



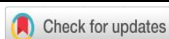
## Exploring the Professional Identity Development of English Lecturers as Tech-Savvy Educators

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The professional identity of lecturers evolved because of the complexity of professional activities and policies. This study aims to discover how English Literature Lecturers cultivate their professional identity as Techno Savvy. **Method:** This qualitative case study is an endeavor to address how English literature lecturers" cultivate their professional identity as tech-savvy lecturers. Four English lecturers voluntarily participated in this study. Semi-structured interviews and observations were done to learn how English Literature Lecturers cultivate their identity. Thematic analysis was used, and methodological triangulation was chosen to ensure objectivity. **Results:** The result indicates that English Llecturers" cultivated their identity as a technology-savvy lecturer through their learning media and learning activities used in the classroom. Joining technology professional development sessions and the Technology Enhanced Language Learning Association becomes the external motivation that socially constructs their identity. **Novelty:** The study found that the type of professional activities, university policy, and social identification influenced Professional Identity Development.

## INTRODUCTION

Professional identity has garnered significant attention in educational research concerning various categories of educators at distinct levels. Professional identity is formed through the different professional person that develops throughout a career, influenced by personal values, academic background, professional training, institutional culture, societal expectations for professional conduct, and interactions with students and colleagues (Tomlinson et al., 2019; Findyartini et al., 2022; Solari et al., 2020; Toh et al., 2022; Suarez et al., 2022). In higher education, lecturers fulfill multiple responsibilities, including educator, researcher, mentor, and often administrator.

Managing various positions while maintaining a cohesive professional identity is a complex and continuous balancing endeavor. This facet of professional identity is fundamentally dynamic due to the complexity and changes inherent in higher education institutions. Lecturers face escalating obligations to provide research output, publish in prestigious or internationally renowned publications, and fulfill institutional service roles, such as chairing pertinent committees (Flores, 2020). Subtly, teachers are being compelled to alter their pedagogical approaches and use advanced technology in their instruction while simultaneously addressing the requirements of their pupils. The intricacy for English literature lecturers, in particular, is exacerbated by the characteristics of their field. Applying critical thinking, reflective practice, and engagement with diverse texts enhance the discipline of literary studies. They affect not

just their pedagogical methods and content but also their identities as educators and academics (Tene et al., 2024).

As a humanistic study, English Literature connects language and culture. Lecturers perceive themselves not merely as transmitters of knowledge but as cultivators of critical thinking and cultural awareness. They esteem their intellectual contributions and regard themselves as pivotal in shaping students' comprehension of literature, language, and critical interpretation (Bearman et al., 2023; Ramzan et al., 2023; López et al., 2020; Alam et al., 2023; Sajja et al., 2024). Thus, the identity formation by these lecturers is a multifaceted outcome connected to their experiences within the academic framework, pedagogical beliefs, personal values, and the broader scholarly setting (Sarraf et al., 2021; Kawai et al., 2021; Smith et al., 2022; Bao et al., 2024; Matos et al., 2021).

Professional identity is acknowledged as necessary in higher education; moreover, only a few studies examine how lecturers in specific disciplines, such as English literature, conceptualize and experience their professional identities. Most existing scholarship concentrates on STEM disciplines and elementary/secondary education (Nguyen & Dao, 2019; Zhan & Niu, 2023). They result in a need for more comprehension of identity formation at advanced educational levels, especially within the humanities. Considering the distinctive characteristics of English Literature regarding knowledge and pedagogy, it is essential to investigate how these lecturers perceive their roles and whether they fulfill expectations while managing pressures within academic environments, which influences their professional identity (Bükki & Fehérvári, 2024; Deuja, 2024; Lu et al., 2024; Solihah et al., 2024).

The evolution of higher education institutions in reaction to global developments, including marketization, internationalization, and digitalization, significantly influences academic identity (Zhang & Cao, 2024). Such developments frequently entail supplementary pressures, such as a heightened focus on results-oriented environments or an increased emphasis on student applicant happiness. Politicized performance indicators can distort perceptions of the professional worth of English Literature lecturers, who likely prefer their employment to emphasize critical reflection or cultural memory rather than quantifiable, examinable outcomes. Recognizing and navigating these contradictions is essential for examining professional identity in this environment (Howard et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2022; Gibson et al., 2021; Bloom et al., 2021; Iatridis et al., 2022). This study examined the professional identity of English literature lecturers, focusing on this subject. This research addresses the following questions: (1) how do English literature lecturers perceive their identity as technologically savvy educators, and (2) how do English literature lecturers develop their identity as technologically savvy educators? This analysis explores how lecturers establish their professional identities, the reasons influencing this process, and the elements affecting identity creation, including social expectations that contribute to teachers' self-concept. This study further elucidates these challenges by examining how people navigate their professional identities. The research's novelty is its comprehensive analysis of the interplay between technological proficiency and identity formation among English literature lecturers. It underscores the distinctive challenges, influencing factors, and motivations that students encounter as they adjust to a rapidly changing educational landscape.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### *Research Design*

This qualitative study employed a research design to explore the diverse and dispersed professional identities of English literature lecturers. A detailed examination of participants' personal experiences, perceptions, and interpretations was conducted to understand the construction of their professional identities. In contrast to quantitative methods, which focus on measuring variables and generalizing results across populations, qualitative research provides varied, contextually grounded insights essential for examining identity (Levitt, 2021; Joseph, 2024; Maxwell & Levitt, 2023). Two primary data collection methods were utilized: interviews and document analysis. These methods were combined to triangulate the data, facilitating a multidimensional analysis of participants' professionalism based on self-reported experiences and research documentation highlighting professional practices. A distinctive feature of this study was its integration of these approaches to capture the complexity and dynamism of professional identity. This framework highlighted the connection between reflective personal narratives and structured, institutionally defined activities, offering a comprehensive understanding of professional identity formation.

### *Participants*

This study involved four lecturers from the English Literature department at a university. Participants were chosen via purposive sampling, a non-probability selection method frequently employed in qualitative research (Vongkulluksn et al., 2018). This method enables the researcher to intentionally select optimally situated individuals to offer insights into the study inquiries. The four instructors were selected based on their expertise in English Literature, pedagogical and research credentials, and readiness to engage in the study.

All participants have a minimum of five years of teaching experience, guaranteeing a well-defined professional identity and the capacity to reflect on the progression of their positions within the academic setting. The participants represented various educational levels, from early-career lecturers to senior faculty, facilitating a more varied examination of the construction and negotiation of professional identity at different stages of an academic career (Marchand et al., 2019). Ethical issues were paramount in the selection and treatment of individuals. All participants were apprised of the study's objective and their entitlement to withdraw at any moment (Pietrzykowski & Smilowska, 2021; Millum & Bromwich, 2021; Kamińska et al., 2022; Poortaghi et al., 2021; McKinlay & Fancourt, 2021). Informed consent was secured before the interviews, and anonymity was assured to safeguard their identities and enable candid discourse regarding their experiences. Pseudonyms were employed to identify each participant in the analysis and presentation of the results (Heaton, 2022; Gerrard, 2021).

### *Data Collection*

The primary method of data collection for this study was semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews offer the chance to thoroughly explore the participants' experiences while ensuring that critical research questions are addressed (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). The duration of each interview was between 60 and 90 minutes, and it was administered in a one-on-one setting, either in person or via video conferencing, depending on the participants' preferences and availability. The interviews were conducted per an interview protocol that included open-ended questions to elicit

detailed narratives about the participants' professional identities (Jiang et al., 2021; Chakraverty et al., 2022; Hayashi et al., 2022; Mike & Inga, 2022; Lee et al., 2024). The interview questions were intended to investigate the participants' perspectives on their professional roles and identities as English Literature lecturers and the factors that influenced the development of their professional identity, including personal experiences, institutional expectations, and societal norms. The accumulation of rich, qualitative data on the lived experiences of English Literature lecturers resulted from the encouragement of participants to share their personal stories and reflections. The semi-structured format of the interviews also facilitated the researcher's ability to elucidate responses and delve deeper into areas of interest by allowing for follow-up inquiries and probing (Marchand et al., 2019). In the third phase of the investigation, document analysis was implemented as a secondary data acquisition method. This study identified themes related to constructing professional identities, the factors influencing this process, and the obstacles participants encountered. The researcher reviewed the initial themes in the fourth phase to verify that they accurately represented the data. Konstantinidis (2020) refined or discarded themes that were too broad or lacked sufficient evidence, and new themes were introduced as necessary. This phase ensured that the final themes were grounded in the data and formed a cohesive narrative (Dawadi, 2020; Morgan & Nica, 2020; Naeem et al., 2024; Foxall et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2020). The defining and naming themes is the fifth phase, during which the researcher aims to capture the essence of the themes precisely – meticulously articulating each theme's specific aspects of professional identity. The report's composition is the concluding stage.

Several strategies were implemented to guarantee the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. The interview transcripts were summarised, and the participants were requested to evaluate them for clarity and accuracy (Rowlands, 2021; Mason et al., 2020; Garfield et al., 2021; Howes, 2022; Mathias et al., 2020). This procedure was instrumental in guaranteeing that the results accurately represented the perspectives and experiences of the participants. Furthermore, the data's validity was improved through the implementation of triangulation. The researcher was able to cross-reference findings and confirm the consistency of the themes that arose by integrating data from multiple sources (interviews and documents) (Konstantinidis, 2020). A colleague with expertise in qualitative research evaluated the coding and thematic analysis to provide feedback and ensure that the study was rigorous and unbiased, and peer debriefing was also conducted (Lim, 2024; Doherty et al., 2024; Kamerer et al., 2024; Bhaskar & Gupta, 2024; Halim et al., 2024).

Ethical considerations significantly influenced this study, as it was designed to investigate personal and professional identities using qualitative methods. Numerous measures were implemented to guarantee that the research complied with ethical standards and safeguarded the rights and welfare of participants. The research, its objectives, and the data collection methods were carefully explained to each lecturer before they participated in the study. They were informed of their right to decline participation or resign at any time without penalty. To guarantee that participants comprehended the implications and extent of their involvement, they provided informed consent in both written and verbal form. Confidentiality was paramount, given the sensitive nature of identity construction and the potential for personal reflections to influence professional experiences and institutional dynamics. We employed pseudonyms for all participants to safeguard their identities.

Additionally, identifying information, including specific institutional names or unique personal details, was omitted or anonymized to protect participants' privacy. All identifying details were removed, and the data acquired, which included interview transcripts and document submissions, was securely stored and accessible only to the researcher in addition to the interviews. Participants were asked to submit relevant documents, such as reflective journals, research profiles, and teaching portfolios, that could offer supplementary insights into their professional identities. These documents served as supplementary data sources, providing a tangible record of the participants' professional practices and how they interacted with their responsibilities as educators and researchers. The process of document analysis involved the examination of these materials to identify themes that were associated with professional identity. These themes encompassed the participants' research methodologies, teaching philosophies, and how they expressed their professional values (Lochmiller, 2021). The researcher incorporated documentation, adding depth to the analysis to triangulate the interview findings and ensure a more robust understanding of the participants' professional identities (Wenger, 1998).

### *Data Analysis*

Thematic analysis, a qualitative research methodology frequently employed to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within data, was used to analyze the data obtained through document analysis and interviews. Investigations like this one, designed to define and interpret the fundamental significance of participants' narratives, are particularly well-suited to thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Vears & Gillam, 2022; Bentley et al., 2022; Drinkwater et al., 2022; Karalis et al., 2023). Thematic analysis in this study followed the outlined six-phase procedure, which comprised the following steps: Acquaintance with the data. The researcher commenced the procedure by verbatim transcribing the interview recordings. The interview transcripts and documents were subsequently read multiple times to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the data. The researcher methodically coded the data after becoming acquainted with it.

Consequently, the initial codes were generated. Codes were inductive, relying on the data itself, and deductive, informed by the existing literature on professional identity. Some potential code pertains to digital reading and experiences. The primary objective was to identify themes that encapsulate significant aspects of the data and provide insight into the research questions.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### *Results*

The results of this study suggest that English Literature lecturers predominantly establish their professional identity as technology-savvy educators by incorporating digital tools and media into their teaching practices. English Literature lecturers frequently regard themselves as facilitators of learning who must adjust to the digital era. They acknowledge the significance of technology in improving student engagement and increasing the accessibility of education. Numerous lecturers experience a sense of obligation to assist their students in critical thinking and the navigation of digital resources, which indicates a transition from traditional teaching roles to more collaborative and supportive roles in the learning process.

Nevertheless, there needs to be more confidence that particular lecturers possess concerning their technological capabilities. This discrepancy can significantly impact their self-perception and propensity to incorporate technology into their teaching practices effectively. External factors, such as participation in professional development programs and associations emphasizing technology-enhanced learning and their interaction with various technologies in the classroom, significantly influence this identity construction. The results indicate that the lecturers' professional identities are influenced by their classroom practices and participation in broader professional communities that advocate for integrating technology into education. The primary method by which English Literature lecturers exhibit their identity as technology-savvy educators is through integrating digital tools and learning media into their classroom activities. Lecturers actively incorporate various technologies, including multimedia resources, interactive tools, and online platforms, to improve their students' learning experience, as indicated by the interview data and documents analyzed in this article. These technologies are supplementary to their teaching and integral to understanding educator roles.

For instance, Lecturer A disclosed during their interview that he frequently implemented digital reading platforms and online discussion forums. He declared:

*"I motivate my students to engage in online discussions following each class." This enables them to interact with one another in a manner distinct from the conventional classroom setting and to engage more thoroughly with the texts. It also demonstrates to them that learning does not cease upon the conclusion of a class – technology enables them to continue their exploration of literature.*

This statement underscores Lecturer A's perspective on the role of technology, which is not limited to the delivery of content; instead, it promotes independent learning and expands classroom discussions into digital spaces. Lecturer A establishes themselves as a technology-savvy educator who utilizes digital tools to develop more dynamic learning environments by building an identity as a facilitator of learning that transcends the physical classroom through these online platforms. Similarly, Lecturer B prioritized utilizing multimedia presentations and video-based assignments in their courses. In their interview, they stated:

*"I prefer to integrate podcasts and videos into my lessons because I have observed that students are more likely to engage with auditory and visual media. Additionally, I motivate them to get their recordings or videos as part of their evaluations. It facilitates the development of indispensable digital literacy skills in the contemporary era and increases the accessibility of the subject matter. (Lecturer B)*

Not only does Lecturer B's utilization of multimedia improve students' learning experience, but it also demonstrates a professional identity that prioritizes digital literacy and endeavors to provide students with the necessary skills to thrive in a technology-driven society. This identity is further reinforced by the lecturer's emphasis on student-generated digital content, which indicates their dedication to incorporating technology into teaching and learning.

The lecturers' professional identity as technology-savvy educators is also influenced by external factors, particularly their involvement in professional development programs and associations emphasizing technology-enhanced learning. The interviews

demonstrated that lecturers diligently seek opportunities to improve their technological abilities and remain informed about the most recent developments in educational technology. Lecturer C elaborated on the significant influence that attending professional development sessions on technology integration had on their teaching methodology:

*"I participated in a series of workshops that focused on using various digital tools in the classroom, and it fundamentally altered my perspective on the teaching profession." I was previously hesitant to incorporate an excessive amount of technology; however, I now recognize its potential to improve student engagement and increase the accessibility of literature. These seminars were instrumental in fostering my confidence in utilizing technology. (Lecturer C)*

This experience underscores the potential of professional development to act as a catalyst for identity development. Lecturer C was inspired to redefine their professional identity as someone comfortable and confident with technology, and the seminars also provided practical skills. The external support provided by these workshops enabled them to surmount their initial apprehensions regarding technology and adopt it as a critical element of their teaching practice. The lecturers' professional identities were significantly influenced by their membership in associations that advocate for Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) and formal professional development sessions. For instance, Lecturer D referenced their participation in a TELL organization:

*"My participation in a Technology-Enhanced Language Learning association has been exceedingly advantageous." Not only is it essential to remain informed about the most recent technological advancements, but it is also crucial to be a member of a community of educators who are enthusiastic about utilizing technology to enhance language acquisition. The utilization of technology in the classrooms of other lecturers is genuinely inspiring, and it serves as an incentive for me to continue to innovate in my teaching". (Lecturer D)*

The TELL association offered Lecturer D a sense of inclusion in a broader community of educators similarly committed to integrating technology into language learning. Lecturer D's identity as a forward-thinking, tech-savvy educator who is part of a broader movement to modernize education through technology was further solidified by this external motivation and the practical knowledge she acquired from the association. The results also indicate that the professional identities of the lecturers are influenced by their interactions with others in their professional communities and their actions. The interviews and document analysis indicate that lecturers perceive themselves as members of a collective of educators striving to integrate technology into the classroom. This collective identity has an impact on their sense of professional identity.

Lecturer E articulated this social aspect of identity construction during their interview:

*"I believe that we, as a collective of lecturers, have been transitioning to a more technology-focused approach to teaching." It is not merely a practice that a few of us are engaging in; it is becoming accepted throughout the department. We exchange ideas, discuss emerging technologies, and provide mutual assistance in acquiring proficiency in their utilization. It is undeniably a collaborative endeavor, instilling a greater sense of assurance in my utilization of technology" (Lecturer E).*

This statement illustrates that professional identity is not formed in isolation but through collaboration with colleagues and engagement in shared practices. The collective movement within the department towards increased technology use reinforces Lecturer E's identity as a technology-savvy educator. The lecturers' mutual support and influence indicate the social construction of identity, which fosters a professional culture that prioritizes technological innovation.

The professional identity construction of the lecturers was further illuminated by the document analysis conducted as part of this study. The teaching portfolios and reflective journals that the participants submitted provided tangible evidence of their dedication to incorporating technology into their teaching and provided supplementary context for the themes identified during the interviews. A teaching portfolio contained comprehensive descriptions of various digital tools employed in the classroom, including digital storytelling software, collaborative writing tools, and online assessment platforms. The lecturer who submitted this portfolio explained how each tool promoted active learning and increased student engagement. For instance, the portfolio emphasized using an online questionnaire platform that enabled students to complete quizzes on their smartphones during class, thereby fostering real-time discussions about the studied literature and providing immediate feedback. The lecturer's identity as a tech-savvy educator who prioritizes innovation in teaching was further solidified by this documentation of technology use in the portfolio.

Additionally, reflective journals offered significant insights into the professional identities of lecturers. Lecturer C's journal entry explored the impact of a new digital instrument on their teaching and the process of acquiring proficiency in its use: "Initially, I was apprehensive about the prospect of incorporating [a particular tool] into my classroom. However, after conducting an experiment and witnessing the students' enthusiasm for it, I realized that this is the direction in which education is moving." With each new instrument that I integrate, I feel as though I am becoming a more "tech-savvy" lecturer. It is a process of learning, but it is also highly thrilling. Lecturers cultivate their technological identity by combining formal training, self-directed learning, and peer collaboration. This process is significantly influenced by professional development programs that emphasize digital literacy and pedagogy.

Numerous educators have been required to modify their instructional strategies and undergo retraining to accommodate the advent of new digital platforms.

Their development as technologically adept educators can also be facilitated by ongoing reflection on their teaching practices and student feedback. Lecturers can enhance their digital competencies and refine their approaches by engaging with students' perceptions of technology use in the classroom. The ongoing process of identity construction is illustrated in this journal entry, as Lecturer C contemplates the role of technology in shaping their professional identity and their evolving self-concept. The utilization of reflective journaling further substantiates the notion that identity construction is a dynamic and ongoing process as a professional development tool. Although the interviews revealed the obstacles that lecturers encounter in developing a technology-savvy identity, the results also emphasize the advantages of this approach. As several participants mentioned, the rapid pace of technological change can be overwhelming, and there is often a sense of pressure to remain up-to-date with new tools and platforms constantly. Lecturer B expressed the following concern:



*"Occasionally, it appears as though there is an endless supply of new tools to acquire, and maintaining that pace can be quite taxing." I am committed to utilizing technology effectively and efficiently while avoiding it, assuming control over my instruction. It is a significant challenge to achieve that equilibrium. (Lecturer C)*

This statement underscores the conflict between the aspiration to be perceived as a technology-savvy educator and the practical realities of remaining current with the rapidly changing educational technology landscape. The participants acknowledged that technology provides numerous advantages; however, it necessitates a substantial investment of time and effort to be utilized advantageously. Moreover, particular lecturers expressed apprehensions regarding the digital divide among students, pointing out that not all students have equal access to the technology necessary for specific digital tools and activities. Lecturer D contemplated this matter:

*"I am always aware that some students may not have the same level of access to devices or reliable internet connections, despite my enthusiasm for incorporating technology into my classroom." It is crucial to ensure that the utilization of technology does not result in any adverse consequences". (Lecturer D)*

This awareness of the potential inequalities associated with technology use further complicates the construction of a technology-savvy professional identity. Lecturers must consider their interaction with technology and the broader social and economic factors influencing their students' capacity to engage in technology-enhanced learning.

### **Discussion**

Identifying English Literature lecturers as technologically savvy educators is a complex and evolving process influenced by various factors. Lecturers regard themselves as facilitators in the digital era, acknowledging the importance of incorporating technology into their teaching to improve student engagement and learning outcomes. This self-perception indicates a transition from conventional teaching roles to more collaborative and supportive roles, in which lecturers assist students in effectively navigating digital resources.

Nevertheless, the path to becoming technologically proficient is replete with obstacles. Many lecturers report that inadequate Information and Communication Technology training impacts their confidence and ability to integrate technology into their pedagogical practices (Haarala-Muhonen et al., 2023). Lecturers frequently experience feelings of inadequacy regarding their professional identities due to their lack of preparation for the technological requirements of online teaching (Yazici et al., 2023). Additionally, effective instruction may be impeded by inadequate technological resources. Inadequate infrastructure, such as outdated hardware or sluggish internet connections, complicates the efforts of numerous lecturers to create engaging online learning experiences. This situation can result in disconnection and resentment from the broader educational community and students. Lecturers persistently strive to cultivate their technological identities despite their obstacles. Professional development programs emphasizing digital literacy and innovative pedagogical strategies are essential. Lecturers who participate in ongoing learning and collaboration with their colleagues express a greater willingness to experiment with new teaching methods and a heightened confidence in their technological abilities.

Furthermore, lecturers can enhance their strategies and adjust to the changing educational environment by analyzing student feedback. The interplay between technological proficiency and identity formation emphasizes the significance of supportive institutional frameworks that offer continuous training and resources. Institutions can assist lecturers in navigating the intricacies of online education and enhancing their professional identities by cultivating an environment that encourages experimentation with technology. The results of this study indicate that English literature lecturers predominantly establish their professional identities as technology-savvy educators by incorporating digital tools into their teaching practices and participating in external professional development. These results underscore the intricate process of identity construction, which is influenced by internal motivations to enhance student engagement and external factors such as institutional expectations and professional communities that prioritize technology-enhanced learning. This section examines the implications of these discoveries in the broader context of higher education, the role of technology in education, and the existing literature on professional identity. The findings suggest that the lecturers' professional identities are intricately linked to classroom technology utilization. This finding is consistent with the current body of research on professional identity in education, which underscores that identity is not fixed but changes in response to new opportunities and challenges. For the lecturers in this study, technology integration represents both a challenge and an opportunity to redefine their roles. By embracing digital tools, they construct an identity as innovative educators who are responsive to the needs of contemporary students, which is consistent with the idea that professional identity is shaped through practice and interaction with evolving pedagogical tools.

This shift in teaching practices reflects a broader trend in higher education, where technology is essential for improving student outcomes. The lecturers' use of digital platforms, multimedia presentations, and other tools allows them to engage students more effectively and foster critical thinking. As Lecturer A explained, online discussion forums extend classroom interaction beyond physical spaces, facilitating more profound engagement with the subject matter. Such practices align with research that suggests technology enables more flexible and collaborative learning environments. Moreover, adopting these technologies helps lecturers position themselves as relevant and adaptable in a rapidly changing academic landscape, reflecting the concept of identity work where individuals align their self-concept with institutional norms.

In addition to internal motivations, external influences play a significant role in shaping the lecturers' professional identities. The interviews revealed that participation in professional development programs and membership in associations like Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) were critical factors in motivating the lecturers to adopt new technologies. This insight supports previous research that highlights the importance of professional development in facilitating the adoption of educational technology. Professional development equips lecturers with the necessary technical skills and contributes to their professional identity by fostering confidence and a sense of competence. For instance, Lecturer C's participation in workshops on technology integration helped them rethink their approach to teaching, demonstrating how external professional opportunities can catalyze identity formation. This insight aligns with the theory of communities of practice, which suggests that professional identity is shaped through participation in shared practices and engagement with a professional community. By being part of associations like TELL, lecturers can construct a

professional identity that reflects individual aspirations and collective values within the community (Marchand et al., 2019). Such participation fosters a shared identity among members and motivates continuous professional development and innovation in teaching practices (Calleja, 2018).

While the findings highlight the benefits of constructing a technology-savvy professional identity, the study also reveals lecturers' challenges. One of the critical challenges is the rapid pace of technological change, which can create pressure to stay updated constantly. This insight is consistent with research that shows educators often feel overwhelmed by the fast-evolving landscape of educational technology (Henderson & Corry, 2021). Lecturer B, for example, expressed concerns about the exhaustion associated with keeping up with new tools, reflecting a tension between their desire to innovate and the practical demands of teaching. This challenge is echoed in the literature on teacher burnout and stress. Although technology can enhance education, the pressure to continually adapt can contribute to burnout if lecturers feel unsupported. The desire to maintain a technology-savvy identity must be balanced with adequate institutional support and time for lecturers to learn and integrate new tools.

Another challenge mentioned by the lecturers is the digital divide among students. Lecturer D expressed concerns about student access to technology inequalities, highlighting how lecturers must navigate ethical considerations when using digital tools. This issue aligns with the broader discourse on educational technology and equity, where unequal access to digital resources can exacerbate existing inequalities. The need to balance innovation with inclusivity adds complexity to constructing a technology-savvy professional identity, as lecturers must ensure that their use of technology does not disadvantage students.

The findings also suggest that lecturers' professional identities are socially constructed through their interactions with colleagues and participation in shared practices within their departments. This finding aligns with social identity theory, which argues that individuals derive their sense of self from their membership in social groups and their alignment with group norms (Scheepers & Ellemers, 2019). Lecturer E's comments about the collective movement towards technology integration within their department reflect this social aspect of identity construction. The professional culture of the department, which values technological innovation, reinforces the lecturer's identities as tech-savvy educators. This collective identity formation process is consistent with communities of practice, where individuals develop a sense of belonging through participation in shared activities and practices. In the case of the lecturers in this study, their participation in departmental initiatives around technology use helps them construct a professional identity aligned with institutional and peer expectations. This social aspect of identity construction emphasizes the importance of collaborative professional cultures in shaping individual identities.

Reflective practices also play a role in how lecturers construct their professional identities. The reflective journals analyzed in this study revealed that lecturers use reflection to make sense of their experiences and articulate their evolving identities. For example, Lecturer C's journal entry about becoming more confident with technology highlights how reflection contributes to identity development, particularly as lecturers experiment with new tools and approaches. Reflection allows lecturers to engage in continuous identity work, assessing their professional growth and aligning their practices with their evolving self-concept. The findings of this study have several

important implications for professional development and institutional support. The study highlights the need for ongoing professional development programs that provide technical skills and address the broader issue of identity construction. Professional development should focus on helping lecturers integrate technology into their teaching to align with their professional values and goals (Vongkulluksn et al., 2018). Programs that emphasize reflective practice and identity development, in addition to technical training, can help lecturers navigate the complexities of technology integration. Second, institutions must provide more support for lecturers as they navigate technology integration challenges. This support includes offering resources for staying updated on new tools and addressing the ethical considerations of the digital divide (Afzal et al., 2023). Institutional support is crucial for helping lecturers balance their desire to innovate with the practical realities of teaching, ensuring they can maintain their professional identities without feeling overwhelmed (Marchand et al., 2019).

## CONCLUSION

**Fundamental Finding:** The research demonstrated that English Literature lecturers establish their professional identity as technology-savvy educators by incorporating digital tools into their teaching practices and participating in professional development programs. Key internal motivators include a desire to improve student engagement, while external factors, such as institutional expectations and membership in professional associations, contribute to forming this identity. Lecturers find that technology enables them to remain pertinent and innovative in a changing academic landscape despite the challenges they encounter due to the rapid pace of technological change and unequal student access to technology. **Implication:** Lecturers must participate in ongoing professional development programs to facilitate technology integration that is consistent with lecturers' professional values and teaching objectives. These programs should promote reflective practices and confidence by addressing technical training and identity construction. Institutions must offer them resources and assistance to assist lecturers in overcoming the obstacles posed by the digital divide and the rapid advancement of technology. **Limitation:** The generalizability of the findings to a broader population was limited because the study only involved four lecturers. A more diverse and extensive sample should be incorporated into future research. **Future Research:** The research concentrated on the role of technology in the construction of identity, potentially neglecting other critical factors, such as personal values or institutional culture. A more comprehensive approach could offer more profound insights.

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