers education and technology solutions so that students can reach their full potential and learning institutions thrive. Millions of students around the world are supported throughout their education journey via Anthology's ecosystem of flagship SaaS solutions and supporting services, including the award-winning Blackboard® (LMS), Anthology® Student (SIS/ERP), and Anthology® Reach (CRM). Through the Power of Together, we are uniquely inspiring educators and institutions with innovation that is meaningful, simple and intelligent to help customers redefine what's possible and create life-changing opportunities for people everywhere. www.anthology.com.