

ICT Integration in Teaching Delivery: A Qualitative Study of Non-Techie Teachers in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

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ABSTRACT

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence has created opportunities and challenges for teachers, particularly non-techie teachers. This study explored the experiences of non-techie teachers in integrating AI into their teaching practice. Specifically, it examined their perceptions of recent AI advancements, the challenges they encountered, the strategies and support systems they used to adapt, and their recommendations for helping other teachers bridge the technology gap. The study employed a qualitative descriptive research design involving purposively selected public elementary school teachers from two rural schools in Sumilao, Bukidnon. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews using a researcher-made interview guide and analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings revealed four major themes: AI as a practical lesson-preparation aid characterized by cautious reliance, limited prompt literacy as a barrier to effective AI use, peer support and self-directed learning amid resource constraints, and embracing gradual learning while using AI as a supportive rather than substitutive tool. Participants viewed AI as a valuable resource for lesson preparation, instructional support, and workload reduction while emphasizing the importance of verifying AI-generated outputs and exercising professional judgment. They relied on self-directed learning and peer collaboration to overcome limited institutional support and regarded AI competency as a gradual learning process. The findings suggest that successful AI integration extends beyond access to technology and requires stronger AI literacy, prompt literacy, and sustained professional development. These results may inform teacher training programs, AI literacy initiatives, and educational policies that promote responsible, ethical, and human-centered AI integration in Philippine basic education.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), non-techie teachers, AI literacy, prompt literacy, qualitative research

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed educational practice, reshaping the teacher–AI–student relationship and requiring educators to develop new competencies while maintaining their professional judgment. The UNESCO (2024) AI Competency Framework for Teachers emphasizes that AI should enhance, rather than replace, human decision-making, while Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 003, s. 2026 similarly mandates that AI serve only as an auxiliary instructional tool that supports teacher expertise. Despite these policy directions, many self-identified non-techie teachers continue to experience AI integration with cautious reliance, appreciating its efficiency while recognizing the need for continuous human oversight.

Recent studies have shown that teachers primarily use AI to support lesson planning, generate instructional materials, and reduce workload (Qumainah et al., 2026; Rempillo & Despi, 2026; Calamlam, 2026; Ortiz et al., 2025). However, effective AI integration remains constrained by limited AI literacy, particularly prompt literacy, which affects teachers' ability to communicate instructional needs and obtain relevant AI-generated outputs (Federiakin et al., 2024; Zosa & Chavez, 2025; Ruiz & Yambao, 2026; Landge et al., 2025). In response to these challenges, teachers frequently rely on self-directed learning and peer collaboration to

strengthen their AI competencies, especially when formal institutional support is limited (Blando, 2025; Obmerga, 2026).

Although previous studies have examined AI adoption, AI literacy, and technology integration among educators, limited qualitative research has specifically explored the experiences of non-techie teachers in navigating the rapid rise of AI within their teaching practice. In particular, there remains a need to understand how they perceive AI, the challenges they encounter, the strategies they employ to adapt, and the recommendations they offer to support fellow educators.

Therefore, this study explored the experiences of non-techie teachers in integrating AI into their teaching practice. Specifically, it sought to examine (1) how they perceive recent advancements in ICT, particularly the rise of AI, within their teaching context; (2) the challenges they encounter in navigating these technologies; (3) the strategies and support systems they rely on to adapt to these digital shifts; and (4) the recommendations they propose to help other teachers bridge the technological gap. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of literature on AI integration and provide insights that may inform teacher professional development, AI literacy initiatives, and future educational policies promoting responsible and human-centered AI adoption in Philippine basic education.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore the experiences of self-identified non-techie teachers in integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into their teaching practice. A qualitative descriptive approach was appropriate because it allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' perspectives and experiences in their natural contexts while providing a comprehensive description of the phenomenon under investigation.

The design enabled the researchers to capture teachers' perceptions, challenges, adaptation strategies, and recommendations regarding AI integration without imposing predetermined theoretical interpretations. This approach was considered suitable for addressing the study's research questions and generating context-rich insights into how non-techie teachers navigate the increasing use of AI in education.

Participants and Setting

The study was conducted during the **School Year 2026–2027** in two rural public elementary schools in Sumilao under the Schools Division of Bukidnon, namely Sumilao Elementary School and Lupiagan Elementary School. The 15 participants were **purposively selected** public elementary school teachers who self-identified as **non-techie**, were **30 years old and above**, and were actively teaching during the conduct of the study. Purposive sampling ensured that participants had relevant experiences regarding the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in their teaching practice.

Research Instruments

The study utilized a **researcher-developed open-ended questionnaire** as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire consisted of four open-ended questions aligned with the study's research questions, focusing on the participants' **perceptions of recent AI advancements in teaching, challenges encountered in AI integration, strategies and support systems used to adapt, and recommendations for other teachers**.

The open-ended format enabled participants to provide detailed descriptions of their experiences, perspectives, and insights regarding AI integration in their teaching practice. Prior to data collection, the instrument was **reviewed by experts in educational research** to ensure the clarity, relevance, and alignment of the questions with the objectives of the study.

Data Collection Procedures

After obtaining the necessary approvals and informed consent from the participants, the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews using a researcher-developed open-ended questionnaire as the interview guide. The interviews were conducted during the School Year 2026–2027, allowing participants to freely share their perceptions, experiences, challenges, adaptation strategies, and recommendations regarding the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in teaching. The interview responses were recorded through note-taking and/or audio recording with the participants' consent, transcribed, and prepared for thematic analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis to systematically identify, analyze, and interpret patterns across the participants' responses.

Bracketing Process (Epoché)

Prior to the analysis, the researcher engaged in bracketing to minimize personal assumptions, experiences, and biases regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI) integration. This process allowed the researcher to approach the data with openness and focus on the participants' authentic perspectives throughout the analysis.

Initial Coding and Familiarization

The interview transcripts were read and reviewed several times to achieve familiarity with the data. Meaningful statements and significant responses related to the research questions were identified and assigned initial codes. Similar codes were then grouped according to shared meanings and recurring ideas.

Theme Development

The initial codes were examined, compared, and refined to identify broader patterns across participants' responses. Related codes were clustered into categories, which were subsequently organized into coherent themes that accurately represented the participants' perceptions, challenges, adaptation strategies, and recommendations regarding AI integration.

Synthesis and Validation

The identified themes were synthesized into a comprehensive description of the participants' experiences. The themes were continuously reviewed against the original interview data to ensure that they accurately reflected the participants' responses. Relevant participant quotations were selected to support each theme, while existing literature was used in the discussion to contextualize and validate the findings.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to fundamental ethical principles throughout the research process. Prior to data collection, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the appropriate school authorities. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their rights before voluntarily providing informed consent. Participation was entirely voluntary, and participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or negative consequences.

Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by assigning participant codes instead of using names or other identifying information. All interview responses, recordings, and transcripts were treated with strict confidentiality and were used solely for the purposes of this study. The collected data were securely stored and made accessible only to the researcher. Throughout the conduct of the study, the ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice were observed to safeguard the rights, dignity, and welfare of all participants.

Inter-coder Reliability

To ensure the consistency and reliability of the thematic analysis, an inter-coder agreement process was utilized. Two analysts, the primary researcher and the co-author, independently coded a subset of the 15 interview transcripts. Following the initial coding phase, the researchers met to compare their findings and resolve any discrepancies in code definitions or thematic boundaries through a consensus method. This collaborative approach ensured that the final themes were not the result of a single subjective interpretation but were verified by multiple analysts, thereby increasing the rigor of the qualitative findings.

Credibility and Trustworthiness

The credibility and trustworthiness of the study were established through several qualitative research strategies. Credibility was enhanced by using open-ended interviews and conducting member checking, wherein participants reviewed the interpreted responses and emerging themes to confirm their accuracy. Dependability was ensured by following a systematic data collection and analysis procedure using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. Confirmability was strengthened through bracketing to minimize researcher bias and by grounding the themes in the participants' actual responses. Transferability was supported by providing a clear description of the research setting, participants, and procedures, as well as including representative participant quotations to substantiate the identified themes.

Limitations and Trustworthiness of the Study

This study is limited to the experiences of purposively selected non-techie teachers aged 30 years and above from two rural public elementary schools in Sumilao, Bukidnon during the School Year 2026–2027. As a qualitative study, the findings are context-specific and are not intended to be generalized to all teachers or educational settings. However, the trustworthiness of the findings was strengthened through the use of expert-reviewed interview questions, member checking, bracketing to minimize researcher bias, and a systematic thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke (2006). Additionally, direct participant quotations were presented to support the identified themes, ensuring that the interpretations accurately reflected the participants' lived experiences. These measures enhanced the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the study.

Scope and Delimitation

This study focused on exploring the experiences of self-identified non-techie teachers in integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into their teaching practice. Specifically, it examined their perceptions of recent AI advancements, the challenges they encountered, the strategies and support systems they employed to adapt, and their recommendations for helping other teachers bridge the technological gap. The study was conducted during the School Year 2026–2027 among purposively selected public elementary school teachers aged 30 years and above from Sumilao Elementary School and Lupiagan Elementary School in the rural municipality of Sumilao, Bukidnon.

The study was delimited to qualitative data gathered through face-to-face interviews using a researcher-developed open-ended interview guide. The findings were based solely on the participants' lived experiences and perceptions and were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. As such, the results are specific to the participants and research setting and are not intended to be generalized to other schools, teachers, or educational contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of the study based on the participants' responses gathered through face-to-face interviews. The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, resulting in the identification of key themes that address the four research questions. The findings are presented alongside

relevant literature to provide a deeper understanding and interpretation of the experiences of non-techie teachers in integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into their teaching practice.

AI as a practical lesson-preparation aid characterized by cautious reliance.

Emergent Theme 1

The findings reveal that the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) among self-identified non-techie teachers centers on the theme of AI as a practical lesson-preparation aid characterized by cautious reliance. Participants consistently described AI as a supportive tool that simplifies lesson preparation while requiring continuous teacher oversight. As shared by the participants:

Participant 14: *“Recent improvements in ICT, especially the use of AI, have been a big help in my teaching career.”*

Participant 9: *“AI makes lesson preparation less difficult.”*

These findings are consistent with Qumainah, Rahmadini, and Maulidiyah (2026), who reported that teachers value AI for saving time and organizing lesson materials. Similarly, Rempillo and Despi (2026) found that Filipino teachers use AI as a drafting tool for lesson planning and Daily Lesson Log preparation to manage increasing workloads. This practical benefit is reflected in the response of Participant 4:

Participant 4: *“AI saves me time in preparing my lessons and helps me teach more effectively.”*

Beyond improving efficiency, participants also viewed AI as a source of instructional ideas and teaching strategies.

Participant 1: *“I use AI mainly to get ideas for my lessons.”*

Participant 3: *“AI gives me many ideas, learning materials, and teaching strategies.”*

These responses indicate that teachers use AI not only to reduce workload but also to enhance instructional planning and creativity. This finding supports Calamlam (2026), who described AI as a content generator capable of producing curriculum-aligned tasks, and Ortiz, Viaña, Ali, and Dela Cruz (2025), who identified AI as a digital support tool for pedagogical design. Participants also perceived that AI contributes to improved student learning, consistent with the findings of Sibug et al. (2024) on AI's potential to provide adaptive and personalized learning resources.

Despite these benefits, participants consistently emphasized the importance of verifying AI-generated information before classroom use.

Participant 2: *“AI still needs to be double-checked because it can still make mistakes.”*

Participant 12: *“AI can sometimes give incorrect information.”*

These experiences align with Calamlam (2026), who noted that AI-generated outputs may be inaccurate or unrealistic, while Rempillo and Despi (2026) and Ortiz et al. (2025) emphasized the need for editing and critical evaluation to ensure curriculum alignment and instructional accuracy.

The findings further show that participants maintained professional agency by positioning themselves as the final evaluators of AI-generated content.

Participant 10: *“I do not rely on it completely. I always check the information first because it can still have errors.”*

This perspective reflects the Human-AI-Human (HAIH) principle discussed by Pangowen (2026), which underscores the necessity of human oversight throughout the teaching-learning process. Likewise, Jesus and Caumeran (2026) argued that AI can support instruction but cannot replace teachers' professional judgment, ethical guidance, and contextual decision-making. As expressed by Participant 6:

Participant 6: *"I still check everything carefully."*

These findings demonstrate that non-techie teachers perceive AI as a valuable instructional support tool while recognizing that effective teaching ultimately depends on human expertise and informed professional judgment.

Conceptual Gap in Prompt Literacy

Emergent Theme 2

The findings reveal that limited prompt literacy is a major barrier to the effective integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) among non-techie teachers. Rather than struggling with access to AI tools, participants experienced difficulty expressing their instructional needs in ways that produced accurate and relevant responses. As Federiakin et al. (2024) explained, prompt engineering is an essential AI competency because the quality of AI-generated outputs depends largely on the quality of the prompts provided.

This challenge is reflected in the participants' experiences:

Participant 13: *"I often have difficulty thinking of the right words to describe what I need."*

Participant 4: *"I sometimes find it difficult to think of the right questions to ask."*

Similarly, Participant 1 shared, "The most challenging part is when I run out of ideas for prompts that can help me get the most appropriate assistance," while Participant 9 added, "I run out of ideas on how to explain what I need, so I don't always get the best results." These responses indicate that teachers struggle not only with using AI but also with translating their instructional intentions into effective prompts. This supports the findings of Zosa and Chavez (2025), who emphasized that prompt framing significantly influences the relevance and accuracy of AI-generated content.

Participants also recognized that clear and specific instructions are essential for obtaining useful AI responses.

Participant 2: *"If we do not explain what we need well, the answers may not match the topic."*

Participant 15: *"It works better when we give clear instructions. Otherwise, the information it provides may not be what we are looking for."*

Participant 14: *"I find it challenging to think of the right instructions to give AI... I am not sure how to ask for it clearly."*

These experiences are consistent with Federiakin et al. (2024) and Zosa and Chavez (2025), who noted that even slight variations in wording can significantly affect AI-generated outputs. The findings suggest that effective AI integration requires not only digital skills but also the ability to formulate clear, purposeful, and context-specific prompts.

Limited prompt literacy also resulted in repeated trial-and-error interactions with AI.

Participant 5: *"Sometimes I don't know the best way to describe what I need, so it takes a few tries before I get the answer I want."*

Participant 10: *"Sometimes I know what I need, but I am not sure how to say it, so it takes a few tries before I get the answer I am looking for."*

These experiences support Federiakin et al. (2024), who described ineffective prompting as time-consuming and cognitively demanding, reducing the efficiency that AI is intended to provide.

The findings further indicate that prompt literacy is closely linked to broader AI literacy and teacher preparedness.

Participant 6: *"I struggle with using AI because I am still learning how it works. Sometimes I do not know exactly what to ask."*

This observation aligns with Ruiz and Yambao (2026), who found that teachers often demonstrate lower competence in technical AI creation tasks, and with Landge et al. (2025) and Shenoy and Saarela (2026), who identified prompt construction and effective communication with AI as essential competencies for successful classroom integration.

The findings suggest that successful AI integration depends not only on access to AI technologies but also on teachers' ability to construct clear and purposeful prompts. Strengthening prompt literacy through targeted AI literacy and professional development initiatives may enable non-techie teachers to maximize the instructional benefits of AI while reducing the challenges associated with ineffective prompt construction.

Peer Support and Self-Directed Learning Amid Resource Constraints

Emergent Theme 3

The findings reveal that peer support and self-directed learning amid resource constraints emerged as the primary strategies employed by non-techie teachers to develop their AI competencies in the absence of structured institutional support. Rather than waiting for formal training opportunities, participants took the initiative to independently explore AI technologies and strengthen their skills through continuous learning.

This is reflected in the participants' experiences.

Participant 2: *"I tried to learn more about it by reading and exploring different resources because it was new to me and I was not familiar with how it worked."*

Participant 5: *"I took time to learn about it by doing some research and practicing how to use it."*

Participant 6: *"I took time to learn about it by doing some research and practicing how to use it."*

These responses indicate that teachers relied on self-directed learning to overcome knowledge gaps and gradually build confidence in using AI. This finding is consistent with Unsong and Morbo (2025), who reported that teachers adopted self-learning strategies to address ICT-related challenges when institutional support was limited. Similarly, Blando (2025) found that inadequate formal technology training often compels Filipino educators to rely on self-learning to develop their digital competencies. These experiences also reflect the Acquire level of the UNESCO (2024) AI Competency Framework, which encourages teachers to independently explore AI as part of continuous professional development.

Beyond individual efforts, participants consistently highlighted the importance of peer support in learning unfamiliar AI technologies.

Participant 4: *"I ask for help from my colleagues who are more knowledgeable about ICT, especially those who know how to use AI in teaching."*

Participant 13: *“When I need help, I go to my colleagues who are more experienced in ICT. They help me understand how to use it effectively.”*

These responses suggest that teachers relied on colleagues not only for technical guidance but also for confidence in integrating AI into classroom instruction. This collaborative practice supports the findings of Obmerga (2026), who explained that Filipino teachers draw upon values such as Pakikipagkapuwa and Bayanihan to promote cooperative professional learning. Likewise, Unsong and Morbo (2025) emphasized that peer mentoring and knowledge sharing strengthen technology integration in schools. As expressed by Participant 12:

Participant 12: *“Their guidance will help me become more confident in using it.”*

The findings also indicate that these learning strategies were largely influenced by limited access to formal AI training. Participants described learning AI gradually through independent exploration because of their limited prior knowledge.

Participant 11: *“I learned about AI little by little because I had little knowledge of it at first.”*

Participant 14: *“I learned about AI little by little through research because I had little knowledge of it at first.”*

These experiences align with Ruiz and Yambao (2026), who found that limited time and administrative responsibilities affect teachers' readiness for AI-related professional development. Similarly, Blando (2025) reported that many public school teachers depend on personal initiative because institutional access to updated ICT resources remains limited. This is further reflected in the responses of Participants 7 and 8.

Participant 7: *“I ask people who know more about AI.”*

Participant 8: *“I ask colleagues who can guide me on how to use it in teaching.”*

The findings suggest that non-techie teachers develop AI competencies primarily through self-directed learning and collaborative peer support. These strategies enable teachers to expand their knowledge, improve their confidence, and adapt to emerging technologies despite limited institutional resources. The findings also highlight the need for schools to strengthen professional learning communities and provide sustained, accessible, and context-responsive AI training that complements teachers' existing self-directed efforts.

Embrace Gradual Learning and Use AI as a Supportive, Not Substitutive Tool,

Emergent Theme 4

The findings revealed the theme "Embrace gradual learning and use AI as a supportive, not substitutive tool," reflecting how non-techie teachers approach AI integration with patience, continuous learning, and a commitment to preserving their professional role. Rather than viewing AI as a replacement for teaching expertise, participants described it as a resource that should be learned progressively and used responsibly.

Participants consistently emphasized that developing AI competency requires patience, persistence, and continuous practice.

Participant 2: *“Let us learn one step at a time, and with patience and practice, we will eventually master everything.”*

Participant 9: *“Learning takes time, and that is okay. Let us focus on one thing at a time.”*

Participant 14: *“If we keep learning step by step and do not give up, we will eventually become better at what we do.”*

These responses suggest that participants viewed AI integration as a gradual learning process rather than an immediate expectation. This finding is supported by Paran et al. (2024), who reported that teachers often experience anxiety and low confidence when technology training is insufficient, leading them to adopt new technologies incrementally. Likewise, Sabado et al. (2026) found that teachers' positive attitudes toward AI often exceed their actual AI knowledge, highlighting the need for sustained, step-by-step professional development.

Participants also emphasized that AI should remain a supportive instructional resource rather than a substitute for teacher expertise.

Participant 3: *"Think of AI as a tool that can support your teaching, not replace your own knowledge and experience."*

Participant 5: *"AI is there to help make teaching easier, but your skills as a teacher are still the most important."*

Participant 6: *"Use AI as a guide, not as a replacement for your own ideas."*

These responses demonstrate that participants view AI as an instructional partner that complements, rather than replaces, professional expertise. This perspective aligns with the Department of Education (2026), which states that AI should function only as an auxiliary tool, and with Balbada (2025), who emphasized that human interaction remains essential in teaching. Similarly, Sereno III et al. (2025) cautioned that excessive dependence on AI may weaken critical thinking and independent problem-solving skills.

The findings further show that participants consistently practiced critical verification before using AI-generated content.

Participant 10: *"Always check its answers and use your own judgment."*

Participant 13: *"AI can make mistakes, so we should always verify the information and use it wisely."*

Participant 7: *"Always check the information it gives and continue to rely on your own knowledge."*

These responses indicate that teachers recognize professional judgment as essential for ensuring the accuracy and appropriateness of AI-generated materials. This finding is consistent with Alvero (2025), who emphasized that educators must critically evaluate AI outputs to maintain instructional quality. Likewise, Balbada (2025) highlighted the need to verify AI-generated content within the Philippine educational context, while Picardal (2026) underscored the importance of human oversight in addressing ethical concerns such as misinformation and AI-assisted plagiarism.

The findings suggest that non-techie teachers embrace AI through gradual learning while maintaining their professional agency. They recognize AI as a valuable instructional support tool but continue to rely on their own knowledge, experience, and judgment to make informed pedagogical decisions. These findings highlight the need for professional development initiatives that strengthen both teachers' AI competencies and their capacity to integrate AI responsibly and ethically in classroom instruction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study demonstrate that while non-techie teachers recognize the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance teaching and learning, they continue to encounter challenges related to AI literacy, prompt construction, limited institutional support, and the need for continuous professional development. Despite these challenges, the participants exhibited adaptability by engaging in self-directed learning, seeking peer support, and maintaining professional judgment in the responsible use of AI.

1. School administrators may design and implement continuous professional development programs on Artificial Intelligence (AI), with particular emphasis on AI literacy, prompt writing, ethical AI use, and practical classroom applications tailored for non-techie teachers.
2. The Department of Education (DepEd) may strengthen institutional support by providing accessible AI training, mentoring programs, and appropriate digital resources, particularly for teachers in rural schools, to promote equitable and responsible AI integration.
3. Teachers are encouraged to engage in continuous self-directed learning, participate in peer mentoring and professional learning communities, and use AI as a supportive instructional tool while maintaining critical evaluation and professional judgment in all AI-generated outputs.
4. Schools may foster collaborative learning environments by encouraging knowledge sharing, peer coaching, and communities of practice where teachers can exchange experiences, effective prompting strategies, and best practices in AI integration.
5. Future researchers may conduct similar studies involving participants from different educational levels, subject areas, and geographical locations using larger and more diverse samples. Future research may also examine the effectiveness of AI literacy programs, prompt engineering training, and professional development interventions in improving teachers' readiness and confidence in integrating AI into teaching and learning.

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