International Journal of Religion
2024
Volume: 5| Number 11 | pp. 8910 – 8925
ISSN: 2633-352X (Print) | ISSN: 2633-3538 (Online)
ijor.co.uk
DOI: https://doi.org/10.61707/97hnrb55

Comparative Analysis of Learning Models and Assessment Strategies in Social Sciences: A Study of Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia

Mohammad Liwa Irrubai[1], Lubna[2] and Noor Insyiraah Abu Bakar[3]

Abstract

Indonesia and Malaysia have different pedagogical approaches in the implementation of curriculum and teaching methods, influenced by educational policies and diverse cultural contexts. This study aims to analyze the learning models and assessment strategies applied in social sciences education at higher education institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia. The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach by conducting observations, interviews, and documentation with lecturers and students involved in social science courses at Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Mataram and Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI). The results indicate that in both institutions, student-centered learning models such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL) are well implemented, although UIN Mataram focuses more on a holistic approach, while UPSI extensively utilizes technology through the MYGURU platform to support learning and assessment processes. The study concludes that the adoption of technology in learning is essential to enhance the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process, and both institutions emphasize the importance of continuous assessment and real-world relevant learning. The implications of this research suggest the need for more adaptive educational policies that respond to technological and pedagogical developments to improve the quality of higher education.

Keywords: *Learning Models, Continuous Assessment, Higher Education, Sosial Sciences, Educational Technology*

INTRODUCTION

Higher education plays a crucial role in developing competent and innovative human resources, particularly through social science courses that provide both theoretical knowledge and essential analytical skills (Eckwert & Zilcha, 2020; Thomas K. McKeon, 2013; Кужелева-Саган & Винокурова, 2021). In the context of Indonesia and Malaysia, a comparative study reveals significant insights into how cultural contexts and educational policies influence the teaching and assessment of social sciences. Both countries have made strides in enhancing educational quality, yet they exhibit notable differences in pedagogical approaches and assessment methods, which can impact student learning outcomes (Febrian et al., 2023; Le & Nguyen, 2024; Supianto et al., 2023). By adopting a sociocultural perspective, researchers can better understand the complexities surrounding classroom assessment and the interrelationships between teacher and student beliefs within these educational frameworks. This understanding is vital for evaluating and improving Assessment for Learning (AfL) practices, which aim to inform both teachers and students about learning progress during the educational process. As globalization continues to challenge educational systems (Esera & Niupulusu, 2023; Lourenço & Paiva, 2024; Novykova, 2024), the need for effective learning and assessment models becomes increasingly urgent, making the comparative analysis of Indonesia and Malaysia essential for identifying best practices in higher education.

Effective learning and assessment are essential in higher education to equip graduates with the critical and analytical skills necessary for the workforce. Appropriate learning models foster an environment conducive to deep understanding and the development of critical thinking skills, which are vital in social science courses where analytical abilities are paramount (Nuroso et al., 2018; Witarsa & Muhammad, 2023). However, many universities in Indonesia and Malaysia face challenges, such as instructional and lecturer-centered approaches that limit student engagement and hinder the cultivation of these skills (Esmaeil et al., 2024; Herlina Karjo & Andreani, 2023). Moreover, the lack of innovative teaching practices restricts the accommodation of diverse

[1] Social Sciences Tadris Study Program, Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty, Mataram State Islamic University E-mail: liwarubai@uinmataram.ac.id

[2]Social Sciences Tadris Study Program, Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty, Mataram State Islamic University
[3]Faculty of Human Development, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

learning styles, further impeding the effectiveness of the educational process (Fernández Rodríguez et al., 2024; Suyo-Vega et al., 2024). This disconnect between theoretical knowledge and real-world application often leaves students struggling to relate what they learn to practical scenarios, ultimately affecting their preparedness for the job market (Shapovalova, 2022). To address these issues, it is crucial to explore and evaluate existing learning and assessment models, identifying best practices that can enhance student engagement and critical thinking. By implementing innovative practices and aligning assessments with real-world applications, universities can better prepare graduates to meet the demands of the modern workforce (Burford et al., 2014).

Assessments in social science courses at universities often face significant constraints that undermine their fairness and comprehensiveness. Traditional evaluation methods, primarily focused on theoretical knowledge through written examinations, fail to adequately assess students' analytical abilities and their capacity to apply concepts in real-world situations. This narrow approach does not capture the full range of competencies necessary for success in social sciences, which demand critical thinking and deep understanding (Danganan, 2024). The National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) emphasizes the need for assessments that align with educational goals and incorporate varied performance assessments, allowing students to engage with controversial social issues and develop reasoned positions (Lee, 2022). Furthermore, formative assessment practices are crucial for helping students identify performance standards and bridge learning gaps, thereby enhancing their critical thinking skills (Nurhijah et al., 2020; Yang, 2024). In Indonesia and Malaysia, these assessment limitations can lead to inequities, diminishing students' motivation and leaving graduates unprepared for the workforce, both in technical and critical thinking skills (Citra Manggalasari et al., 2023; Franchis & Mohamad, 2023). Consequently, it is essential to reevaluate and improve pedagogical approaches and assessment methods in higher education to ensure that graduates possess the competencies needed to contribute effectively to society (Kim Anh, 2024; Meimanova, 2024).

Penelitian tentang model pembelajaran dan asesmen dalam pendidikan tinggi telah menjadi topik penting dalam literatur akademik, namun masih terdapat celah yang signifikan terkait studi komparatif lintas negara, khususnya antara Indonesia dan Malaysia. Meskipun banyak penelitian yang membahas pendekatan pedagogis di masing-masing negara ('Arifin, 2024; Ch'ng, 2024; Dahlan et al., 2024; Wahyu Hoerudin et al., 2024), hanya sedikit yang mengeksplorasi perbandingan langsung dan dampaknya terhadap hasil belajar mahasiswa di mata kuliah ilmu sosial. Selama 5 tahun terakhir ini, hanya ada 20 laporan yang terbit di jurnal internasional berdasarkan hasil pencarian di Google Scholar. Hanya laporan yang secara langsung berkaitan dengan pembelajaran (Arista et al., 2023; Saputri et al., 2020; Sari et al., 2020). Penelitian yang yang melaporkan model pembelajaran dan asesmen yang digunakan di perguruan tinggi di kedua negara, khususnya pada pembelajaran ilmu sosial belum ada. Berdasarkan fakta tersebut, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk (1) Mengidentifikasi dan mengeksplorasi model pembelajaran dan model assessmen yang diterapkan dosen, dan (2) menganalisis persamaan dan perbedaan model pembelajaran dan asesmen di FTK UIN Mataram dan Faculty of Human Development Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris Malaysia. Penelitian ini tidak hanya berkontribusi pada peningkatan praktik pendidikan di Indonesia dan Malaysia tetapi juga memberikan wawasan berharga yang dapat diaplikasikan dalam konteks pendidikan tinggi yang lebih luas, terutama dalam menghadapi tantangan globalisasi dan kebutuhan akan lulusan yang memiliki kompetensi yang relevan dan adaptif.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research approach. The entire research process is conducted empirically, logically, and systematically by revealing actual data as it is in both research locations, namely the social studies teaching at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training at the State Islamic University of Mataram and the Faculty of Human Development at Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia. This ensures the validity and reliability of the research findings related to the investigated issue. Both institutions were selected as research sites because the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training at the State Islamic University of Mataram and the Faculty of Human Development at Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia share similar characteristics in their social studies curriculum. In qualitative research, the researcher acts as both an instrument and a data collector, making their presence in the research locations essential. This enables the

researcher to gather information and data on the application of teaching models and assessments implemented in each higher education institution in both countries.

In qualitative research, the subjects are those from whom the data are obtained (Denny & Weckesser, 2022). The selection of subjects in this study employed purposive sampling or targeted sampling techniques (Ames et al., 2019). The sources of data in this research were the lecturers teaching social studies courses and the students enrolled in these courses. The social studies courses examined in this study included history, sociology, and social research methods at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, State Islamic University of Mataram, and the sociology course at the Faculty of Human Development, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia. These specific social studies courses were chosen as the focus of this research based on the curriculum implemented in both universities during the time of the research, which was the second semester of the 2023/2024 academic year.

Data Collection

The data collection techniques used in this study include observation, interviews, and documentation (De Sordi, 2024; Mowat, 2022; Wallwey & Kajfez, 2023). The observation technique employed is non-participant observation, which is used to collect data on the teaching models and assessments applied in social studies at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, State Islamic University of Mataram, and the Faculty of Human Development, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia. The interview technique used in this research is a semi-structured interview, where the researcher initially asks several pre-structured questions, followed by more in-depth questions to obtain more comprehensive information. For the purpose of this study, an interview guide was first prepared to collect data on the teaching models and assessments used, their effectiveness in measuring learning outcomes, and the determination of student graduation in social studies at both institutions. Additionally, the documentation technique in this research is used to gather data from documents related to the teaching models and assessments, such as learning policy documents, student graduation standards, guidebooks, and other materials used at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, State Islamic University of Mataram, and the Faculty of Human Development, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study uses descriptive-comparative analysis. The descriptive analysis follows the Flow Model of Miles and Huberman (Asipi et al., 2022), which is used to systematically describe the data through the processes of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification regarding the teaching models and assessments applied. The next stage is comparative analysis, where the application of teaching models and assessments in the two institutions is compared to draw conclusions. Data condensation refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that emerges from the full corpus of written field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and other empirical materials. In this case, the researcher collected data through observation, interviews, and documentation. The next step after data reduction is data display. The data is presented in the form of descriptive words and sentences, arranged in an interconnected, organized, and sequential pattern from the initial, intermediate, and final data obtained from the research locations. After data reduction and presentation, the next step is drawing conclusions and verification. The initial conclusions drawn by the researcher are still tentative, as they may change if no strong evidence is found during further data collection. However, if the researcher finds valid and consistent evidence in subsequent research, the conclusions can be considered credible.

Checking Data Validity

Data validity is one of the measures of the truthfulness of the data collected (Jansen et al., 2024). In this study, it aims to provide an overview of the alignment between the researcher's concepts and the concepts held by the data sources (respondents). For this purpose, the study employs the triangulation technique. Data triangulation involves using various types of data, applying more than one theory, utilizing several analytical techniques, and involving multiple researchers. The triangulation method emphasizes the effectiveness of both the process and the desired outcomes. The triangulation used in this research includes source triangulation and

technique triangulation. Source triangulation is conducted by comparing and cross-checking the reliability of information obtained from different sources using the same questions. Meanwhile, technique triangulation is used to compare the results of interviews with those from observations or documentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The Learning Model Applied at UIN Mataram and UPSI Malaysia

In line with the ever-changing dynamics of society and the highly competitive and competence-driven demands of the current era of globalization, teaching models in higher education must also align with these dynamics and demands to prepare graduates capable of competing at both national and international levels. The traditional face-to-face teaching model, dominated by lecture-centered approaches, has become irrelevant. As a result, lecturers at various universities, including those at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, State Islamic University of Mataram, have adapted to these demands. In social studies courses, the teaching models applied include direct instruction, problem-based learning, and project-based learning.

The direct instruction model is the most favored teaching model among social studies lecturers at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training. However, in its implementation, it is often combined with other teaching models and innovative strategies. For instance, in the social studies (history) course taught by Nazala, the direct instruction model is combined with the Environment-Based Learning Model (EBLM). The implementation of these two models begins by explaining the learning outcomes in the syllabus and conducting a course agreement. The lecturer then delivers material on various social studies concepts (covering both knowledge and skills), checks students' understanding, and provides feedback. Before the final step of checking understanding and giving feedback, the lecturer allows students to make direct observations related to the theories presented in the direct instruction by asking them to identify historical sources (such as the old town of Ampenan, museums, and regional archives offices); they then conduct field observations and present their findings in class. In addition to the historical sources mentioned, there are many more historical sources on the island of Lombok that can serve as interesting study material for social studies students focusing on history.

In addition to integrating the Environment-Based Learning Model (EBLM), Nazala also incorporates the direct instruction model with the LOKR strategy (Literacy, Orientation, Collaboration, and Reflection). In its implementation, students are asked to read course materials consisting of concepts and theories (Literacy); the lecturer then guides them on the material they have read (Orientation); students are given the opportunity to collaborate and discuss (Collaboration); and finally, students are asked to formulate their final conclusions, either in groups or individually (Reflection). The efforts of lecturers at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training to integrate the direct instruction model with other teaching models and innovative strategies aim to ensure that students not only memorize concepts or theories but also understand the realities of the facts and concepts that build the theories in the social studies courses being taught. Students' closeness to the social context becomes crucial to develop their social and personal skills as prospective teachers who will work directly in schools or madrasahs, which are part of the community. This aligns with Lubna's view that the purpose of social studies education is to equip students with academic skills, social skills, and personal skills.

Problem-based learning models are not widely applied in social studies at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training. Their implementation is adjusted to the topics of the course materials being discussed. Some lecturers combine its application with cooperative learning models and case studies, as demonstrated by Baharuddin in the sociology course. The implementation of this model in teaching involves the following steps: the lecturer selects a topic or case study theme; students identify problems related to the case based on the chosen theme as directed by the lecturer; students analyze the causes of the problem (based on a reality review and literature review); and students are asked to determine the root cause of the problem and find solutions. Baharuddin applied this model to the topic of conflict theory, using the case of conflict within the large organization Nahdlatul Wathan (NW), specifically between NW Anjani and NW Pancor. The findings from the case analysis suggest that the conflict was caused by differing views on female leadership. As a result of the limited application of this model, these findings need to be triangulated and further examined to provide a solution to the ongoing conflict, in line with the stages of the problem-based learning (PBL) model.

The application of this model in the classroom is highly flexible; some lecturers strictly follow the PBL syntax, while others modify it. For instance, the lecturer may present a problem, or students might identify an issue from fieldwork. Students then discuss the problem in pairs or groups, analyzing its causes and proposing solutions based on a literature review. This process is followed by rotating presentations and concludes with clarification and reinforcement from the lecturer. Despite the various approaches taken by lecturers in implementing the PBL model, they agree that PBL fosters critical and creative thinking, enhances problem-solving skills, and encourages students to become independent and responsible. Additionally, integrating this model with cooperative learning helps develop teamwork skills and cultivates a sense of moderation by encouraging students to accept and respect differing opinions. This aligns with Settiawan's assertion that PBL trains students to solve complex problems, develop analytical and creative skills, and take responsibility. Furthermore, it resonates with the mission of the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training to promote and integrate the values of moderation in education.

The application of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model in social studies at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FTK) is implemented in the social studies course, specifically in the Social Research Methodology subject. The process begins with the lecturer first determining the project theme (social and cultural issues). The theme of culture is chosen because many local cultures, rich with social, religious, and educational values, are still not widely known and need to be preserved. The stages students go through in completing the project are as follows: 1) identifying social and cultural issues in their environment through preliminary surveys (reality review or literature review); 2) determining a researchable problem; 3) drafting a research proposal in the form of a mini research project based on the concepts, theories, and research steps learned in the initial sessions; 4) presenting the proposal to receive feedback and criticism from the lecturer and other students; 5) after the proposal draft is approved by the course lecturer, students go into the field to collect data, analyze it, and discuss the research findings (during fieldwork, students can consult intensively with the lecturer regarding any issues encountered during the research process); 6) drafting the research report; and 7) presenting the mini-research results in class to receive suggestions and feedback from the lecturer and other students. This final step serves as a refinement stage for finalizing the report, which is the product of the mini-research project.

The subject of social studies in the field of sociology at the Faculty of Human Development (FPM) is a compulsory subject for student-teachers. Since becoming a teacher requires up-to-date knowledge and skills, FPM strives to fulfill this responsibility by designing course content that aligns with current demands. Regarding the course content, it begins with selecting appropriate and relevant learning topics in line with current needs. Once the learning topics are determined, an appropriate teaching approach must be chosen to ensure the topics are delivered effectively by the lecturers. The various teaching models in the field of sociology education at FPM are presented in Figure 1 below

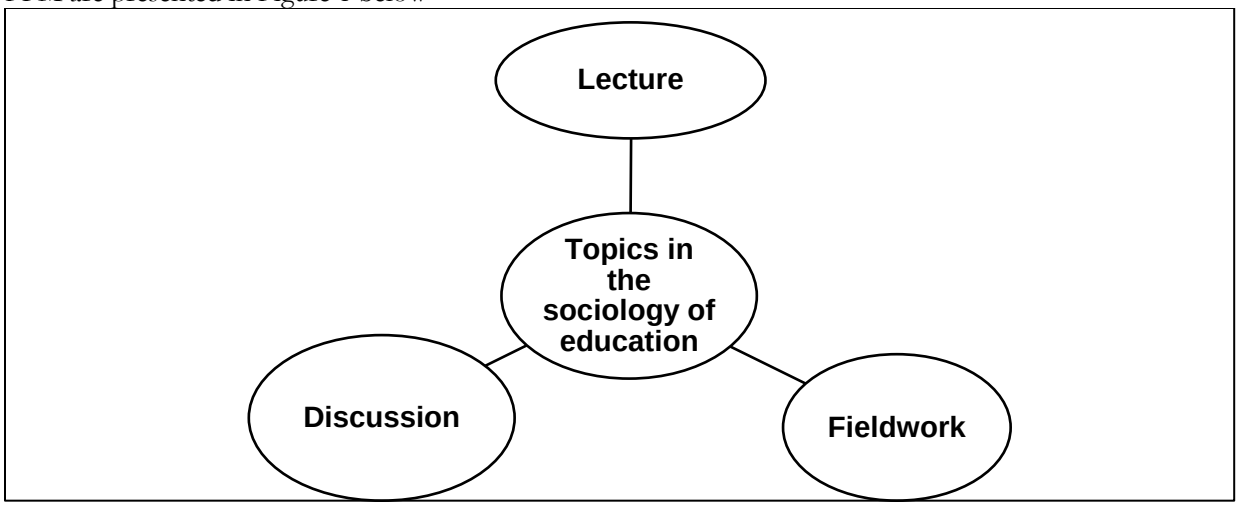

Figure 1: Sociology of Education Learning Model at FPM

The lecture model is chosen based on the characteristics of the material to be delivered, such as concepts, theories, and the essence of a theoretically oriented topic. To motivate students during the sociology learning process, lecturers utilize multimedia. This includes integrating lecture models with game-based activities using various media such as Kahoot. Several studies have found that Kahoot can foster students' interest in learning, as demonstrated by changes in their responses, such as increased enthusiasm, active participation, eagerness, following instructions, and improved concentration. Additionally, to enhance students' understanding of the material, lecturers use ICT media throughout the lectures, in line with the demands of education in the current technological era.

The application of the discussion model in social studies lectures at FPM-UPSI Malaysia is similar to the implementation of the cooperative learning model at FTK UIN Mataram, Indonesia, using the discussion method. The cooperative model with the discussion method trains students to think critically. Additionally, the discussion-based learning model also trains students to become active listeners and effective speakers. It fosters values such as cooperation and respect for differing opinions, in line with the goals of social studies education and the objectives of the cooperative learning model, which include academic achievement, acceptance of diversity, and the development of social skills.

The application of the field study model in the Social Studies subject, specifically in sociology, at FPM is considered highly important for prospective teachers. The stages of its implementation in sociology classes include: 1) the lecturer explaining the procedures for conducting field studies, 2) conducting direct interviews with school teachers, 3) analyzing the data collected, and 4) writing a report on the activities. The field study model in sociology courses is particularly engaging because, from the start, students are introduced to schools and gain real insight into the duties and responsibilities of teachers. This equips prospective teachers with better adaptability to the professional world. In the context of Indonesia, this concept is known as Business and Educational World Collaboration (BEWC), which aims to bridge the gap between the business sector/employers and the educational sector, which produces professionals such as teachers. Additionally, the field study model helps minimize the occurrence of skills mismatch, where graduates' skills do not align with the requirements of the job or workplace, ensuring that graduates' competencies are relevant to the demands of the job market.

The Assessment Model Applied at Uin Mataram and Upsi Malaysia

The assessment model currently implemented at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training at UIN Mataram is based on the assessment models within the *Merdeka* curriculum. Since the 2022/2023 academic year, the *Merdeka* curriculum, which is based on Outcome-Based Education (OBE), has been adopted. In the Indonesian context, OBE is applied to align the curriculum with industry needs and ensure that graduates possess relevant competencies and are job-ready. Based on the competencies being measured, the relevant assessment models implemented in social studies at FTK are those that assess graduates' competencies comprehensively, namely authentic assessment, assessment as learning, assessment for learning, and assessment of learning. These four models are selected by lecturers with different approaches and emphasis on various aspects according to the characteristics of the courses and the learning outcomes of each course.

The application of the authentic assessment model in social studies education at FTK can be seen from the comprehensively measured aspects, including process and outcome assessment, as well as the assessment of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Process assessments include attendance, active participation during class discussions, and discipline in completing tasks, both individual and structured tasks. Outcome assessments cover the evaluation of structured task reports, quizzes, mid-term exams (UTS), and final exams (UAS). Regarding assessment criteria, there are two reference criteria that lecturers can use: Criterion-Referenced Assessment (PAP) and Norm-Referenced Assessment (PAN). The implementation of Assessment as Learning (AaL) in social studies at FTK is limited to peer assessment, where students evaluate each other's work or presentations and provide constructive feedback. Students are given questions at the end of each lesson to continuously measure the achievement of each lecture topic, but these do not significantly determine final grades. Instead, they serve as a consideration for student participation, with a maximum of 10% of the participation component being factored into the overall evaluation for a semester.

The forms of Assessment for Learning applied in social studies classes include quizzes and formative tests. Lecturers administer short quizzes or tests during lectures to measure students' understanding of newly taught material. Assessment during class discussions and student participation in question-and-answer sessions is also used. Lecturers guide students through interactive discussions and Q&A sessions to evaluate comprehension and provide immediate feedback. The most commonly applied Assessment for Learning model by lecturers is the assignment component, which consists of individual tasks and structured assignments. Structured assignments play a significant role in determining students' final grades, with a weight of 30%-40%, while individual tasks are given to support lectures in the form of instructions to read the course materials for the next session. For structured assignments, some lecturers provide personalized feedback on students' worksheets or general feedback in class when errors are found among a large number of students. Lecturers offer continuous, constructive, and specific feedback, helping students understand what they have accomplished and what areas need improvement.

Assessment of Learning (AoL) is the assessment process conducted at the end of a learning period to evaluate students' academic achievement. This model is used to make decisions regarding students' academic progress and performance. At FTK UIN Mataram, the implementation of Assessment of Learning is carried out through scheduled Mid-Semester Exams (UTS) and Final Exams (UAS) set by the study program. The passing percentage from the UTS component ranges between 20-30%, while the UAS contributes 30-40%. In addition to these components, students' attitudes and character are also significant factors considered for passing the course. In practice, there are differences in final graduation assessments. Although each lecturer uses the same assessment components, there is an emphasis on specific aspects that are considered to have a substantial impact on students' learning outcomes.

At UPSI Malaysia, two assessment models are applied in social studies education at the Faculty of Human Development (FPM), namely continuous assessment and final assessment (see Figure 2). Continuous assessment consists of field reports, presentations, and E-forums. Each model is adapted to the student competency standards being assessed.

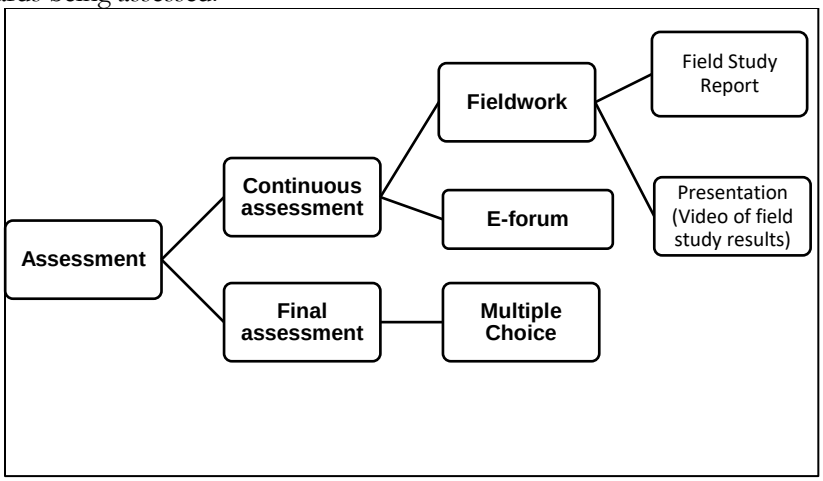

Figure 2. Assessment model applied at FPM UPSI Malaysia

Each assessment model applied at FPM UPSI Malaysia is tailored to the characteristics of the material being measured. In the implementation of continuous assessment, students are evaluated not only on their knowledge but also on their skills and attitudes. The knowledge aspect is assessed from theoretical mastery to practical implementation in the field or school settings. The skills aspect includes not only academic skills but also technical skills that support learning, such as the ability to create educational videos for presentations. Likewise, in terms of attitude, the continuous assessment model encourages critical and creative thinking as part of the evaluation. In the context of assessment in Indonesia, this model aligns with the implementation of authentic assessment, which is characterized by its comprehensive nature. The use of E-Forum as an assessment tool is

highly innovative, supported by adequate facilities, providing students with opportunities to develop their creativity in the digital realm, in line with the demands of the 21st century.

Comparison of Learning and Assessment Models Implemented at UIN Mataram and UPSI Malaysia

Several teaching models are applied at both universities, including the Direct Instruction Model or Lecture-Based Learning, which at FPM UPSI is referred to as the Lecture Model. The main difference is that the teaching model at FPM UPSI tends to be more adaptive to technological developments and industry needs, whereas at FTK UIN Mataram, despite improvements in technology use, there are still limitations in implementing media-based teaching strategies. In terms of assessment models, the similarities between the two universities lie in the objectives of assessment, the scope of assessment, and the approach to implementing several assessment models. In terms of objectives, both universities conduct assessments to measure and evaluate the achievement of the learning outcomes (CP) that have been set. Similarly, the scope of the assessment objects is consistent across the aspects being assessed. Another similarity is in the implementation of the Assessment of Learning (AoL) model, which at FPM UPSI is referred to as the final assessment model. The key difference in assessment models between FTK UIN Mataram and FPM UPSI lies in the implementation of the continuous assessment model using an online, media-based approach. At FPM UPSI, students are assessed not only on their mastery of content but also on their creativity in creating presentation media. Meanwhile, at FTK UIN Mataram, the focus is more on assessing content mastery and critical thinking, as media skills are covered in the educational media courses. Although there are differences in the implementation of assessment instruments between continuous assessment and assessment for learning, both models equally motivate students. As previous research in several universities in Indonesia has shown, the implementation of the Assessment for Learning (AfL) model has been proven to increase students' motivation and academic performance. Similarly, in the application of the continuous assessment model, evaluations are carried out continuously throughout the semester through various tasks, projects, and video presentations. The assessment methods include assignments, quizzes, group projects, and presentations, providing a comprehensive evaluation of students' skills and understanding.

The use of the MYGURU e-learning platform, specifically developed by UPSI to support online assessments and provide real-time feedback, distinguishes the assessment practices in social studies at FPM UPSI Malaysia from those at FTK UIN Mataram. FPM UPSI is more intensive in using technology for assessments compared to FTK UIN Mataram, which is still in the development and adoption stage. In terms of assessment assignments, FPM UPSI offers more variety, especially in field studies and reporting, as well as the creation of videos using the latest software for presentation media. Meanwhile, FTK UIN Mataram primarily assigns individual or group tasks with reporting and in-class presentations using PowerPoint.

DISCUSSION

The study highlights the implementation of student-centered learning models at UIN Mataram, which aligns with constructivist theory and emphasizes active engagement in the learning process. Specifically, UIN Mataram employs Direct Instruction, Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Project-Based Learning (PJBL), and Collaborative Learning, all designed to foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills through contextual and practical experiences (Setiawati et al., 2014; Tengku Kasim et al., 2010; Zulida Abdul Kadir, 2013). These models encourage students to take an active role in their education, moving away from traditional teacher-centered approaches and promoting a more interactive learning environment (Hannafin et al., 2014a). In contrast, UPSI Malaysia primarily utilizes traditional learning methods such as lectures and field studies, albeit enhanced by technology through the MYGURU platform. This integration allows for a more flexible and interactive learning experience, facilitating dynamic interactions between learners and instructors (Ji-Wei Wu et al., 2015). While both institutions aim to improve educational outcomes, UIN Mataram's focus on student-centered methodologies represents a more progressive shift towards fostering independent learning and critical inquiry, contrasting with UPSI's blend of traditional and technological approaches.

At UIN Mataram, a multifaceted approach to assessment is employed, integrating Authentic Assessment, Assessment as Learning (aAL), Assessment for Learning (aL), and Assessment of Learning (aOL). These models underscore the role of assessment as a vital component of the learning process, rather than merely a tool for final evaluation. Authentic assessments are designed to provide continuous feedback, fostering gradual

and reflective skill development in line with constructivist principles (Vu & Dall'Alba, 2008). This ongoing engagement allows students to better understand their learning journey and progress (John et al., 2001). In contrast, UPSI Malaysia implements a Continuous Assessment model that utilizes field study reports, training, and e-Forums on the MYGURU platform. This model emphasizes consistent and integrative assessments throughout the semester, focusing not only on learning outcomes but also on the processes and development of students [4]. By aligning with formative assessment theory, this approach highlights the importance of continuous feedback as a mechanism for ongoing improvement, ensuring that students are supported in their learning endeavors (Arlene, 2007). Together, these assessment strategies reflect a commitment to enhancing student learning through meaningful and reflective practices.

Both universities exhibit a strong commitment to student-centered learning, employing diverse strategies that reflect the creativity of their lecturers. This approach actively engages students in the learning process, aligning with the principles of Cooperative Learning (CL) and Problem Based Learning (PBL) that are promoted at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) (Khairiyah Mohd. Yusof et al., 2004). These active learning techniques not only enhance student engagement but also prepare graduates for the competitive job market. Moreover, both institutions recognize the importance of comprehensive assessment models that encompass cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains, ensuring a holistic educational experience (Çubukçu, 2012; Hannafin et al., 2014b). However, a notable difference arises in their technological integration. UPSI Malaysia has successfully developed the MYGURU digital platform, facilitating the implementation of learning models and assessments. In contrast, FTK UIN Mataram is still in the early stages of adopting a Learning Management System (LMS), which highlights a gap in technological readiness. This disparity underscores that while both universities share similar pedagogical approaches, their effectiveness in implementing these models is significantly influenced by their respective levels of technological adoption and readiness in education.

The study highlights the effective implementation of student-centered learning approaches, such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Project-Based Learning (PJBL), and Collaborative Learning at UIN Mataram, which align with findings from previous research. These methodologies emphasize active student engagement, fostering an environment conducive to improved participation and learning outcomes in social science disciplines (Finucane et al., 1998; Wright, 2011). The literature supports the notion that such active learning strategies not only enhance student involvement but also promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills, essential competencies in the field (Md. Jaafar et al., 2012; Sulaiman, 2011). Moreover, the collaborative learning framework encourages a community of learners, reducing competition and fostering a supportive educational atmosphere, which has been shown to positively impact student attitudes and learning outcomes (Salis et al., 2015). While the similarities in these approaches are evident, the study also notes significant differences in their application compared to previous studies, suggesting a unique contextual adaptation at UIN Mataram. This adaptation may reflect local educational needs and cultural factors, warranting further investigation to understand the nuances of student engagement in diverse educational settings.

The integration of traditional learning models, such as lectures and field studies at UPSI Malaysia, with the MYGURU digital platform introduces a transformative approach to education that enhances flexibility and accessibility. This digital platform supports blended learning theories, which combine traditional and digital methods, thereby fostering greater interaction among students and educators (Jailani et al., 2011; Lim et al., 2013; Marinela, 2012; Okaz, 2015). The use of MYGURU aligns with the growing trend in Southeast Asia's higher education institutions to adopt technology for improved learning experiences. At UIN Mataram, the emphasis on authentic, formative, and holistic assessments reflects a commitment to comprehensive evaluation methods that support ongoing learning. Similarly, UPSI Malaysia's implementation of continuous assessment through field study reports and e-Forums, integrated with MYGURU, demonstrates the effectiveness of formative assessments in enhancing student engagement and providing timely feedback (Ayllón Díaz-González, 2010). This dual approach not only enriches the educational experience but also highlights the importance of technology integration in achieving curriculum objectives and engaging students in meaningful learning processes (Ifinedo & Kankaanranta, 2021). Overall, the synergy between traditional methods and digital platforms like MYGURU represents a significant advancement in the educational landscape of Southeast Asia.

The comparison between UPSI and UIN Mataram illustrates a significant disparity in digital adoption, with UPSI leveraging the MYGURU platform to enhance educational practices effectively. This integration of digital technologies is crucial, as it has been widely recognized as a key factor in improving the efficiency and quality of education (Akbar et al., 2023; Jaiswal & Singh, 2023). In contrast, UIN Mataram's ongoing development of its Learning Management System (LMS) indicates a commitment to embracing e-learning integration, which is essential for modern educational environments (Islam & Mahmud, 2020; Thakre, 2024). The findings suggest that UIN Mataram has substantial potential to accelerate its technological adoption, aligning with global trends in the digitization of education. This transition is particularly relevant in the context of higher education quality improvement, where strategies that incorporate technology can significantly enhance learning outcomes (Kempa et al., 2024; Sjahruddin et al., 2022). Furthermore, the emphasis on student-centered learning approaches at both institutions highlights the importance of active learner engagement, which is vital for fostering independent learning and improving educational quality (Çubukçu, 2012). Thus, the study not only corroborates previous research but also expands the discourse on the transformative role of technology in higher education, especially within the social sciences.

The study highlights the distinct educational approaches at UIN Mataram and UPSI Malaysia, shaped by their respective contextual needs and education policies. UIN Mataram employs student-centered learning models such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Project-Based Learning (PJBL), and Collaborative Learning, which are designed to foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork skills essential for higher education (Diquito et al., 2024; Tampubolon & Sipahutar, 2024). This aligns with constructivist theories that advocate for active student participation in knowledge construction, positioning learners as agents rather than passive recipients (Azizah Siti Lathifah et al., 2024; Conrad, 2022). Furthermore, the curriculum at UIN Mataram emphasizes the integration of theory and practice, ensuring relevance to real-world applications and job market demands. In contrast, UPSI Malaysia relies on traditional learning models, including lectures and field studies, enhanced by the MYGURU digital platform. This approach reflects a systematic focus on comprehensive material mastery, supported by education policies that prioritize technology as a means to enrich learning experiences (Monika et al., 2023). The MYGURU platform facilitates a blended learning environment, merging face-to-face instruction with digital tools, thereby creating a holistic educational experience that caters to diverse learning needs (Müller & Wulf, 2020). This comparison underscores how institutional strategies and educational frameworks are tailored to meet the unique challenges and opportunities within each context.

UIN Mataram's choice of an authentic, formative, and holistic assessment model reflects a commitment to evaluating students comprehensively, focusing on both their learning processes and final outcomes. This approach aligns with formative assessment theory, which emphasizes the importance of continuous feedback to enhance student learning and engagement (Boran, 2012). In contrast, UPSI Malaysia has adopted a more advanced digital system, MYGURU, which facilitates continuous assessment and real-time monitoring of student development, thereby providing timely feedback that meets the demands of modern education (Azman et al., 2020). The differences in technology adoption between these institutions highlight varying levels of institutional readiness, with UPSI demonstrating a more robust implementation of digital tools to support learning and assessment. This disparity suggests that education policy and investment in technology are critical factors influencing the effectiveness of learning models and assessments (Shihah Abdullah, 2015a). Ultimately, these elements play a significant role in preparing students for future challenges, underscoring the need for institutions to align their assessment strategies with technological advancements and educational goals (Saad & Selamat, 2012a; Walters et al., 2016).

The findings of this study align closely with established educational theories, particularly constructivism and student-centered learning. At UIN Mataram, the implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Project-Based Learning (PJBL), and Collaborative Learning exemplifies the constructivist principle that students learn most effectively when actively engaged in constructing their knowledge through hands-on experiences and real-world problem-solving (Cholily et al., 2024; Nayak et al., 2024; Nurhayati et al., 2023). This approach not only fosters critical and analytical thinking skills but also emphasizes the importance of contextual learning, as supported by the literature (Green & Gredler, 2002). Conversely, at UPSI Malaysia, while traditional learning models such as lectures and field studies are prevalent, the integration of technology through the MYGURU

platform enhances the learning experience. This blend of face-to-face instruction with digital tools exemplifies the theory of blended learning, which promotes a more flexible and interactive educational environment (Hannafin et al., 2014c). By merging technology with conventional methods, MYGURU enriches student engagement and supports continuous learning, demonstrating how innovative practices can coexist with traditional educational frameworks to improve accessibility and interactivity in learning (Saad & Selamat, 2012b).

The assessment models applied at UIN Mataram, such as authentic assessment, Assessment as Learning (aAL), and Assessment for Learning (aL), align closely with formative assessment theory, which emphasizes continuous feedback as a vital tool for enhancing student learning and development. This approach fosters an environment where students engage in ongoing reflection and self-assessment, promoting skill development in line with holistic education principles (Pellegrino, 2010; Timmers, 2013). Conversely, at UPSI Malaysia, continuous assessment methods, including field study reports and e-Forums integrated with MYGURU, also reflect formative assessment principles but leverage technology to provide real-time monitoring and feedback (Shihah Abdullah, 2015b). This integration of technology not only enriches the assessment process but also facilitates immediate, objective feedback, enhancing the learning experience (Mukazi, 2022). The findings from these studies contribute to the existing literature on educational theories, demonstrating how the fusion of technology with traditional assessment models can create a more adaptive and holistic learning environment. This underscores the role of technology as a facilitator in modern education, making classical educational theories more relevant to the dynamic needs of today's students (Awajan, 2023; Olateju Temitope Akintayo et al., 2024; Wang, 2024).

The results of this research have significant implications for the development of educational policies and teaching practices in higher education institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia, especially in encouraging the adoption of student-centred learning models and comprehensive and holistic assessments. Both institutions, UIN Mataram and UPSI Malaysia, have demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach in improving the quality of learning, highlighting the need for policy support for the training and professional development of lecturers to be able to implement innovative learning and assessment strategies. Additionally, the difference in technology adoption, with UPSI having advanced further through the development of the MYGURU platform, shows the importance of investment in educational technology infrastructure. Institutions such as UIN Mataram, which are still in the LMS system development stage, must accelerate technology adoption to compete in the era of digitalization of education. Therefore, education policies need to be more adaptive to developments in pedagogy and technology to ensure more effective and relevant education in the future.

CONCLUSION

This study has successfully explored the comparative teaching and assessment models in higher education institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia, specifically UIN Mataram and UPSI Malaysia. The findings reveal both similarities and differences in the approaches adopted by these institutions. Both universities have made strides in incorporating student-centered learning models such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Project-Based Learning (PjBL), and collaborative strategies aimed at enhancing critical thinking, problem-solving, and real-world application skills. UIN Mataram has demonstrated a strong commitment to the implementation of formative assessments that emphasize continuous feedback and reflective learning. On the other hand, UPSI Malaysia has embraced advanced digital technologies, integrating platforms like MYGURU to provide real-time assessment feedback and facilitate e-learning. This has positioned UPSI as a forerunner in digital education within Southeast Asia, while UIN Mataram is still in the process of adopting similar technological advancements. The implications of these findings suggest that higher education institutions in both countries must continue to enhance their educational strategies, particularly in the face of increasing globalization and technological advancement. For UIN Mataram, accelerating the adoption of digital learning platforms will be crucial for remaining competitive in the global education landscape. Meanwhile, UPSI can further refine its approach to blended learning, ensuring that the balance between traditional and digital education methods continues to support student success. Future research should explore deeper integration of innovative

assessment models and how they can be adapted to various cultural and institutional contexts for more effective education outcomes.

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