



Determinants of Use and Integration of New Technologies in Military Education and Training Institutions in Cambodia

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ABSTRACT

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Modernizing education and training within the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) is critical to strengthening national defense capability and operational readiness amid evolving regional and global security participation. This study examines the key factors influencing modernization initiatives in RCAF training and educational institutions. It adopts the extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) framework, integrating constructs from the Theory of Planned Behavior, Diffusion of Innovation Theory, Theory of Reasoned Action, and Technology Acceptance Model. To enhance explanatory power, Self-Efficacy and Anxiety were incorporated into the UTAUT model. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 509 instructors, senior officers, and students across two Cambodian military universities. The findings indicate that Behavioral intention to use new technologies was found to be highly influenced by performance expectancy, self-efficacy, facilitating conditions, anxiety, and social influence, but not by effort expectancy. In turn, actual use of modern education and training technologies was highly influenced by behavioral intention. However, challenges such as limited resources, resistance to organizational change, and insufficient capacity- building efforts hinder progress. This study offers practical policy implications for defense leaders and emphasizes the importance of sustained institutional reform. It also underscores the need for further research to address existing gaps and support the long-term transformation of military education and training in Cambodia.

KEYWORDS:

Modernization, Use and Integration, New Technologies, Military Education and training.

1. INTRODUCTION

Effective integration of modernization in Cambodia's military education and training (MCMET) institutes is critical for strengthening defense capabilities and preparing personnel for contemporary security challenges. Understanding the key determinants requires assessing existing technological conditions and collecting insights from leaders, instructors, and trainees to identify areas for improvement. Historical analyses highlight gaps in unconventional warfare preparedness, underscoring the need for a flexible and adaptive curriculum (Nagl, 2022). Clearly defined goals, incorporation of tools such as simulations and

online platforms, and alignment with international standards can enhance engagement and learning outcomes (Young, 2018). A user-friendly military education system should incorporate interdisciplinary curricula, strengthen language and communication training, and address modern military requirements including joint operations and peacekeeping capabilities (Blasko, 2021).

Successful MCMET integration demands substantial investment in technological infrastructure and instructor capacity building. Allocating resources effectively is crucial and can be supported by public-private partnerships, international aid, and government funding. Regional and global collaborations further enhance training quality. Challenges such as financial constraints, cultural resistance, and geopolitical factors necessitate phased implementation with short-, medium-, and long-term goals. Success can be measured through improved trainee performance, increased participation in international peacekeeping missions, global

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recognition of Cambodian military qualifications, and elevated professionalism within the armed forces.

Modern warfare increasingly depends on technologies such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), cybersecurity, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), robotics, and precision-guided weapons. For the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF), integrating these technologies into modern education and training is crucial for modernization and national defense. Simulation and virtual reality (VR) tools, in particular, provide safe, realistic environments that develop decision-making skills and adaptability to evolving security challenges, offering strategic insights for policymakers and military leaders (Dunleavy et al., 2009).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) enhance military training by personalizing learning and adapting to individual performance, while data analytics enable real-time feedback and curriculum improvements. Cybersecurity training, supported by VR and Augmented Reality (AR) simulations, prepares personnel for digital warfare. The growing use of drones and UAVs systems also requires updated training programs. International collaboration and military aid promote knowledge sharing and technology adoption, while investment in research and development supports local innovation. Human resource development policies ensure skills match operational needs, and international standards support modernization. However, challenges such as financial constraints, cultural resistance, and rapid technological change may hinder effective technology integration (Evans & Britt, 2023).

Successful integration of MCMET depends on technology adoption, international collaboration, cultural relevance, Human Resource Development (HRD), infrastructure, and strategic planning, requiring evaluation of RCAF students' readiness to adopt these technologies.

Research Objectives

1. To identify key factors influencing the use and integration of new technologies in military education and training institutions in Cambodia.
2. To examine the degree of relationship among factors influencing the use and integration of new technologies in military education and training institutions in Cambodia.
3. To identify factors that influence behavioral intention to use new technologies in military education and training institutions in Cambodia.
4. To study the relationship between behavioral intention to use and use behavior of new technologies in military education and training institutions in Cambodia.

Research questions

- 1- What are factors affecting the use and integration of new technologies in military education and training institutions in Cambodia?

- 2- What is the degree of relationship among factors?

- 3- What is an appropriate theory for the use and integration of new technologies in military education and training institutions in Cambodia?

- 4- How can the proposed research model be validated?

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research methodology used to examine the hypotheses and conceptual framework on the modernization of Cambodian Military Education and Training (MCMET) within Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) institutions. It details the research design, participant selection, data collection instruments, and procedures, ensuring rigorous measurement of variables. The chapter emphasizes the validity and reliability of instruments, supported by pilot testing to confirm their quality. Descriptive statistics were employed to present demographic profiles, while Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test hypotheses and explore relationships among variables, providing robust validation of the conceptual framework.

A quantitative research approach was adopted to investigate factors influencing the adoption and integration of new technologies in military education and training. Structured questionnaires were distributed to a large sample of respondents, including both closed- and open-ended items to capture knowledge, attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors. This method was chosen for its efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and ability to reduce interviewer bias while accommodating large datasets. Overall, the methodology ensures systematic, reliable, and valid analysis of the determinants affecting technology adoption within RCAF military education, supporting evidence-based conclusions and recommendations.

The research population included management staff, trainers, and trainees from two key Cambodian military education institutions: the Health Science Institute (HSI) of the RCAF and the National Defense University (NDU) of Cambodia. The total population consists of 2,097 individuals, including 1,251 participants from HSI and 846 from NDU. From this population, a proportionate sample of 509 respondents (24.27%) was selected, comprising senior officers, lecturers, and students. The study also examines participants' demographic characteristics, particularly their technological knowledge and competence in using computer-related technologies.

Research on integrating new technologies in military education is based on several behavioral and technology adoption theories. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) introduced the Theory of Reasoned Action to explain how attitudes and subjective norms influence behavioral intentions. The

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Technology Acceptance Model Davis (1989); Davis et al. (1989) focuses on perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, while the Theory of Planned Behavior, Ajzen (1991) adds perceived behavioral control. The Diffusion of Innovations Theory Rogers (2003) explains how innovations spread through groups and organizations. The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology, Venkatesh et al. (2003) integrates these perspectives, identifying performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions as key factors influencing behavioral intention and technology adoption. Although these models differ in constructs, they agree that individuals' perceptions of modern education and training strongly influence technology usage. While UTAUT performs well, researchers extend it by adding factors such as anxiety and self-efficacy, which significantly affect behavioral intention and students' engagement with new technologies (Huang, 2020); (Wiafe et al., 2020).

This study extends the original UTAUT model by incorporating two additional constructs—self-efficacy and anxiety—resulting in an eight-construct framework, combining six original UTAUT factors with insights from prior research. Technology adoption theories emphasize that both facilitating factors and barriers influence the integration of new technologies in modern education and training. Across these frameworks, individuals' beliefs consistently shape technology usage behavior, and these beliefs can be influenced by system design, management strategies, and targeted training programs. Using an extended UTAUT framework provides a clear understanding of behavioral intentions toward integrating technologies in modern education and training. (Figure 1)

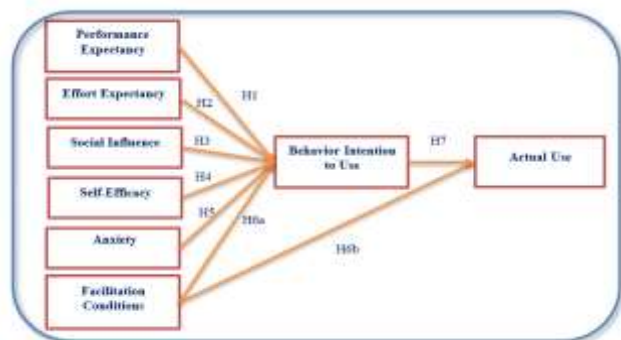


Figure 1: Research Framework
Source: Developed by Researcher

Performance expectancy (PE) reflects the belief that tools such as e-learning, artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), and information and communication technologies (ICT) enhance military education by improving learning outcomes, increasing training efficiency, and strengthening institutional reputation (Masadeh, 2016) and (Radianti, 2020). When instructors and students perceive these benefits, they are more motivated to adopt modern

training methods and integrate digital tools, making the framework a practical guide for promoting effective technology adoption in military education. Effort expectancy (EE) refers to the perceived ease of using technological systems. Studies by Teo (2010); Teo and Noyes (2011) show that technologies that are easy to learn and operate are more likely to be accepted by educators and students. Therefore, effort expectancy plays a critical role in encouraging the integration of innovative teaching approaches and digital learning tools in military education. Social influence (SI) also affects individuals' behavioral intentions to adopt new technologies. Research, including Samnang et al. (2021), indicates that encouragement from peers, instructors, and institutional leaders can strongly shape technology adoption decisions. In military environments, hierarchical structures, formal regulations, and mandatory policies further strengthen this influence.

According to hypothesis testing, the most significant predictor was Facilitating Conditions (FC), which had a significant positive impact on Behavioral Intention (BI) to adopt new technology in Cambodian military education. This result confirms earlier UTAUT-based research showing that staff members are encouraged to incorporate technology into training when they have access to sufficient resources, infrastructure, and institutional supervision. On the other hand, Actual Use (AU) was significantly impacted negatively by FC. The hierarchical and mandatory structure of military organizations may be the cause of this unanticipated outcome, as support mechanisms may be viewed as enforcement or control, resulting in compliance-based technology use rather than proactive, voluntary adoption.

Additionally, Self-efficacy (SE) influences individuals' confidence in using (Bandura & Wessels, 1997), while Anxiety (AN) reflects emotional reactions when interacting with new systems (Venkatesh, et al. 2003). Behavioral intention (BI) represents an individual's readiness to use technology and is considered the strongest predictor of actual technology adoption in military education and training.

III. RESULTS

The Alpha test results indicated that all eight study constructs demonstrated satisfactory reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.6. Performance Expectancy (0.828), Effort Expectancy (0.839), Social Influence (0.815), and Self-Efficacy (0.810) showed very good reliability, while Facilitating Conditions (0.806), Behavioral Intention to Use (0.866), Anxiety (0.730), and Actual Use (0.758) indicated good strength, confirming the adequacy of the research instrument.

Prior to structural equation modeling (SEM), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) confirmed the measurement model's validity, with all items significant and factor loadings above 0.50, demonstrating discriminant validity. Goodness-of-fit indices met recommended criteria (Hair et al., 2021) and

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convergent validity was acceptable, as Composite Reliability ranged from 0.754 to 0.866 despite some AVEs below 0.5. Discriminant validity was established when the square root of AVE in the diagonal correlation coefficients for each construct in the pertinent rows and columns has a higher value than the correlations with other constructs (Hair et al., 2013), as shown in Table 1.

Using AMOS, the study analyzed direct, indirect, and total effects among variables in Table 2. Direct effects occur without mediators, while indirect effects involve at least one mediator. Results showed performance expectancy, social influence,

self-efficacy, anxiety, and facilitating conditions significantly influenced behavioral intention to use new military technologies, while effort expectancy had no direct effect. Actual use was directly affected by facilitating conditions and behavioral intention. Facilitating conditions had the largest total effect, followed by self-efficacy, social influence, performance expectancy, and anxiety. Indirect- Effects confirmed their critical role in shaping both intention and actual technology use.

Table 1: Discriminant Validity

	PE	EE	SI	SE	AN	FC	BIU	AU
PE	0.670							
EE	0.369	0.759						
SI	0.505	0.256	0.727					
SE	0.372	0.147	0.297	0.720				
AN	-0.094	-0.456	-0.074	0.084	0.732			
FC	0.24	0.119	0.267	0.187	-0.072	0.700		
BIU	0.244	0.093	0.342	0.175	-0.03	0.659	0.671	
AU	0.148	0.068	0.113	0.252	-0.131	0.172	0.134	0.676

Source: Processed data by author

Table 2: Direct (DE), Indirect (IE), and Total Effects (TE) of Relationships

Independent Variables	Dependent variables								
	Behavioral Intention to Use (BI)				Actual Use (AU)				
	DE	IE	TE	R ²	DE	IE	TE	R ²	
Performant Expectancy (PE)	0.114		0.114	0.967		0.11	0.11	0.213	
Effort Expectancy (EE)	-0.003		-0.003			-0.003	-0.003		
Social Influences (SI)	-0.116		-0.116			-0.112	-0.112		
Shelf-Efficacy (SE)	0.159		0.159			0.154	0.154		
Anxiety (AN)	-0.069		-0.069			-0.067	-0.067		
Facilities Condition (FC)	1.792		1.792			-1.584	1.734		0.151
Behavioral Intention to Use (BI)						0.968			0.968

Source: Processed data by author

Table 3: Summary of Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypothesis	Std coef. (β)	t-value	p value	Test result
H1: PE-> BI	0.114	2.154	0.031*	Supported
H2: EE-> BI	-0.003	-0.104	0.917	No Supported
H3: SI-> BI	-0.116	-2.642	0.008**	Supported
H4: SE->BI	0.159	3.379	***	Supported
H5: AN->BI	-0.069	-2.941	0.003**	Supported
H6a: FC->BI	1.792	12.327	***	Supported
H6b: FC->AU	-1.584	-3.463	***	Supported
H7: BI->AU	0.968	4.099	***	Supported

Source: Processed data by author.

Remark: (*, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$; ***, $p, 0.001$)

Among eight hypotheses, performance expectancy (H1: PE-> BI), social influence (H3: SI-> BI), self-efficacy (H4: SE->BI), anxiety (H5: AN->BI), facilitating conditions (H6a: FC->BI and H6b: FC->AU), and behavioral intention (H7: BI->AU), were supported, while effort expectancy (H2: EE-> BI) was not. (Table 3).

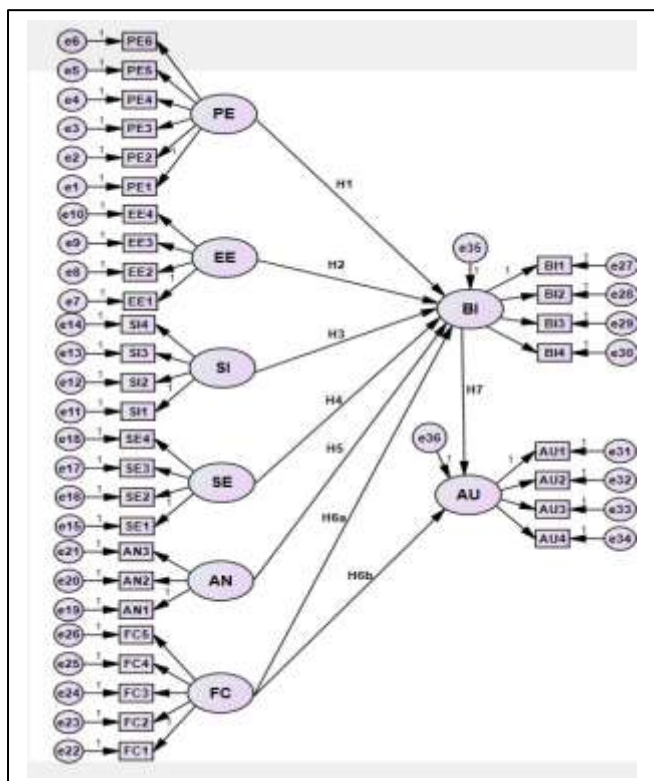


Figure 2, Conceptual Framework of Reliability Statist
Source: Processed data by author.

Figure 2, Conceptual Framework of Reliability Statist presents SEM hypothesis testing results for factors influencing the use and integration of new technologies in RCAF military education.

IV. DISCUSSION

Modernizing military education and training within the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) through modern education and training technologies presents a novel challenge. For successful integration of new technologies, military education institutions in Cambodia require a comprehensive plan that emphasizes flexibility, user-friendliness, and practical benefits. This study employed a modified UTAUT-2 model, incorporating two additional constructs—self-efficacy and anxiety—alongside the four traditional constructs: performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the analysis showed that performance expectancy, self-efficacy, facilitating conditions, anxiety, and social influence significantly influenced behavioral intention to use (BI) new technologies, while effort expectancy (EE) had no significant effect. Behavioral intention, in turn, strongly determined actual use (AU) of modern education and training technologies.

Performance expectancy, self-efficacy, and facilitating conditions reflect the belief that adopting new technologies will improve performance and enhance learning outcomes. Senior officers, lecturers, and students expressed willingness to adopt technologies that are effective, efficient, and productive, demonstrating the RCAF’s readiness to integrate innovative technologies to strengthen military capabilities. Anxiety, defined as the emotional response to using new systems, negatively affected BI, underscoring the need to address technological apprehension. Effort expectancy was insignificant, suggesting that military personnel prioritize performance outcomes over ease of use, as systems are often mandatory in controlled military settings. Social influence also negatively impacted BI, indicating that excessive top-down or peer pressure can reduce willingness to adopt new technologies.

Hypothesis testing for Facilitating Conditions (FC) and Behavioral Intention (BI) in the integration of new technologies in Cambodian military education revealed significant and contextually nuanced effects. H6a: Facilitating conditions (FC) strongly influenced BI, with a standardized estimate of 1.792, t-value 12.327, and $p < 0.001$, making it the most influential factor among all determinants in the study. This aligns with prior research in Cambodian universities and UTAUT-based studies (Try et al., 2022); (Birch & Irvine, 2009); (Magsamen-Conrad, 2015); (Tan, 2013); (Ali et al., 2016), confirming that supportive conditions, including resources, infrastructure, and guidance, strongly drive military personnel's intention to use and integrate new technologies. H6b: (FC) unexpectedly had a significant negative direct effect on Actual Use (AU) (standardized estimate -1.584, $t = -3.463$, $p < 0.001$). While UTAUT typically predicts a positive FC-AU relationship, the hierarchical and mandatory structure of military education may explain this result. In highly structured command systems, facilitating conditions may be perceived as institutional enforcement or external control rather than enabling support, reducing voluntary engagement and leading to compliance-driven usage rather than proactive adoption. This finding highlights the context-sensitive nature of FC in mandatory, high-authority organizations.

Overall, successful modern education and training technology adoption in RCAF depends on demonstrating clear benefits, providing institutional support, fostering individual confidence, and managing anxiety. Prioritizing performance outcomes while addressing emotional and social factors is essential for effective integration of modern technologies in military education and training.

V. CONCLUSION

The modernization of military education and training in Cambodia relies on the willingness of administrators, instructors, and students to embrace new technologies and innovative teaching methods. Successful integration of technology requires a balanced approach encompassing curriculum reform, instructor capacity building, infrastructure development, and international cooperation. Prioritizing adaptability and user-friendliness ensure that the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) can address complex twenty-first-century challenges.

The study draws on technology adoption theories, including the Theory of Reasoned Action, Technology Acceptance Model, Theory of Planned Behavior, and UTAUT. Extending UTAUT with self-efficacy (SE) and anxiety (AN), the eight-construct model reflects the structured military education context. Findings indicate that facilitating conditions primarily influence behavioral intention rather than actual use in mandated military settings, highlighting the importance of psychological readiness over infrastructure alone. Performance expectancy, self-efficacy, and facilitating

conditions positively support behavioral intention, while social influence and anxiety negatively affect it, reflecting hierarchical command structures and social dynamics.

Practically, the study provides recommendations for military educators and defense leaders, emphasizing that technology adoption must be supported by psychological readiness, competency alignment, and command structure considerations. Addressing socio-economic, political, and international factors further ensures personnel are prepared for modern digital education. These findings offer a foundation for Cambodian defense policymakers and military educators to design effective initiatives for sustainable integration of technology into military education and training programs.

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VII. DISCLOSURE

Regarding this study, the author discloses no conflicts of interest. The research, analysis, and publication of this paper were not influenced by any financial, personal, or professional ties.

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