

“Integrating Religion, History, and Culture in English Teaching in Pakistan: Preserving Values Through Education with AI-Supported Learning”

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Abstract

This study examines how English language education in Pakistan can integrate local cultural and Islamic values to support both linguistic development and moral awareness among learners. While English plays a central role in academic advancement and international communication, current textbooks and digital resources often emphasize foreign contexts and values that may not directly reflect learners’ daily experiences or ethical frameworks. Drawing on Schema Theory and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, the study explores the potential of culturally and religiously grounded content to enhance learning by connecting with students’ prior knowledge and social values. The research includes qualitative analysis of Punjab Textbook Board English textbooks for Secondary and Higher Secondary levels, selected AI-supported educational content, and locally produced Urdu cartoons/ animations such as *Kaneez Fatima* and *Ghulam Rasool*. Interviews with English teachers reveal classroom experiences, learner engagement, and how media influence ethical understanding. The study shows that culturally familiar narratives, combined with AI-supported storytelling, can enhance

language learning while reinforcing Islamic and societal values, offering a practical approach to designing English teaching materials that promote academic skills, cultural identity, and moral development.

Keywords: English language teaching, Islamic values, culturally responsive pedagogy, Pakistan, AI in education, Urdu digital content, moral education, Schema Theory

Introduction

Teaching English in Pakistan occurs within a rich and complex socio-cultural environment, shaped by historical, religious, and societal influences. English is widely recognized as a key to academic achievement, professional opportunities, and global communication. However, educational content often focuses on foreign contexts, characters, and value systems, which may differ from the ethical and cultural frameworks that have traditionally guided Pakistani learners (Rahman, 2002; Mansoor, 2004). At the same time, digital media, AI-driven learning platforms, and global entertainment appear to be increasingly shaping students' perspectives on authority, relationships, ethics, and social norms.

Educators note that textbooks frequently emphasize general moral or academic lessons without connecting them to learners' lived experiences or societal values. This creates an opportunity to explore culturally and religiously grounded approaches that can support both language development and ethical awareness. Locally produced Urdu animations, including *Kaneez Fatima* and *Ghulam Rasool*, provide examples of content that naturally integrates Islamic and societal values, modeling respect, empathy, cooperation, and patience within familiar family, school, and community contexts. These narratives offer learners opportunities to internalize values through observation and engagement, while also reinforcing language skills. High-quality dubbing and international distribution further demonstrate the adaptability of culturally rooted narratives across linguistic and geographic contexts (Imran et al., 2023).

The integration of Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching has become an important issue in today's evolving educational landscape Khan et al. (2025). Recent AI-based educational content, such as the *Hamza* AI series, combines interactive storytelling with ethical guidance, illustrating the potential for modern technology to complement traditional moral and cultural education. Together, these examples show that English language learning can be designed to strengthen linguistic competence while also supporting historical, cultural, and religious awareness.

This study employs qualitative analysis of Punjab Textbook Board English textbooks for Secondary and Higher Secondary levels, along with selected AI-supported and local digital content. Semi-structured interviews with English teachers explore classroom experiences and learner engagement. Drawing on Schema Theory and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, the study investigates how teaching materials can activate prior cultural knowledge, reflect Islamic and societal values, and support holistic development. The ultimate goal is to propose a model for English language education that integrates historical, cultural, and ethical dimensions, making English a tool for learning, cultural continuity, and moral engagement.

Literature Review

Language, Culture, And Identity in Education

Language is considered a primary carrier of culture, religion, values, and collective memory. Kramsch (1993) has confirmed that language learning necessarily involves exposure to the cultural meanings embedded in discourse. In post-colonial and multilingual contexts, such as Pakistan, English occupies a complex position; it is considered a symbol of progress and social advancement, while at the same time creating tension with local languages and identity formation processes (Rahman, 2002). Researchers have consistently argued that the preference for global languages without contextual adaptation leads to cultural alienation and identity erosion (Canagarajah, 1999; Pennycook, 2001). Mansoor (2004) points out that the prescribed English textbooks in Pakistan often depict social practices, relationships, and lifestyles that are unfamiliar to the learners, making it difficult for them to relate to. When students are unable to connect the content to their cultural reality,

motivation weakens, and learning becomes a more mechanical process rather than a transformative educational experience.

The Theory of Cognitive Schemas And Cultural Familiarity Schema

Schema Theory provides a cognitive explanation for the effectiveness of culturally rooted content. Bartlett (1932) hypothesised that understanding relies on mental frameworks formed through cultural experience, while Anderson and Pearson (1984) demonstrated that comprehension improves when new information aligns with the learner's existing cognitive schemata.

In the context of teaching English, Alptekin (2006) demonstrated that learners understand texts better when the cultural references are familiar to them. Foreign cultural and religious environments often burden learners cognitively and emotionally, while culturally rooted narratives enhance interaction, information retention, and self-confidence. These theoretical foundations support the inclusion of culturally recognised characters and situations in English language books aimed at Pakistani learners.

Language and culture are fundamentally intertwined, as the use, interpretation, and construction of meaning in language are deeply rooted in the cultural contexts in which communication occurs (Byram, 2020). Accordingly, language learning cannot be separated from the values, norms, and socio-cultural beliefs that shape learners' identities and worldviews. Researchers have long emphasised that effective language education requires sensitivity to the cultural frameworks underlying linguistic practices, due to their significant impact on learners' understanding, interactive choices, and overall communicative competence (Kramsch, 1993). In this context, the religious beliefs and moral values of learners play a pivotal role in shaping their attitudes towards language learning and their engagement with educational content (Byram, 2014).

In certain local educational contexts, English is sometimes viewed as a carrier of Western cultural values that may conflict with Islamic ethical values and principles. Studies indicate that some learners associate learning English with cultural and moral threats, especially when educational materials prioritise Western lifestyles, social practices, and value systems without sufficient contextual adaptation (Bukar, 2020; Rohmana, 2020).

Common topics in global English language teaching books such as casual dating, gender mixing, or excessive individual expression are often considered inappropriate or culturally insensitive in Islamic educational environments, leading to discomfort, resistance, or aversion to learning among learners (Bashar, 2024). These tensions highlight the limitations of Western-oriented educational materials when applied uncritically in different cultural and religious contexts.

These issues highlight the increasing need to align English language teaching by integrating local cultural, ethical, and Islamic values, which supports linguistic development while simultaneously preserving the cultural and religious identity of learners. Several studies have shown that aligning English language teaching content with Islamic principles can reduce learner resistance and reintroduce English as a neutral communication tool instead of a symbol of cultural dominance or moral erosion (Alfian, Yusuf & Nafiah, 2022; Safitri, Jabu & Samtidar, 2023). From this perspective, English can be reframed as a means to access global knowledge, engage in cultural dialogue, and even disseminate Islamic values, rather than being viewed as a tool of Westernisation (Astuti, Mustofa, & Nisak, 2024; Hasanah, 2022).

Integrating Islamic Values Educationally in Teaching English.

From an educational perspective, integrating Islamic values into English language teaching can take various forms. Educational materials may include texts by Muslim scholars, discussions of contemporary issues analysed from an Islamic ethical perspective, or project-based tasks that encourage learners to critically connect global challenges with Islamic teachings (Farahian et al., 2012; Rosanita, 2012; Saepudin, 2022). At the classroom level, teachers play a pivotal role in modelling Islamic ethical values such as honesty, respect, cooperation, and social responsibility creating educational environments that resonate with students' life experiences and value systems (Alsubaie, 2022; Farah, 2025; Laily et al., 2022). Linguistic concepts can also be illustrated through culturally familiar examples derived from Islamic texts, including selected verses from the Holy Quran or prophetic traditions, to demonstrate the use of vocabulary, rhetorical patterns, or grammatical structures in meaningful and culturally relevant contexts (Nuruddin & Taufiq, 2021; Octaviara, 2021).

Experimental evidence supports the educational value of such contextual approaches. A qualitative study conducted in Indonesia by Mulyati and Kultsum (2023), which included classroom observations and interviews with 42 students and one lecturer, showed that integrating Islamic and cultural values into English language

teaching contributed to enhancing students' understanding and engagement. The observational data revealed a notable improvement in multiple language skills, including speaking, listening, reading, translation, and vocabulary development. Despite the specificity of the context, these results contribute to enriching the literature that confirms that culturally responsive and value-based educational practices can enhance linguistic competence and shape a positive learner identity in Islamic educational environments.

Similarly, Alshaar (2023) emphasised the role of Islamic ethics in English language classrooms, highlighting how practices such as respectful dialogue, cooperative learning, and mindful listening align with Islamic ethical principles, while also supporting the development of communicative competence. The effects of these approaches are not limited to improving classroom interaction; they also contribute to enhancing the sense of belonging, mutual respect, and moral responsibility among learners. These studies collectively indicate that aligning English language teaching materials and educational practices with Islamic values represents a practical path to achieving a balance between global linguistic objectives and preserving established cultural and religious identities.

Culturally Responsive Education and the Formation of Islamic Values

Culturally responsive education calls for utilising learners' cultural backgrounds as educational resources, instead of viewing them as obstacles (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2018). This approach views education as a holistic process that integrates intellectual, social, and moral growth. The Islamic educational philosophy largely aligns with this approach; Halstead (2004) explains that Islamic education focuses on shaping values through life models, observation, and social interaction, rather than relying on direct moral preaching. Narratives, role models, and everyday situations are considered the foundation of moral learning. This principle is clearly manifested in Islamic animated cartoons such as Kaneez Fatima, Ghulam Rasool, and Hamza, where values are organically conveyed through dialogue and action.

Local Media, AI Graphics, and Cultural Preservation

Recent experimental research confirms the effectiveness of local media in preserving language and culture. Imran, Shafiq, and Sadiq (2023) demonstrated that Kaneez Fatima and Ghulam Rasool effectively contribute to

resisting cultural erosion by portraying Pakistani social norms, linguistic expressions, and moral behaviours through authentic dialogues. Their study highlights how cartoons serve as informal educational tools that shape behaviour while simultaneously preserving the use of the Urdu language.

The emergence of AI-based animations, such as the **Hamza AI series**, represents an extension of culturally grounded educational models by combining advanced technology with ethical and moral education. Research by Hussain and Rizvi (2018) and Haq (2017) highlights that digital platforms aligned with cultural and religious values can provide supportive spaces for language learning and identity preservation. The **Hamza AI series**, as well as the **Kaneez Fatima** and **Ghulam Rasool** animated series, are broadcast on the **Madani TV channel**, which offers Urdu, English, Bangladeshi, and Arabic transmissions including children's programming, and are also uploaded on the **Kids Land YouTube channel**, which currently has over **20.6 million subscribers**. All three series have been dubbed into English, Arabic, and other regional languages, demonstrating that culturally and religiously rooted content can facilitate intercultural communication, enhance ethical understanding, and preserve learners' cultural and religious identities.

The educational implications of teaching English and book design in Pakistan

Despite the success of these local models, the English textbooks prescribed for the secondary and higher secondary levels by the Punjab Textbook Board rarely employ culturally rooted narrative techniques. Rahman (2010) asserts that developing localised English teaching materials can reduce cultural displacement if they align with the local reality.

The integration of culturally inspired characters and narrative frameworks, supported by artificial intelligence, into English language teaching books represents a practical solution; such materials can model the use of language with respect, discipline, empathy, and responsibility, while simultaneously developing reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. This approach contributes to bridging the gap between modern technological interaction and traditional value systems, directly addressing teachers' concerns regarding behavioural change and media influence on contemporary learners (Mansoor & Azam, 2018).

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative content analysis approach, based on Schema Theory and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. It aims to examine how or fails to activate the English language textbooks prescribed by the Punjab Textbook Board, along with selected and AI-supported digital educational resources, activate the prior cultural, ethical, and social schemata of Pakistani learners, in light of the huge expansion of digital technologies and the emergence of artificial intelligence as an influential tool in the learning space .Ahmad et al. (2025)

The study also examines the linguistic content and the moral or ethical messages embedded in the texts to evaluate their role in the holistic development of the learner.

The Sample

The study focuses on English language textbooks for the Secondary School Certificate (SSC, grades 9-10) and Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC, grades 11-12) issued by the Punjab Textbook Board, in addition to selected digital educational materials. The analysed texts include the following:

- Grade Nine: The Dear Departed (One-act play, William Stanley Houghton).
- Grade Ten: “Chinese New Year,” Little by Little One Walks Far; Population Growth and World Food Supplies; Great Expectations (Charles Dickens); A World Without Books.
- Grade 12: The Dying Sun; Why Boys Fail in College; David Daiches End of Term; J.C. Squire On Destroying Books; The Man Who Was a Hospital (Jerome K. Jerome); China’s Way to Progress (Galezo Santini); Hitchhiking Across Sahara (G.F. Lamb); Mustafa Kamal (Wilfrid Castle); Goodbye Mr. Chips (James Hilton) Additional materials include digital content and AI-integrated series (e.g., the Hamza series) and indigenous Islamic cartoons (e.g., Kaneez Fatima, Ghulam Rasool) for comparative evaluation.

The sample also includes digital materials and series integrated with artificial intelligence (such as Hamza Series) and local Islamic animations (such as Kaneez Fatima and Ghulam Rasool) for comparison purposes.

Data Collection

Data collection was carried out in three phases:

1. Textual analysis of Punjab Board books

- Reviewing each book in terms of themes, narrative structure, and language use.

- Coding texts according to indicators: cultural alignment, ethical/value content, and integration of global perspectives, especially in relation to Islamic and Pakistani societal values.
- Identifying cultural gaps; for example, topics like Population Growth and World Food Supplies do not refer to the Pakistani context.

2. Teacher Interviews

- Conducting semi-structured interviews with English language teachers to explore the level of learner engagement, comprehension challenges, and the impact of digital media and AI-based learning platforms on behaviour.
- The responses contribute to the methodological triangle between textbook content and classroom reality, highlighting areas of cultural or ethical gaps and their impact on shaping values.

3. Analysis of culturally responsive content supported by artificial intelligence

- Analysis of culturally responsive and AI-supported content.
- Analysing local animations and AI-based series in terms of implicit value transmission, narrative strategies, language complexity, and interaction level.
- Evaluating the extent to which the integration of artificial intelligence aligns with schema theory by measuring the ability to connect new content with learners' prior cultural and ethical knowledge.

Data Analysis

Coding and thematic analysis:

Textual materials and teacher interviews were systematically coded using NVivo or comparable qualitative analysis software, where applicable, to identify recurring themes and patterns. The coding process focused on the following key aspects:

- **Cultural connection and authenticity** – Assessing how content reflects learners' local cultural, religious, and historical contexts.

- **Transmitting moral values** – Identifying implicit or explicit ethical lessons embedded within narratives or classroom practices.
- **Language complexity and comprehension support** – Evaluating linguistic structures, vocabulary, and clarity to ensure accessibility for learners.
- **Integration with digital tools and artificial intelligence** – Examining how AI-supported or digital content complements traditional narratives and fosters learning.

This structured approach allowed for the triangulation of textbook content, digital media, and classroom perspectives to draw robust conclusions regarding the alignment of English teaching materials with cultural, religious, and ethical values.

Mapping cognitive schemata:

Employing schema theory to evaluate the content's ability to activate prior cultural and moral knowledge, the study examines how learners connect new information with their existing cognitive frameworks. For example, *Great Expectations* by Dickens is analysed to detect potential dissonance with local moral and social frameworks, highlighting areas where cultural references, ethical dilemmas, or social behaviours may not align with Pakistani learners' experiences. This approach allows the identification of gaps in cultural relevance and moral resonance, providing guidance for adapting or supplementing content to support meaningful learning that integrates ethical reasoning, cultural identity, and language development.

Comparative analysis:

Comparing Punjab Textbook Board books with local digital content integrated with artificial intelligence to extract best practices in shaping values and promoting language, including:

- The density of culturally aligned narratives
- Opportunities for ethical reflection and discussion
- Adaptability to multilingual classrooms

The methodological triangle (Triangulation):

Integrating the results of textual analysis, teacher interviews, and AI content evaluation to ensure validity,

identify strengths and gaps, and formulate practical recommendations for designing ELT materials that enhance linguistic proficiency, cultural continuity, and moral development.

Ethical Considerations

- Obtaining informed consent from all participating teachers.
- Analysing textual and digital materials with cultural sensitivity, avoiding subjective value judgements, and maintaining academic rigour.
- Protecting the privacy of learners when displaying classroom notes or teacher reports.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study focuses on examining the cultural, ethical, and cognitive impact of school English language books alongside locally produced Urdu digital content, particularly the Kaneez Fatima, Ghulam Rasool, and Hamza series that rely on artificial intelligence. The analysis takes into account how each educational medium contributes to enhancing moral growth, social-emotional learning, language preservation, and cognitive interaction among students.

The results show that textbooks especially imported literary and informational texts provide general moral lessons and academic knowledge, but they often lack contextual relevance to Pakistani society, which limits students' ability to internalise and apply moral and cultural values in their daily lives. In contrast, local digital content offers culturally rooted narratives that reflect the details of daily life, Islamic principles, and Pakistani social norms, thereby enhancing implicit learning through observation, participation, and interaction.

Based on this, the analysis compares the effectiveness of these two educational mediums in shaping moral reasoning, social behaviour, and language development, highlighting the areas where cultural relevance and content adaptation enhance educational impact and achieve deeper and more sustainable learning.

Punjab Textbook Board English Textbooks

Class	Unit/Chapter	Content Summary	Analytic Observations	Cultural/Ethical Relevance	Critical Commentary
9th	Unit 11 – <i>The Dear Departed</i> (William Stanley Houghton)	One-act play depicting family greed and social pretense; inheritance dispute central to plot	Highlights selfishness, moral hypocrisy, and family conflict. Paragraphs showing Mrs. Slater’s manipulations expose consequences of unethical behavior	Universal moral lessons (honesty, family respect) but British social context may reduce local resonance	Could include Pakistani family norms, inheritance traditions, and consequences of dishonesty in local contexts
10th	Unit 1 – <i>Chinese New Year</i>	Describes Chinese festival rituals, home cleaning, celebrations	Provides cultural knowledge but lacks ethical or moral dimension	No connection to Pakistani festivals or ethical lessons	Could include Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha, Milad-un-Nabi with customs like charity, family gatherings, community bonding
10th	Unit 2 – <i>Little by Little One Walks Far</i>	Story emphasizing perseverance and gradual progress	Reinforces patience, self-discipline, and moral persistence	Aligns with Islamic teachings and Pakistani values	Could include local school/community examples to contextualize perseverance
10th	Unit 12 – <i>Population Growth and World Food Supplies</i>	Global statistics on population trends and food distribution	Informative but detached from Pakistan; lacks moral reflection	Limited engagement with learners’ ethical schemas	Could include local data and discussion of ethical responsibility toward food and sustainability

10th	Unit 11 – <i>Great Expectations</i> (Charles Dickens)	Moral development, ambition, and social conscience	Pip’s moral dilemmas highlight consequences of unethical choices	Ethical lessons universal but not directly relatable to Pakistani social/family structures	Teacher guidance required to map Dickens’ moral lessons to local norms
10th	Unit 10 – <i>A World Without Books</i>	Emphasizes knowledge preservation	Abstract ethical implications; no reference to modern tools or AI	Provides ethical reflection on value of knowledge but lacks immediacy	Could integrate AI-based scenarios to contextualize knowledge preservation ethically
12th	Unit 1 – <i>The Dying Sun</i> (Sir James Jeans)	Scientific essay on the dying of the sun	Introduces cosmic perspective, human insignificance, and environmental reflection	Encourages moral contemplation regarding human responsibility for knowledge and planetary stewardship	Could include examples linking environmental ethics to Pakistan to activate learners’ cultural schemas
12th	Unit 2 – <i>Why Boys Fail in College</i> (Herbert E. Hawkes)	Essay on academic failure, discipline, and social environment	Highlights personal responsibility, consequences of negligence	Aligns with ethical reflection on accountability and diligence	Could include local college experiences , ethical decision-making scenarios, and context-sensitive examples
12th	Unit 3 – <i>End of Term</i> (David Daiches)	Literary reflection on student life and moral conduct	Emphasizes responsibility and cultural preservation	Universal ethical lessons; British context may limit resonance	Could include Pakistani student examples for cultural relevance
12th	Unit 4 – <i>On Destroying</i>	Essay on cultural	Discusses ethical	Ethical principles	Could incorporate Pakistani library or

	<i>Books (J.C. Squire)</i>	preservation	responsibility, moral consequences of neglect	universal	cultural heritage examples to enhance relevance
12th	Unit 5 – <i>The Man Who Was a Hospital</i> (Jerome K. Jerome)	Humorous critique of selfishness and social negligence	Paragraphs expose unethical behavior and social irresponsibility	Universally relevant moral lessons	Could include Pakistani healthcare/community examples to localize ethical lessons
12th	Unit 8 – <i>China's Way to Progress</i> (Galezo Santini)	Exploration of China's development	Informative but lacks local ethical grounding	Global knowledge only; does not activate learners' moral/ethical schemas	Could relate progress to Pakistani civic responsibility and ethics
12th	Unit 9 – <i>Hitchhiking Across Sahara</i> (G.F. Lamb)	Travelogue and exploration narrative	Encourages curiosity and resilience	Lacks connection to local ethical frameworks	Could connect global learning experiences to local ethical decision-making
12th	Unit 16 – <i>Mustafa Kamal</i> (Wilfrid Castle)	Biography emphasizing leadership and public service	Highlights societal contribution; controversial treatment of female purdah	Teachers and students express cultural/religious discomfort	Could focus on leadership and public service while respecting local gender norms
12th	Unit 17 – <i>Goodbye Mr. Chips</i> (James Hilton)	Teacher-student relationships, mentorship, moral duty	Highlights perseverance, dedication, and moral guidance	Romantic subplot (Katherine Bridges' love) conflicts with local cultural and religious	Focus discussion on professional ethics, mentorship, and personal development; de-emphasize romance for cultural

				norms	appropriateness
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Analysis of Locally Produced Urdu Digital Content

Series	Key Features	Cultural/Ethical Emphasis	Educational & Developmental Value	Evidence/Impact
Kaneez Fatima	Family-centered stories, relatable child protagonists	Respect for elders, parents, teachers; patience; honesty	Supports moral development, social responsibility, empathy; models problem-solving in everyday life	Encourages internalisation of Islamic values and Pakistani cultural norms; enhances Urdu language skills (Imran et al., 2023)
Ghulam Rasool	Community-based narratives, school and neighbourhood contexts	Cooperation, fairness, respect for neighbours, ethical decision-making	Promotes social awareness, ethical reasoning, teamwork	Helps maintain cultural continuity, strengthens child engagement with familiar societal settings (Imran et al., 2023)
Hamza AI	Interactive AI-driven storytelling	Personalized moral guidance; scenario-based learning	Encourages critical thinking, creativity, and technology-mediated ethical reasoning	Early evidence suggests potential for combining cultural content with digital literacy; less traditional narrative impact compared to Kaneez Fatima and Ghulam Rasool

Teachers' Views on Local Context and Textbooks

Class	Unit/Chapter	Teacher Observations	Cultural/Ethical Relevance	Suggestions for Local Adaptation
9th	Unit 11 – The Dear Departed	Students struggle to relate to British family greed and inheritance	Ethical lessons universal but cultural disconnect noted	Include Pakistani family norms, local inheritance traditions, and consequences of unethical

		disputes		behavior
10th	Unit 1 – Chinese New Year	Provides knowledge but no moral dimension; students show low engagement	Minimal connection to Pakistani values	Integrate Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha, Milad-un-Nabi, family and community customs
10th	Unit 2 – Little by Little One Walks Far	Students respond positively to perseverance theme; aligns with teacher expectations	Aligns with Islamic teachings and local cultural values	Include local school or community examples to contextualize perseverance
10th	Unit 12 – Population Growth and World Food Supplies	Teachers note students find global statistics abstract; moral lessons unclear	Limited ethical engagement	Include local population and food sustainability data, link to community responsibility
10th	Unit 11 – Great Expectations	Students appreciate moral dilemmas but struggle with foreign context	Universal ethical lessons; cultural mapping needed	Teacher guidance to connect Dickens' lessons to local norms and social realities
10th	Unit 10 – A World Without Books	Abstract discussion; students require examples for understanding	Highlights value of knowledge but lacks immediacy	Incorporate AI-based scenarios or local libraries to contextualize knowledge preservation
12th	Unit 1 – The Dying Sun	Teachers emphasize cosmic perspective; students intrigued	Supports reflection on human responsibility	Link environmental ethics to local issues in Pakistan
12th	Unit 2 – Why Boys Fail in College	Students relate to academic failure and personal accountability	Aligns with ethical reflection on responsibility	Include local college experiences and culturally relevant decision-making scenarios
12th	Unit 3 – End of Term	Teachers note students understand responsibility but miss	Universal ethical lessons; limited local	Integrate Pakistani student examples to contextualize

		cultural cues	resonance	responsibility
12th	Unit 4 – On Destroying Books	Students understand ethical importance of preservation	Ethical principles universal	Include examples from Pakistani libraries and cultural heritage
12th	Unit 5 – The Man Who Was a Hospital	Students recognize social negligence; teachers highlight humor and critique	Moral lessons universally relevant	Include Pakistani healthcare or community examples for local relevance
12th	Unit 8 – China’s Way to Progress	Teachers note informative value but lack of local ethical grounding	Global knowledge only	Relate progress to Pakistani civic responsibility and ethics
12th	Unit 9 – Hitchhiking Across Sahara	Encourages curiosity; students enjoy adventure	Lacks connection to local ethics	Connect global experiences to local ethical decision-making
12th	Unit 16 – Mustafa Kamal	Teachers note leadership lessons but female purdah issue causes discomfort	Students express cultural/religious concerns	Emphasize leadership and public service respecting local gender norms
12th	Unit 17 – Goodbye Mr. Chips	Students understand mentorship and moral guidance	Romantic subplot conflicts with local cultural norms	Focus on professional ethics, mentorship, and personal development

Integrated analysis of school textbooks and locally produced Arabic digital content

Results

First: Cultural and Ethical Integration

The analysis of English textbooks for grades nine to twelve, along with local digital content, shows a clear variation in the level of cultural relevance and ethical engagement. The series Kaneez Fatima and Ghulam Rasool successfully integrate Islamic moral values and Pakistani cultural norms effectively within the narrative.

Unlike imported Western materials, which often require explicit moral lessons or idealised situations far removed from reality, these local animations naturally present morals and culture through everyday life contexts. Children observe the main characters as they deal with familiar family and social situations, which enhances implicit learning based on observation and interaction.

In contrast, study units such as *The Dear Departed* (9th grade) and *Great Expectations* (10th grade) offer general moral lessons related to honesty, responsibility, and social conscience, but they are rooted in British social contexts, which limits their direct resonance with Pakistani students. Many other units, including scientific, developmental, and global cultural articles, provide informational knowledge but lack culturally rooted ethical reflection, which diminishes their ability to influence the development of moral thinking among learners.

Second: Language retention and cognitive interaction

Urdu cartoons in addition to the dubbed English version play an important role in language development, as the characters communicate in natural Urdu rich in context, which supports children's linguistic understanding and expressive ability. Repeated exposure to this type of content contributes to enhancing vocabulary, dialogue structures, and culturally relevant linguistic expressions. Cognitive interaction is also enhanced through predicting events, determining ethical choices, and processing the sequence of the narrative.

In contrast, although textbooks support reading and critical thinking skills, they often present content in abstract or foreign contexts such as *China's Way to Progress* or *Hitch-hiking Across the Sahara* which may not provoke culturally rooted ethical thinking or directly relate to students' life experiences. The unit *Little by Little One Walks Far* (10th grade) is one of the closest units to local ethical frameworks, as it embodies the values of perseverance and patience, yet its contextual examples remain limited.

Third: Social and Emotional Development

Through immersive storytelling, *Kaneez Fatima* and *Ghulam Rasool* contribute to enhancing social and emotional learning, allowing children to internalise values of respect, patience, empathy, and cooperation. The episodes that address conflict resolution, helping neighbours, and adhering to ethical standards reinforce the

application of learnt behaviours in real-life situations.

As for textbooks, especially imported literary works, they present moral stances related to accountability and social responsibility, but they often require educational intervention from the teacher to bridge the cultural gap and make the lessons more relevant to the students' reality. Units such as Why Boys Fail in College (12th grade) and End of Term (12th grade) highlight concepts of responsibility and diligence, but their connection to the Pakistani context is not immediately clear.

Fourth: Digital Adaptation and Technological Engagement

The Hamza series, based on artificial intelligence, offers interactive and personalised ethical scenarios, introducing children to technology-mediated ethical thinking. Although this type of narrative is less culturally rooted compared to traditional animations, it has great potential to combine digital interaction with authentic cultural content, thereby enhancing both digital culture and moral growth. The integration of these tools alongside traditional media leads to the creation of a multimedia learning environment that simultaneously supports ethical reflection, linguistic development, and cognitive skill enhancement.

Conclusion

Locally produced digital content shows a higher level of cultural relevance, ethical harmony, and learning appeal compared to imported educational materials. By depicting daily life and Islamic values naturally, the series Kaneez Fatima and Ghulam Rasool enable children to internalise moral and social standards without direct indoctrination. This type of content contributes to language preservation, the development of cognitive abilities, and the enhancement of social and emotional learning, highlighting the advantages of culturally rooted educational media.

As interactive platforms based on artificial intelligence, such as Hamza AI, show promising potential to support and develop traditional storytelling, their cultural and ethical impact remains contingent upon the extent of their successful localisation and alignment with local values. In contrast, although the content of textbooks provides

general moral guidance, it often lacks direct cultural relevance and requires contextual adaptation to effectively foster moral thinking, social responsibility, and value awareness among students in Pakistan.

Recommendations

- **Encouraging Local Production**

Priority should be given to investing in culturally rooted digital content by media institutions, educational entities, and decision-makers, due to its effective role in promoting moral development, preserving the language, and sustaining cultural identity.

- **Integrating Media in the Educational Context**

Schools and teachers must integrate culturally relevant animations and AI-based content into a comprehensive curriculum that combines moral, linguistic, and cognitive learning, transforming media into an organised educational tool for holistic development.

- **Aligning the Content of Imported Textbooks**

Teachers should adapt textbook units by supporting them with local examples, culturally rooted discussions, and relevant case studies. This includes comparing British or foreign cultural references with Pakistani family, social, and religious standards to enhance relevance and moral understanding.

- **Research and Impact Assessment**

Continuous experimental studies are recommended to measure the behavioural, linguistic, and ethical outcomes of students exposed to culturally rooted media content and adapted book content. These studies will provide data-driven guidelines for developing and implementing content within classrooms.

- **Employing Artificial Intelligence in Cultural Narratives**

Interactive platforms based on artificial intelligence such as Hamza AI should be developed to provide culturally authentic and ethically rooted narratives, complementing traditional animation with personalised learning experiences and enhancing moral reasoning.

- **Engaging the Family and Community**

It is important to raise awareness among parents and community members about the educational value of culturally relevant animated content and AI-based material. Organised discussions, lesson reinforcement, and reflection on ethical behaviours also contribute to deepening the internalisation of social norms and moral values.

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