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# Comparative study of academic culture and teaching practices among lecturers in Malaysia and Pakistan

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**Abstract**

This study aims to investigate and compare the teaching methods and academic cultures of lecturers in Pakistan and Malaysia. It examines significant topics such teaching tactics, evaluation techniques, pedagogical approaches, interactions between teachers and students, chances for professional growth, and opinions on what constitutes good instruction. The study also looks at how educational technology is incorporated and how historical, cultural, and socioeconomic factors affect academic practices in both nations. Semi-structured interviews with instructors from a range of higher education departments at universities in Pakistan and Malaysia were used as part of a qualitative study design. Purposive selection was used to guarantee diversity in experience, discipline, and academic standing. The study highlights both similarities and variations in teaching methods, showing that although both nations are shifting toward student-centered approaches, Malaysia integrates new pedagogy and technology in a more systematic and policy-driven manner. Pakistan, on the other hand, exhibits promise through grassroots innovation, even though it faces obstacles with infrastructure and institutional assistance. Additionally, the study finds that whilst integration varies between institutions in Pakistan, Malaysia more consistently incorporates Islamic ideals into academic procedures. The results offer insightful information on the changing academic cultures of both countries and advance our knowledge of how instructors view and carry out high-quality training. The study emphasizes the way enhancing teaching standards requires more faculty development, policy support, and teamwork. For stakeholders and educational authorities looking to promote academic achievement and apply best practices in comparable institutional and cultural contexts, it also provides implications.

**Keywords:** Academic culture, Teaching practice, Higher education, Lecturers, Malaysia and Pakistan

## 1.Introduction

The most important component for comprehending and enhancing the teaching and learning process is the teaching profession. Alderman (2013) asserts that they are closely tied to the strategies educators employ to shape their students' learning environments and increase their motivation and achievement levels. The research now in print has comprehensive components of instructional techniques that are connected to effective classroom learning and enhance student performance, claim Klieme and Vieluf (2009). Lecturers' attitudes, choices, and behaviors are greatly influenced by their teaching methods, even if they are frequently implicit. They are impacted by presumptions on instructional methodology and the nature of teaching and learning. Research indicates that these activities affect classroom dynamics, academic culture, and learning outcomes; the impacts differ based on the lecturers' educational backgrounds and grade level (Tantawy, 2020). Bowman et al. (2022) claim that personal experiences, education, and values are important factors that determine the behavior and decision-making processes of effective instructors in the classroom. Teaching methods, practices, and learning outcomes are all influenced by the views of the lecturers.

Research indicates that educators' beliefs significantly influence classroom practices, parental involvement, and broader academic culture across different educational levels (Aquino & Chavez, 2022). The debate surrounding quality in higher education has evolved over time, with early emphasis from sociologists on social context and more recent focus from cognitive psychologists on learning processes. Since the 1990s, cognitive psychology has dominated the discourse, stressing how factors such as gender, ethnicity, social class, religion, and nationality shape students' cognitive development. Globally, higher education systems are facing increasing pressures from rapid societal change, globalization, and technological progress (De Wit, 2019). Rising tertiary enrollment has led to larger, more diverse classrooms—posing new challenges for university educators managing students from varying cultural,

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educational, and socioeconomic backgrounds (Aina et al., 2022; Scherer, 2022). Numerous studies have explored academics' beliefs about teaching and learning methods (Kember & Kwan, 2000; Samuelowicz & Bain, 2001; Kember et al., 2008; Kennedy, 2010). Recently, growing attention has also been given to departmental culture and professional development (PD) in higher education (Ross et al., 2022; Khan, 2014; Knight & Trowler, 2000; Salmon & Wright, 2014). However, the interrelationship between these elements remains underexplored. Scholars argue that teaching practices and PD approaches are deeply shaped by their academic environments (Kálmán et al., 2019) and understanding lecturers' practices requires insight into how they perceive their departmental culture (Bruggeman et al., 2021; Chugh et al., 2023). Despite its importance, this area is rarely examined in university teaching research. Addressing this gap, Chaaban et al. (2023) aimed to explore the connections among teaching methods, professional growth, and departmental culture, with a focus on cross-group comparisons, given prior evidence of variation across disciplines and levels of teaching experience (Pekkarinen et al., 2020; Mälkki & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2012; Stes & Van Petegem, 2014).This study investigates how lecturers in Malaysia and Pakistan perceive academic culture and engage in knowledge sharing, focusing on how these perceptions influence their teaching practices, research interests, and academic performance. It emphasizes the importance of pedagogy, subject matter expertise, and adaptable teaching approaches in delivering high-quality instruction (Gess-Newsome et al., 2019; Vermote et al., 2020). Academically committed lecturers design relevant learning activities, adapt to student needs, and align with institutional policies and curriculum requirements (Shum & Luckin, 2019). In the context of Pakistan, academic culture supports lecturer involvement in research, publication, conferences, and professional development, all of which enhance teaching and learning outcomes (Shahid & Naveed, 2020).

Malaysian educators recognize the need to develop students' critical thinking, moral values, and academic integrity to remain effective in modern classrooms (Mohammadi & Karupiah, 2020). Through professional learning communities, they continuously refine their teaching practices, collaborate with peers, and stay current in their fields (Fauzi, Nya-Ling, et al., 2019). Academic culture significantly shapes instructional methods and student outcomes in higher education (Markey et al., 2023). Although both Malaysia and Pakistan strive to improve educational quality, contextual differences influence their teaching practices. However, limited comparative studies and small sample sizes restrict deeper insights. More research is especially needed on the role of educational technology in both countries (Abdullahi et al., 2023; Mohd Rasdi et al., 2023). This study examines academic culture and teaching strategies in Malaysia and Pakistan, focusing on areas such as professional development, research, classroom practices, and assessment, while also urging further global research on influencing educational factors (Arifin et al., 2024). This study looks at the academic culture, teaching strategies, and knowledge sharing between the Islamic International University Malaysia (IIUM) and Islamic International University Islamabad (IIUI). It investigates how academics' attitudes impact their teaching and collaboration to determine the systems' benefits and drawbacks to guide educational changes and guide policy. It might apply to other countries as well.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Academic Culture in Malaysia and Pakistan

Academic culture in Malaysia focuses a high importance on norms, hierarchy, and deference to authority. Respected senior professors frequently employ conventional teaching techniques including lectures and official tests. Nonetheless, the educational system is progressively moving toward more student-centered strategies that promote involvement and active learning in the classroom (Hamdan et al., 2014). Malaysian lecturers are recognized for their strong subject knowledge, which supports their roles as effective teachers and mentors (Paiman et al., 2023). To nurture students' creativity and critical thinking, educators are encouraged to adapt their teaching to various learning styles and promote collaborative, problem-solving environments (Calavia et al., 2021; Ramalingam et al., 2021). Malaysia's academic culture, shaped by its multicultural society, values formal academic settings and hierarchical respect, while increasingly emphasizing teamwork and interdisciplinary collaboration (Hosen et al., 2020). Senior faculty

often contribute by mentoring, engaging in collaborative research, and sharing knowledge through conferences and publications (Tan, 2016; Tangaraja et al., 2015). In Pakistan, university professors are expanding their knowledge across various academic fields, but traditional teaching methods and hierarchical structures still hinder the transition to student-centered learning (Afzal & Amin, 2022). Like Malaysia, Pakistan blends traditional cultural values with modern educational trends to foster academic discussions and information exchange (Raza & Awang, 2021). Teachers are not only seen as educators but also as mentors, guiding students in their intellectual and career development (Lodhi, 2012; Javaid et al., 2020; Bhatti & Hassan, 2024). Collaborative learning, such as group projects, is becoming more common, with universities increasing support for research and academic resources. Most Pakistani academics are active researchers, frequently publishing in both local and international journals (Bibi & Ali, 2017). Academic conferences and seminars play a key role in providing networking opportunities and sharing ideas among researchers, educators, and students (Wahid et al., 2024).

## 2.2 Teaching practices in Malaysia and Pakistan in higher education

This literature review examines teaching practices in Malaysia and Pakistan within their institutional, cultural, and religious contexts. While both nations aim to improve education, their approaches differ. Pakistani lecturers gain from diverse academic exposure but face limited access to professional development in research, technology, and pedagogy (Ehtsham et al., 2024; Iftikhar et al., 2022). Efforts are underway to bridge this gap through training and international collaboration (Batool et al., 2023). Assessment methods are gradually shifting toward alternatives like group work and presentations to enhance student evaluation (Kamran et al., 2023). In research-oriented universities, the emphasis on scholarly output often influences teaching priorities. University-level administrative support influences how effectively faculty can engage in research and innovative teaching, with resource availability varying across institutions (Murtaza & Hui, 2021). In Pakistan, Islamic values are commonly integrated into curricula (Raza & Awang, 2020), while Malaysia promotes effective teaching through structured professional development programs (Hamdan et al., 2014). Both countries are transitioning from lecture-based methods to student-centered approaches like group work and problem-based learning to enhance critical thinking and engagement (Ahmad et al., 2021). Malaysia also advances blended learning by integrating online and in-person instruction to foster flexible, interactive classrooms (Anthony et al., 2019).

Lecture-based instruction remains prevalent in Malaysia, often emphasizing content delivery and authoritative classroom management (Cicekci & Sadik, 2019). However, there is a growing move toward student-centered methods like collaborative and problem-based learning, which foster critical thinking and engagement (Ali, 2019). Supportive classroom environments and strong teacher-student relationships are increasingly valued for boosting student motivation (Franklin & Harrington, 2019). Although traditional assessments like exams are still widely used, universities now promote innovation in teaching through professional development opportunities such as seminars and workshops (Jasmi et al., 2022). Malaysian higher education also emphasizes inclusive, student-focused teaching, research productivity, and pedagogical excellence (Awang-Hashim et al., 2019; Muniandy & Abdullah, 2023). In both Malaysia and Pakistan, interactive teaching methods such as discussions and group projects are being adopted to encourage active learning (Benlahcene et al., 2020).

## 2.3 Theoretical framework (CHAT)

For conducting a comparative analysis of academic culture and teaching practices among lecturers in Malaysia and Pakistan, a suitable theoretical framework can provide a conceptual lens to guide the research and facilitate meaningful comparisons. In this case, Nunez (2021) the Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) can serve as a relevant framework to explore the complexities and interactions within the educational systems of both countries. Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) developed by Vygotsky in 1983 (Clifford, 2022; Tibi Thomas & Pillai, 2023) and further expanded by Engeström, provides a framework for understanding the social, cultural, and historical factors that shape human activities, including educational practices. It

emphasizes the interconnectedness of individuals, their socio-cultural context, and the tools and artifacts they employ in their activities.

- An activity system refers to the network of individuals, artifacts, rules, and division of labor that form a specific activity within a particular context (Clifford, 2022). In the context of this study, the activity systems would represent the academic cultures and teaching practices in Malaysia and Pakistan.
- Mediating artifacts are the tools and resources used within an activity system to support and mediate human actions (Adamides, 2023). In the context of academic culture and teaching practices, mediating artifacts can include educational policies, curricula, textbooks, teaching materials, and technology tools employed by lecturers in both countries Malaysia and Pakistan.
- CHAT recognizes that activity systems are dynamic and often characterized by contradictions and tensions arising from various aspects, such as conflicting goals, institutional policies, and socio-cultural norms. Analyzing these contradictions can provide insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by lecturers in both Malaysia and Pakistan (Saris et al., 2023).
- Application of CHAT to Comparative Analysis: Using CHAT as a theoretical framework, the comparative analysis can examine the following elements in the academic culture and teaching practices of both countries.
- Analyze the key components of the academic culture and teaching practices in Malaysia and Pakistan, including the roles and expectations of lecturers, institutional values, and practices.
- Explore the tools, resources, and institutional structures that influence teaching practices and shape the academic culture in both countries. This can include examining educational policies, curricula, assessment methods, and technology integration.
- Identify and analyze the contradictions and tensions within the activity systems of both countries. This can involve investigating the challenges faced by lecturers, such as workload, limited resources, language barriers, and the influence of cultural and societal norms.

Researchers can gain a comprehensive understanding of the academic culture and teaching practices in Malaysia and Pakistan. This framework allows for the examination of how the socio-cultural, historical, and institutional factors interact with lecturers' practices, shaping the educational landscape in both countries. The findings can provide valuable insights into the similarities, differences, challenges, and best practices, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of higher education systems in Malaysia, Pakistan, and potentially other contexts as well.

## 3. Methodology

This chapter is organized around nine research questions exploring lecturers' understanding of academic culture and quality teaching, as well as their teaching practices in Malaysia and Pakistan. It also compares similarities and differences between the two countries. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with ten lecturer participants. Table 4.1 presents their demographic information such as gender, teaching experience, subject area, and position—which helped contextualize and analyses the interview responses while maintaining participant anonymity.

**Table 4.1.** Participant demographics of Malaysia

| # | Country | Gender | Years of Teaching | Subjects (Shortened) | Position |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Malaysia | Male | 16 | Philosophy of Education, Educational Leadership, Teacher Development, History of Education | Associate Professor |
| 2 | Malaysia | Female | 16 | Qualitative Research Methods, Methods of Moral education, Community Equipment | Dean |
| 3 | Malaysia | Male | 25 | Teaching Arabic, Instructional Technology, Research Methodology, Methods of Teaching Language, | Lecturer |
| 4 | Malaysia | Male | 16 | Islamic Education | Lecturer |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | Malaysia | Female | 16+ | Qualitative Research Methods, Educational Psychology | Associate Professor |

**Participant demographics of Pakistan**

| # | Country | Gender | Years of Teaching | Subjects | Position |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Pakistan | Female | 15 | School Management, Teacher Education needs and Challenges | Assistant Professor |
| 2 | Pakistan | Male | 17 | Measurement & Evaluation, Methods and Materials in Teacher Education | Assistant Professor |
| 3 | Pakistan | Female | 16 | Psych Research Methods, Advanced Psychotherapy | Assistant Professor |
| 4 | Pakistan | Male | 25 | Teacher Education, Distance Learning, Curriculum Development | Dean |
| 5 | Pakistan | Male | 16 | Educational Psychology, Curriculum Development, Teaching Methods, Educational Research | Assistant Professor |

### 3.1 Research design

The present research is qualitative while comparative study was used to achieve the objectives of the research. A comparative study helps the researchers to investigate the perceptions of participants who experience and identify the commonalities among participants. The qualitative comparative design was used to explore the lecturer's point of view about self-efficacy and the nature of the teaching-learning practice. Comparative study is a remarkable research approach in qualitative design to explore the social reality of an organization.

### 3.2 Population

The study included faculty from Islamic International University Malaysia (IIUM) and Islamic International University Islamabad (IIUI), focusing on the School of Education at Islamic International University Malaysia (IIUM) and the faculty of Educational Studies of Islamic International University Islamabad (IIUI). This research aimed to compare academic cultures and teaching practices in Malaysia and Pakistan. A diverse and sufficient sample was selected, considering accessibility, timeframe, resources, and ethical considerations for valid comparative analysis.

### 3.3 Sample and sampling

This qualitative study used purposive sampling to select 12 lecturers from education departments in Malaysia and Pakistan, aiming to capture diverse perspectives based on teaching background, academic level, and subject expertise. Data was collected to saturation, using small sample sizes to enable in-depth investigation. Time, participant willingness, and accessibility were practical considerations that affected the selection process. The sample matched the study's goal of comparing academic cultures and teaching methods and was evenly distributed across the two nations in terms of age, gender, experience, and discipline.

### 3.4 Data collection

The researcher personally collected data using a qualitative method, establishing rapport and trust with participants to guarantee transparency. To obtain deeper insights, semi-structured interviews were utilized to examine lecturers' viewpoints and methods regarding high-quality instruction. Data was collected from faculty members at the Islamic International University Malaysia (IIUM) and the Islamic International University Islamabad (IIUI), including lecturers, assistant professors, and professors across various departments. Prior to data collection, formal permissions were obtained. The interviews focused on academic culture, teaching strategies, assessment practices, and institutional support, offering a rich understanding of instructional practices in both countries.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Qualitative methodologies were employed for the analysis of the gathered data. To find recurrent themes and trends, qualitative data was coded and subjected to thematic analysis. The data was transcribed in the prescribed format and at the end

the whole data was critically analyzed and coded step by step to explore the emerging themes relating to the stated objectives of this research study. The themes were used to critically analyze to make further meanings and interpretations of the data. The data collected was transcribed in textual form. Data was organized through NVivo 14 to manage all the data into themes.

## 4. Findings and analysis

### Research question 1: Teaching practices implemented by lecturers in Malaysia

### Student learning approaches: active learning engagement

This analysis emphasizes the learning standards in Malaysia and Pakistan with special focus on country's policies and educational pedagogy. Active learning is given particular attention in Malaysia. Students are urged to engage in group work and share ideas during discussions. Additionally, teachers make use of technology to enhance lessons through the employment of digital simulations, online collaboration, and the use of multimedia.

One Malaysian lecturer shared:

***M 3 also said that***

*"I am practicing various teaching methods. Mainly, I primarily the lecture method and related activities such as group discussions, group projects, test-based learning, and project-based learning".*

The educator in IIUM combines traditional lectures with modern, active learning methods—like group discussions, projects, and test-based learning—to

create an engaging and inclusive classroom environment. This approach supports diverse learning styles and encourages student participation, enhancing understanding and retention. While collaborative teaching methods are well-established in IIUM, they are still emerging in IIUI, where challenges like limited institutional support and inadequate teacher training hinder their wider adoption.

One participant from IIUM shared:

***M 1 said***

*"We produce students who engage in critical thinking."*

*"We call that HOTS (Higher-Order Thinking start with knowledge, for example, then understanding, application, and still use the term synthesis. Then we have evaluation and creation." And I always remind my students about critical thinking, making sure that they start with a positive mindset."*

*"They should start or aim to instil critical thinking in teaching and learning by beginning with positive thinking." Because we want to Skills)."*

The lecturer from IIUM highlights the importance of a progressive learning approach using Bloom's Taxonomy, which moves students from basic knowledge to higher-order skills like evaluation and creation. By fostering a positive mindset and encouraging Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), the approach promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. This method aims to develop motivated, independent, and analytical learners capable of applying their knowledge to real-world challenges.

### Role of technology in education

Though to varying degrees, technology has a significant impact on the teaching and learning processes in both countries. Malaysia has completely embraced technology in education by integrating e-learning tools, smart classrooms, and digital platforms to encourage interactive learning. A Malaysian educator offered their perspectives on the ways in which technology has affected their instruction:

***M 2 mentioned that***

*"We focus on student-centered learning, and we use technology enhancement for active learning. We have learning platforms where students can engage in project-based work, group discussions, and collaborative activities. Technology is very much embedded in our teaching strategies to ensure the students are engaged in their learning."*

By encouraging active participation through group projects, conversations, and teamwork, the school takes a student-centered approach. By fostering

collaborative learning environments and guaranteeing that students actively interact with the material rather than passively absorbing it, technology facilitates these practices. This strategy demonstrates a dedication to creating an engaging, dynamic learning environment that emphasizes student involvement and comprehension.

### In Pakistan

### Reflective learning

#### *P 3 said:*

*"If we talk about critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills I think we can't deal with all these with lectures only We usually give some practical tasks, some assignments or activities and they have to think about how to do them, and how to be more innovative as compared to the other students of the class and then based on that, we evaluate how creative they are And how well they can understand the problem and bring innovation to it".*

Active student participation through real-world assignments, projects, and hands-on activities is necessary to foster abilities like creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Passive listening alone is not enough. These activities challenge kids to think freely, explore ideas, and generate innovative solutions, frequently creating healthy competition. In addition to enhancing comprehension, these kinds of exercises promote the use of creative solutions to challenging issues.

### Technology enhancement of teaching learning

***P 2 said:*** *"We give the students topics to make their presentations. They make presentations and assignments in their groups. There are different components, like reading material, presentation time, group discussion time, and we share their things on LMS. We share them on LMS".*

Students collaborate in groups to develop presentation themes that we assign to them. As part of the group work, they also finish related assignments in addition to their presentations. Reading materials, presentations, and group discussions are some of the elements that make up the learning process. We upload all pertinent materials and student work to the Learning Management System (LMS), where everything is arranged and shared for both students and teachers, to facilitate their learning and guarantee simple access to resources.

### High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)

#### *P 5 said*

*"Mostly, the content has gaps in promoting critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. So, I need to revise the content as I am noticing that the students lack critical skills and problem-solving methods."*

The findings reveal significant gaps in Pakistan's curriculum regarding the development of critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. The current focus on rote memorization limits students' opportunities to engage in higher-level thinking. To address this, the curriculum should incorporate interactive strategies like inquiry-based, project-based, and problem-based learning, which can enhance academic performance and better prepare students for real-world challenges and future careers.

### Research Question 2: Lecturers understanding of academic culture in Malaysia

### Collaborative academic culture

#### *M 2 said*

*"Sharing and knowledge management" is very much done actively. If this is done, then definitely it will improve or enhance our teaching practice because we learn from each other".*

At the Islamic International University Malaysia (IIUM), lecturers prioritize collaboration and professional growth through knowledge sharing. Peer learning enhances creativity, reflection, and teaching effectiveness. Collaboration is supported through digital platforms, meetings, and professional learning communities (PLCs), with tools like Google Drive and Moodle facilitating resource sharing. Incentives such as recognition and CPD points encourage participation, fostering a vibrant and connected academic community.

### *M 4 said*

*"For example, I mentioned that collaboration and interdisciplinary work also can influence teaching practices". However, having interdisciplinary work or collaboration between all experts can give the quality and impact the academic culture".*

At the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), lecturers engage in peer observation and feedback to reflect on and improve their teaching practices. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) foster collaboration and deeper dialogue among educators, supported by incentives like recognition, publication opportunities, and CPD points. Academic leaders play a key role in sustaining these initiatives. A lecturer also highlighted the value of interdisciplinary collaboration, which enhances teaching quality, promotes innovation, and enriches the academic environment by integrating diverse perspectives for a more inclusive and dynamic learning experience.

## Teaching excellence through evaluation and integration

### *3 said*

*"I think the lecturers contribute to the overall academic culture based on their interests. So, some lecturers are more interested in teaching and some of the lecturers are interested in teaching and research. And some lecturers are more interested in teaching and community activities.*

Depending on their own interests and strengths, lecturers at this university contribute to academic culture in a variety of ways, according to the lecturer. Teaching may be the primary focus of some lecturers but teaching and research or teaching and community involvement may be equally important to others. This demonstrates how a variety of professional interests and passions influence academic culture by highlighting the variety of roles and contributions made by professors inside a university.

## Institutional support (require funds, professional development center, academic acknowledgement)

### IIUM lecturer 4 said:

**"***We must be the professional development whereby we have to just train ourselves and do the continuous professional development. Not only that, the lecturers also must contribute to the community and the broader society, not only in the university but also out of the university".*

They go on to describe professional progress. As a crucial component of their academic duties, the lecturers stress the significance of ongoing professional development. They understand that to stay productive in their positions, they must continuously develop their knowledge and abilities through self-improvement and continuing training. Professional development is viewed as an ongoing process as opposed to a one accomplishment. They also emphasize that their responsibilities go beyond university teaching and research. Along with actively contributing to the community and larger society, lecturers are expected to use their knowledge to positively influence both inside and outside of the classroom.

## Research collaboration in IIUI

### *P 5 said*

**"***Prevailing attitude that the teachers have intentions for collaboration and discussions with the other faculty members. So, the second prevailing attitude is the administrative in which we have regular instructions from the industry management for taking the practices and adopting the instructions to promote academic culture".*

*"Basically, academic culture is that there is collaboration in the research at our university. The second thing is that we have regular meetings to promote our teaching practices and discuss other academic matters".*

Faculty at Islamic International University Islamabad (IIUI) emphasize an academic culture built on cross-faculty collaboration, idea sharing, and professional support. Administrative leadership and corporate influence help align academic practices with current trends. Regular meetings and collaborative research

promote ongoing professional development, with teamwork and a strong focus on research and instructional improvement shaping the university's academic environment.

### In IIUI Innovative Teaching methods

#### *P 4 said*

*"For critical thinking, you need creativity, curiosity, and reaction. All these critical thinking aspects are done in problem-based learning. Automatically, by default of the teaching method, creativity, and critical thinking come. The student's knowledge increases, and curiosity increases. Creativity increases. Questioning and reasoning increase".*

The lecturer highlights the close relationship between critical thinking and creativity, curiosity, and responsiveness. Problem-based learning naturally cultivates these fundamental components. The lecturer claims that because this teaching approach pushes students to think critically and solve real-world situations, it naturally fosters critical thinking. As a result, pupils develop greater curiosity and creativity in addition to gaining deeper information. Critical thinking is a crucial result of this teaching strategy since it greatly enhances their capacity to inquire, reason, and consider many viewpoints.

### Research skills development (Academic Research Events for students, Research Development Skills in students, Research Trainings)

### In Pakistan

#### *P 2 said*

*"In our university, we practically ask them to assign a seminar, arrange a workshop, or visit. So, students come to that, and they do it out of curiosity. So that they can learn the relevant courses. Suppose, for example, there are two courses of our research project and educational research. And in research report writing, they collect the data and write up the thesis type or research project type. After that, they make it short. Like in Viva, we arrange a conference for the students. They arrange a conference, and they are very happy about it. And everyone shares their experiences. That is what came into my research, what came into my research. Even if it is just one word, one paragraph, there is no finding or conclusion. But in that, they share their experience".*

The university promotes a hands-on, student-centered learning approach by encouraging students to organize academic events like seminars, workshops, and educational trips. Courses such as Educational Research and Research Project/Report Writing play a central role, guiding students through the full research process from creating synopses to collecting data, writing reports, and presenting findings at student conferences or viva sessions. These activities foster curiosity, critical thinking, strategic planning, and real-world application of knowledge. By taking ownership of their learning, students build confidence, deepen their understanding, and develop essential academic and professional skills. The focus is not solely on research outcomes, but on valuing the process itself enhancing reflection, communication, creativity, and community engagement.

### Research through Technology (AI in Research, Innovation in Research, Innovative teaching methods)

### In Pakistan

#### *P 2 said*

*"Our students are very anxious. They are anxious to use CHATGPT. To use AI tools. And to use humans. We have held seminars on this. We will use it. But how to use it for academic purposes. So that they learn from it. And not become slaves to it".*

Our students' curiosity and desire to investigate cutting-edge technologies like ChatGPT and other AI tools are growing. Many of them are actively looking for ways to integrate these tools into their academic work because they are thrilled about the opportunities they present. We have planned talks and seminars to address the ethical and efficient application of AI in education since we recognize this interest. Teaching students how to use these technologies in a relevant, academic setting is more important to us than simply using them. Helping them use AI for research, learning, and skill

improvement without becoming unduly reliant on it is the aim. Instead, then letting AI take the place of their own critical thinking, we want students to continue using it as a helpful tool.

### Research Question 3: Lecturer's understanding of quality teaching in Malaysia

### Enhance student learning

### AI and Technology in teaching and learning

#### *M 1said*

*"We do not reject technology, because technology is called one of the elements, which is supportive in education. It's not the main thing for us in education here. Sometimes it becomes the main, but it's something supportive".*

We acknowledge technology as a helpful tool that contributes significantly to improving the learning process, not as a means of rejecting its usage in the classroom. Technology is a useful tool that enhances and supports teaching and learning, even though it is not seen as the primary emphasis of education in our setting. Technology may become more important in some circumstances, such as online education or digital testing. But fundamentally, it still serves to further educational objectives rather than take the place of the fundamental components of good instruction, such meaningful engagement, critical thinking, and interpersonal contact.

### Teaching and learning practices

#### *Participant 3 said*

*"Teaching methodologies and lectures give practical tasks or involve students, and the directive teaching mode is very effective. Certain problem-solving skills or analytical activities can be assigned to students, so they think and respond instead of just traditional lectures only these are very productive".*

Lecturers emphasize the importance of interactive teaching methods to promote critical thinking and deeper understanding. While traditional lectures convey basic knowledge, they often lack engagement. To address this, educators incorporate analytical tasks, problem-solving activities, and hands-on projects, encouraging active student participation. Directive teaching—where instructors provide clear guidance while fostering interaction is widely viewed as effective. This approach empowers students to take ownership of their learning and helps develop essential academic and professional skills through meaningful engagement.

### Innovative pedagogy

#### *P 2 said*

*"The discussion type, the student's involvement, and the projects. And students have to assign tasks. The teacher's role must be a facilitator instead of a teacher. This methodology is more effective for quality improvement and quality participation".*

Lecturers at this university stress the importance of project assignments, active student participation, and discussion-based learning in raising educational standards. According to them, assignments and duties should motivate students to take charge of their education and interact more intimately with the subject matter. With this method, the instructor takes on the role of a facilitator rather than a traditional knowledge provider, helping students as they investigate, challenge, and apply what they have learned. A more student-centered learning environment where students are encouraged to work together, exercise critical thinking, and solve issues is fostered by this change in the role of the teacher. Lecturers claim that this approach increases student participation and enhances the quality of learning results, making the educational process more effective and meaningful.

### Theme 4

### Quality teaching through research

#### *P 5 said*

*"The institution is supportive in every aspect. Just like they are continuously engaging us in managing the workshops, training programs, seminars, and symposiums. They are also supporting in conducting the research and producing the research articles and books. And, in collaborations with other national and international institutions."*

According to them, the group offers instructors substantial assistance in every facet of their

professional growth. "The administration actively organizes and participates in workshops, training programs, seminars, and symposiums to enhance faculty members' academic knowledge and teaching abilities," they write. Because of their constant involvement, educators remain current on the latest methods, trends, and developments in the field of education. The institute provides substantial research funding in addition to professional development initiatives. Lecturers are encouraged to conduct research, write research articles, and publish scholarly books. This not only promotes the intellectual growth of each student but also enhances the institution's general reputation and intellectual output. The university also opens doors for joint research projects, scholarly exchanges, and exposure to different teaching philosophies by promoting collaborations with other domestic and international universities. This kind of support system creates an atmosphere that encourages professional growth, network expansion, and significant contributions to the academic community.

### 4.1 Comparative analysis of Malaysia and Pakistan

**Table 1:** Research question 1: Teaching practices implemented by lecturers in Malaysia and Pakistan

| Themes | Malaysia IIUM | Pakistan IIUI |
|---|---|---|
| Teaching Methods | Emphasizes student-centered learning with active participation. Uses case studies, group work, inquiry-based and problem-based learning, and presentations. | Still largely relies on traditional, lecture-based instruction. Student-centered methods are recognized but not widely adopted. |
| Development of HOTS | Teachers actively guide students through Bloom's Taxonomy stages to develop Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) including evaluation, analysis, and creativity. | Focus remains on content knowledge acquisition. HOTS development is limited due to lack of training and systemic support. |
| Technology Utilization | High integration of technology including gamification, smart classrooms, WhatsApp groups, multimedia, and e-learning platforms. Technology is a core component of the learning process. | Technology is used minimally, mostly to distribute materials via WhatsApp or email. Lack of infrastructure limits further integration. |
| Classroom Culture | Encourages creative expression, autonomy, adaptability, and student choice in presentation formats. | Culture is more teachers driven. Creativity and student autonomy are less emphasized due to systemic constraints. |
| Educational Administration | Institutions offer structured support for faculty, including time management tools, professional development, and research support. Faculty manage students and research efficiently. | Limited institutional support: instructors often juggle multiple roles, hindering adoption of new teaching methods or deep student engagement. |
| Assessment Techniques | Uses formative assessments like quizzes, presentations, in-class questioning, and feedback. Emphasis on continuous evaluation that supports deep learning. | Summative assessments (e.g., final exams) dominate. Formative techniques are present but not systematically implemented. |
| Islamic Values in Education | Systematically integrated into curriculum and teaching. References Hadith, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, and others to promote moral and intellectual growth. | Islamic principles are incorporated |
| Innovation in Pedagogy | Highly innovative, with continual adaptation of new methods aligned with learning outcomes and curriculum reforms. | Transitioning phase; innovation exists but is limited by resources, training, and administrative pressure. |
| Faculty Workload | Workload is better managed, allowing time for experimentation and mentorship. | Instructors face heavy workloads, limiting the ability to innovate or engage deeply with students. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Support for Creativity | Activities are planned to promote independence, originality, and creative thinking. | Focus on creativity; teaching is often exam oriented. |

**Table 2:** Research question 2: Lecturers understanding of academic culture in Malaysia and Pakistan

| Themes | Malaysia (IIUM) | Pakistan (IIUI) |
|---|---|---|
| Core Focus in Academic Culture | Emphasis on peer collaboration, interdisciplinary engagement, and reflective teaching practices. | Focus on administrative alignment, industry relevance, and practical research training. |
| Collaboration Academic Culture | Bottom-up collaboration via peer-to-peer learning, communities of practice, and interdisciplinary networking. | Top-down collaboration, guided by administrative policies and peer intentions. Faculty meets to discuss academic concerns. |
| Professional Development | Structured support through CPD points, teaching awards, and digital repositories to promote teaching excellence. | Emphasis on training related to emerging technologies, AI, and global academic standards. |
| Scholarship of Teaching & Learning | Strong alignment with SOTL—integration of research into teaching, promotion of reflective pedagogy. | Research and teaching are aligned, but practical application and innovation are more emphasized than reflective practice. |
| Student-Centered Approaches | Integrated through Islamic values, collaborative learning, and values-driven teaching strategies. | Increasing use of cutting-edge methods like flipped classrooms and problem-based learning to enhance engagement. |
| Research Integration | Research is integrated with teaching, mostly at postgraduate levels, and framed through SoTL and Islamic ethics. | Early research exposure at the undergraduate level—students present at conferences, write reports, organize seminars. |
| Use of Technology | Well-supported integration of digital tools, but more focused on structured institutional platforms and collaborative systems. | Adopting AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) for teaching and research; more experimental and responsive to tech trends. |
| Islamic Values Influence | Strong and systematic integration into curriculum and faculty culture; a cornerstone of IIUM's pedagogy. | Present in teaching and curriculum but varies in consistency and depth across departments and institutions. |
| Institutional Support | Robust and organized through professional learning communities, SOTL incentives, and structured mentorship. | Support exists but more administratively driven; emphasis on research productivity and technological upskilling. |
| Strengths | Collaborative academic culture, structured SOTL practices, values-driven pedagogy, peer empowerment. | Innovation in research, early student research training, adoption of AI tools, responsiveness to global trends. |
| Areas of Ongoing Development | Increasing responsiveness to rapid technology changes and industry needs. | Strengthening institutional support for reflective teaching and collaborative academic communities. |

**Table 3**: Research question 3: Lecturer's understanding of quality teaching in Malaysia and Pakistan

| Themes | Malaysia | Pakistan |
|---|---|---|
| Teaching Methods | Institutionalized shift to student-centered learning (e.g., PBL, inquiry-based learning, Bloom's Taxonomy). | Student-centered approaches gaining traction, e.g., PBL and flipped classrooms, but driven by individual initiatives. |
| Creative Pedagogy | Supported through CPD programs, gamification, and real-world application of learning. | Creativity visible in classroom discussions, projects, and problem-solving, but support is inconsistent. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Evaluation Practices | Emphasizes balanced formative and summative assessments, with real-time feedback, peer review, and presentation skills. | Summative-heavy evaluation system (e.g., final exams), with limited and uneven use of formative assessments. |
| Research Integration | Encourages research-informed teaching via institutional mandates and CPD-driven alignment of research and teaching. | Strong grassroots integration of research; students are engaged early in conferences, reports, and applied projects. |
| Pedagogical Content Knowledge | Focused on blending modern pedagogy with Islamic philosophy, through structured faculty development and curriculum design. | Individual faculty often experiment with new methods; pedagogical training exists but varies across institutions. |
| Academic Resources & Technology | Well-equipped with smart classrooms, e-learning platforms, AI tools, and consistent infrastructure investment. | Use of technology like WhatsApp and email is common, but full integration into pedagogy is limited by resources. |
| Integration of Islamic Values | Core to curriculum at IIUM—Islamic worldview is fused with Western knowledge to develop ethically competent graduates. | Islamic principles are recognized in theory but less structured in daily pedagogy across most universities. |
| Institutional Support for Teaching | Strong and policy-driven: CPD, teaching excellence awards, resource access, and national quality frameworks. | Exists but less uniform. Institutes like IPD offer training, but scale and consistency are challenges. |
| Infrastructure & Funding | Backed by diverse funding (governmental, institutional, private); allows experimentation and innovation. | Infrastructure varies significantly; funding gaps limit broad pedagogical transformation in some universities. |
| Technology Integration | System-wide integration of digital tools; tech used for engagement, personalization, and content delivery. | Technology used mostly for communication and material sharing; limited institutional drive for deep integration. |
| Policy Orientation | Strong alignment of pedagogy with national policy, continuous improvement embedded in system design. | More fragmented approach: innovation exists but policy implementation is uneven across regions and institutions. |
| Strengths | Cohesive, values-integrated, and technology-supported model; clear national direction and institutional alignment. | Research engagement, classroom innovation, grassroots creativity, and rising faculty motivation to improve quality. |
| Challenges | Need to adapt faster to global tech trends and expand industry linkage. | Needs resource investment, policy cohesion, and scaling of innovation across institutions. |

Tables 1, 2 and 3 reveal key differences between IIUM (Malaysia) and IIUI (Pakistan) in teaching approaches, technology use, classroom culture, administration, assessment, and integration of Islamic values. IIUM offers a structured, student-centered learning environment supported by institutional policies, CPD programs, and technology-enhanced instruction. In contrast, IIUI remains in a transitional phase, where innovation often depends on individual lecturers and is constrained by limited support and heavier workloads.

Both institutions promote collaboration, innovation, and professional development, but IIUM systematically embeds Islamic values and reflective teaching practices through frameworks like SOTL. IIUI, meanwhile, emphasizes industrial relevance, undergraduate research, and growing use of AI tools such as ChatGPT. IIUM stands out for its institutionalized use of inquiry-based and problem-based learning and its balance of formative and summative assessments. IIUI has made progress in research-led instruction and flipped classrooms, though implementation is uneven due to funding and policy gaps.

In terms of values, IIUM consistently blends Islamic and Western educational philosophies, while IIUI's integration of Islamic principles varies by department. Overall, IIUM represents a more cohesive and well-supported academic model, whereas IIUI shows promise through its research-driven and adaptive culture but requires stronger institutional backing to sustain its innovations.

## 5. Discussion

IIUM (Malaysia) and IIUI (Pakistan) share the goal of enhancing higher education but follow distinct developmental paths. IIUM has adopted student-centered approaches such as problem-based, inquiry-based learning and group projects, aligning with Malaysia's holistic education goals and frameworks like Bloom's Taxonomy and HOTS (Kamaruddin et al., 2020). In contrast, these methods are still emerging at IIUI, where their adoption is limited by weak institutional support and lack of professional development (Khan & Mahmood, 2017; Rehman et al., 2022). Technologically, IIUM leads with tools like LMS, smart classrooms, and gamification, aligning closely with global 21st-century educational practices, while IIUI lags in this area.

This study compared the academic cultures and teaching practices of IIUM (Malaysia) and IIUI (Pakistan), showing that although both institutions aim to enhance the quality of higher education, they follow different developmental paths shaped by their national contexts. At IIUM, student-centered learning approaches such as problem-based learning (PBL), inquiry-based learning, and group projects are well established and supported through national frameworks like Bloom's Taxonomy and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), aligning with Kamaruddin et al. (2020). In contrast, these methods are still emerging at IIUI, implemented with the lack of budget support, a challenge also noted by Khan & Mahmood (2017) and Rehman et al. (2022).

In terms of technology use, IIUM integrates advanced tools such as learning management systems (LMS), smart classrooms, and gamification in ways that reflect global 21st-century education practices. These efforts are supported by structured institutional strategies and regular training, echoing Rahman et al. (2018). IIUI, on the other hand, is gradually adopting basic platforms like WhatsApp and LMS for classroom use. However, as noted by Ali & Ullah (2021), technology use in Pakistani classrooms remains largely passive and geared toward content delivery and interactive engagement.

Institutional support for faculty differs significantly between the two universities. IIUM faculty benefit from organized professional development, time management programs, and research funding, which promote instructional innovation. At IIUI, they arranged the professional development trainings for the lecturers but heavy teaching workloads and resulting in stress and reduced motivation concerns echoed in the findings of Farooq & Habib (2020).

Assessment practices also vary. IIUM employs a balance of formative and summative evaluations, including presentations, peer feedback, and reflective exercises, which support deeper learning (Yusoff & Hashim, 2019). At IIUI, assessments remain primarily exam-based, limiting opportunities for feedback and critical thinking and summative assessment. Although reforms are underway, as reported by Shah & Javed (2023), formative assessment remains underutilized and inconsistently applied (Haider & Farooq, 2020).

The integration of Islamic values into higher education also differs. At IIUM, Islamic ethics are systematically embedded in teaching practices, curriculum design, and faculty culture—an approach supported by Abdullah & Saad (2019). The university references classical Islamic scholars and integrates moral reasoning into classroom interactions, reflecting Malaysia's broader goal of harmonizing faith with modern education. In contrast, Pakistan's approach is less consistent, with Islamic principles mostly confined to content and not regularly embedded into pedagogy a gap noted by Qureshi et al. (2020).

Professional collaboration and development are better institutionalized at IIUM, where the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) framework encourages teachers to integrate research into teaching and reflect on their practices. These efforts are supported by continuous professional development (CPD) points, teaching awards, and structured peer collaboration (Hashim & Embi, 2020; Ahmad & Roslan, 2021). At IIUI, collaboration is more top-down, with administrative policies guiding

initiatives. While peer interaction exists, it is often informal and less structured, as observed by Khan et al. (2018) and Rehman & Bano (2022).

Research engagement is approached differently at both institutions. IIUM primarily focuses on postgraduate research, incorporating Islamic ethics and reflective practices to develop students both morally and intellectually (Abdullah & Ahmad, 2017). In contrast, IIUI places strong emphasis on undergraduate research. Students frequently participate in conferences, write reports, and organize seminars encouraging practical skills but often lacking the ethical depth found in IIUM's model (Shah & Rehman, 2023).

Technology integration also reflects institutional contrasts. IIUM takes a structured approach, integrating tools like AI, smart classrooms, and e-learning platforms into regular teaching while providing systematic faculty training. Meanwhile, IIUI is more experimental, with growing use of tools like ChatGPT but without comprehensive support systems in place. This reflects findings from Ali & Jamil (2023), who emphasized the need for Pakistan to adopt a more strategic technology framework.

Despite these differences, both institutions are gradually moving toward more innovative and student-centered teaching. IIUM integrates Islamic pedagogy, collaborative projects, and student empowerment into its instructional model (Yusoff et al., 2019). In Pakistan, flipped classrooms, problem-solving tasks, and digital tools are gaining ground, reflecting growing innovation (Khan & Iqbal, 2022). Yet, as Rehman & Jamil (2022) point out, many of these innovations occur independently of formal institutional support.

Infrastructure and funding continue to be key issues. Malaysian universities offer stable funding, smart classrooms, and digital resources, enabling the expansion of quality teaching (Abdullah & Saad, 2019). In contrast, Pakistani universities face budget limitations and inconsistent access to technology, limiting the scalability of new teaching strategies, despite faculty enthusiasm and support programs like those offered by the Institute of Professional Development (IPD).

In conclusion, this research supports existing literature while offering new insight into how IIUM and IIUI navigate educational reform. IIUM provides a structured, policy-aligned model with a strong foundation in Islamic values and technology integration. IIUI, though facing structural challenges, demonstrates resilience, creativity, and a growing culture of research-based innovation. Going forward, IIUM could benefit from increasing global partnerships and tech responsiveness, while IIUI would gain from enhanced institutional support, funding, and clearer teaching frameworks. Both institutions have much to learn from each other Malaysia from Pakistan's grassroots innovation, and Pakistan from Malaysia's organized and values-driven academic systems.

Both institutions aim to modernize while preserving Islamic principles, but IIUM benefits from stronger institutional support for implementing student-centered practices such as Bloom's Taxonomy, inquiry-based learning, and PBL (Kamaruddin et al., 2020; Norazah et al., 2019). At IIUI, these innovations are mostly led by individual faculty and remain in development (Rehman & Jamil, 2022). While Malaysian universities take a system-wide approach to reform (Tan et al., 2021), IIUI shows scattered yet promising innovation. The comparison suggests potential for regional collaboration to enhance pedagogical practices through mutual learning. At IIUM, technologies such as gamification, AI tools, smart classrooms, and e-learning platforms are fully integrated into teaching and supported by continuous professional development (Yusoff & Hashim, 2019). In contrast, IIUI relies more on basic tools like email, WhatsApp, and YouTube, with technology often used as a supplement rather than a core instructional component. This reflects a broader need for a structured technology integration strategy in Pakistani higher education (Ali & Jamil, 2023). Assessment practices also differ significantly. IIUM employs a balanced mix of formative and summative assessments such as peer reviews and presentations to support personalized learning. IIUI, however, remains heavily reliant on summative exams, and although formative methods are endorsed in policy, they are inconsistently applied (Haider & Farooq, 2020). Despite this, one of Pakistan's universities like IIUI, strengths lie in its emphasis on research engagement, where universities promote early

student involvement in research, conferences, and applied projects encouraging a strong, practice-based research culture (Shah & Rehman, 2023). IIUM promotes research-informed teaching through structured initiatives like CPD programs and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), especially at the postgraduate level (Hashim & Embi, 2020). Islamic values are systematically integrated into IIUM's pedagogy, aligning with its mission to develop morally and intellectually sound graduates, a practice rooted in Malaysia's academic identity that blends Islamic and Western thought (Wan Daud, 2016). In contrast, while IIUI's curriculum includes Islamic principles, their practical implementation varies, and faculty often lack formal training in value-based pedagogy.

Malaysia's strong educational infrastructure digital libraries, smart classrooms, high-speed internet, and reliable LMS is supported by diversified funding, enabling innovative and quality teaching (Abdullah & Saad, 2019). In Pakistan, however, limited funding and uneven access to technology hinder widespread adoption of new pedagogical strategies, despite faculty interest and programs like those from the Institute of Professional Development (IPD).

Both IIUM and IIUI are evolving toward global standards of quality education. IIUM offers a cohesive, policy-driven model with integrated technology and Islamic values, while IIUI displays strong grassroots innovation and a research-teaching nexus, though constrained by infrastructure and policy gaps. Going forward, IIUM should enhance industry partnerships and global adaptability, while IIUI needs improved infrastructure and institutional support to scale its efforts.

## 6.Conclusion

This study examines the evolving academic cultures and teaching practices at IIUM (Malaysia) and IIUI (Pakistan), focusing on pedagogy, classroom interaction, technology use, institutional support, assessment, and the integration of Islamic values. IIUM stands out for its structured adoption of student-centered methods like inquiry-based and problem-based learning, supported by smart classrooms, gamification, and continuous professional development. Islamic principles are deeply embedded in IIUM's curriculum and teaching practices, fostering interdisciplinary thinking and holistic education. In contrast, IIUI is still transitioning, with pedagogical innovation often limited to individual lecturers. Challenges such as heavy workloads, outdated teaching models, poor infrastructure, and limited institutional support hinder broader reform. While IIUM offers diverse assessments, including formative techniques and peer feedback, IIUI relies primarily on summative exams. Collaboration at IIUM is systematized through formal initiatives like CPD programs, while IIUI's teamwork is informal and interest based. Despite systemic limitations, IIUI demonstrates creativity, resilience, and a growing research culture. With better infrastructure and policy reform, it has the potential to scale its innovations. IIUM, meanwhile, can enhance its global reach while maintaining its culturally rooted, student-centered model. Both institutions, with their unique strengths, can contribute meaningfully to global higher education through shared values and mutual learning.

## 7.Implications and future research

IIUM benefits from a well-established institutional system that supports research, teaching, and student mentorship. Its supportive academic culture and stable infrastructure foster innovation and holistic learning. In contrast, systemic challenges in Pakistan often hinder educational reform and innovation. Malaysian universities, with better funding and facilities, provide improved learning environments, while Pakistan's assessment remains largely exam focused. IIUM employs a balanced approach using diverse, formative and summative assessments, such as presentations and peer feedback.

Both countries value Islamic teachings, but IIUM integrates them more systematically into teaching and curriculum design, whereas IIUI applies them inconsistently across departments. Academic collaboration at IIUM is formalized through programs like CPD and teaching merit awards, while IIUI's collaboration is more informal. Moving forward, IIUM should continue adapting to global technological trends, and IIUI would benefit from strategic planning to enhance personalized and engaging learning experiences.

Malaysia and Pakistan can learn from each other: Malaysia may adopt Pakistan's grassroots innovation,

while Pakistan can benefit from Malaysia's structured digital and pedagogical systems. IIUM excels in balanced assessment methods combining formative and summative tools like peer reviews and feedback loops while Pakistan still relies heavily on summative exams, despite policy support for formative evaluation. Future reforms in Pakistan should prioritize aligning assessments with learning goals and enhancing teacher development, while Malaysia could expand its use of learning analytics.

IIUM systematically integrates Islamic values into teaching and curriculum design, unlike IIUI, where such integration is inconsistent and mostly content based. Future research should explore CPD impacts, the role of technology in learning, student perspectives, Islamic pedagogy, and institutional barriers in Pakistan. Overall, IIUI showcases a dynamic, research-driven model needing stronger institutional support, while IIUM presents a tech-supported, values-aligned framework. Together, both models can influence global conversations on culturally grounded, high-quality education. Malaysia and Pakistan can learn from each other: Malaysia may adopt Pakistan's grassroots innovation, while Pakistan can benefit from Malaysia's structured digital and pedagogical systems. IIUM excels in balanced assessment methods combining formative and summative tools like peer reviews and feedback loops while Pakistan still relies heavily on summative exams, despite policy support for formative evaluation. Future reforms in Pakistan should prioritize aligning assessments with learning goals and enhancing teacher development, while Malaysia could expand its use of learning analytics.

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