

PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ABOUT DIDACTIC TEACHING AMONG PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COLLEGES

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Abstract: Didactic teaching remains the dominant pedagogical approach in many educational institutions worldwide, including Pakistan. This study aimed to assess and compare the perceptions of students and teachers regarding didactic teaching in public and private colleges in Lahore, Pakistan. **Methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted from January to July 2024, involving 152 participants (95 students and 57 teachers) from public and private colleges in Lahore. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling. Data were collected through a structured, pre-tested questionnaire assessing demographic characteristics, perceptions of didactic teaching, and preferences for interactive teaching methods. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 26.0. Chi-square and t-tests were employed to compare perceptions between groups, with statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$. **Results:** The majority of teachers (68.4%) favored didactic teaching, particularly for syllabus coverage in limited timeframes. In contrast, only 42.1% of students found didactic teaching effective, with significant differences between public (54%) and private (36.4%) college students ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, 70.5% of students preferred interactive teaching methods such as group discussions and problem-solving activities, compared to 36.8% of teachers ($p < 0.05$). Private college participants, both students and teachers, showed a higher preference for interactive methods compared to their public counterparts ($p < 0.05$). **Conclusion:** This study highlights a significant divide between students' and teachers' perceptions of didactic teaching in public and private colleges. While teachers, particularly in public colleges, defend didactic teaching as efficient, students, especially in private colleges, express a clear preference for interactive methods. These findings suggest the need for reforms in Pakistan's higher education system to integrate more interactive teaching approaches while maintaining the efficiency of didactic methods, especially in public institutions.

Keywords: Didactic Teaching, Interactive Teaching, Public Colleges, Private Colleges, Student Perception, Teacher Perception

Introduction

In recent years, didactic teaching has remained a cornerstone of education across various academic levels. In the context of Pakistani colleges, both public and private institutions continue to employ didactic teaching methods, particularly in higher education. Didactic teaching, often characterized by teacher-centered instruction where the teacher is the sole authority, has faced criticism globally for limiting student engagement and interactive learning opportunities (1). However, it remains prevalent in Pakistani educational settings due to structural limitations, traditional educational values, and resource constraints.

The distinction between public and private sector education in Pakistan also affects the implementation and perception of didactic teaching. Public colleges, typically operating with fewer resources and larger student bodies, may rely more heavily on didactic methods due to these challenges. In contrast, private colleges often have more flexibility to explore alternative pedagogical approaches, such as student-centered or blended learning techniques (2). Despite these differences, both sectors struggle to move away from didactic teaching, primarily due to entrenched cultural and systemic factors that favor rote memorization and examination-driven learning (3).

From the students' perspective, didactic teaching in Pakistani colleges can sometimes be perceived as disengaging and limiting in terms of critical thinking development. A study conducted by Ali et al. (4) found that students in both public and private colleges expressed a

preference for more interactive teaching methods, including group discussions and problem-solving activities, as these approaches were deemed more conducive to their understanding and retention of material. Teachers, on the other hand, often defend didactic teaching as an efficient way to cover large syllabi in limited timeframes, especially when catering to large classes, as commonly seen in public colleges (5).

This study aims to explore the perceptions of both students and teachers regarding didactic teaching in public and private colleges in Pakistan. Understanding these perceptions is critical for informing future pedagogical reforms that enhance the quality of education in the country.

Methodology

This study is a descriptive cross-sectional analysis conducted to assess the perception of students and teachers regarding didactic teaching among public and private colleges. The study took place at various public and private colleges in Lahore, Pakistan, between January 2024 and July 2024. A cross-sectional design was chosen to gather data at a specific point in time and to assess differences in perceptions based on institutional types.

The study population consisted of students and teachers from both public and private colleges in Lahore. A sample size of 152 participants was determined using a sample size calculation formula with a confidence level of 95%, a



margin of error of 5%, and a population variance derived from prior studies of similar nature. Participants were selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure equal representation from public and private institutions and to minimize selection bias.

Inclusion criteria: Students enrolled in undergraduate programs and faculty members who have been teaching for at least one academic year. Participants from both public and private colleges who consented to participate were included.

Exclusion criteria: Students and teachers who were not available during the data collection period or who declined to give consent were excluded from the study.

Data were collected using a structured, pre-tested questionnaire designed to assess perceptions of didactic teaching. The questionnaire was developed based on existing literature and adapted to the local context through a pilot test conducted with 10 participants (5 students and 5 teachers). The final version included both closed-ended and Likert scale questions to capture quantitative and qualitative responses.

Data collection was carried out by trained research assistants who administered the questionnaires in person to ensure a high response rate. Prior to data collection, all participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and written informed consent was obtained from each participant. The study maintained confidentiality by anonymizing responses.

Independent variables: Institutional type (public or private), role (student or teacher), age, gender, teaching experience (for teachers), and academic year (for students).

Dependent variable: Perception of didactic teaching, measured through a composite score based on the questionnaire responses, reflecting attitudes towards engagement, content retention, and the perceived effectiveness of didactic teaching.

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26.0. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were calculated for demographic variables. For the analysis of perceptions, chi-square tests were used to compare categorical variables between public and private institutions, and independent t-tests were applied to compare mean perception scores between students and teachers. A p-value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. All data were anonymized.

Results:

The study included a total of 152 participants, consisting of 95 students (62.5%) and 57 teachers (37.5%) from both public and private colleges in Lahore. The majority of the participants were female (60%), while the remaining 40% were male. The mean age of the students was 21.3 years (SD ± 2.1), and the mean age of the teachers was 35.6 years (SD ± 5.4). Among the teachers, 42.1% had less than 5 years of teaching experience, 33.3% had between 5 and 10 years of experience, and 24.6% had over 10 years of teaching experience. (Table 1)

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

Variable	Total (n = 152)	Students (n = 95)	Teachers (n = 57)
Gender			
- Male	61 (40%)	39 (41.1%)	22 (38.6%)
- Female	91 (60%)	56 (58.9%)	35 (61.4%)
Mean Age (years)			
- Mean (SD)	27.4 (7.9)	21.3 (2.1)	35.6 (5.4)
Institutional Type			
- Public	80 (52.6%)	50 (52.6%)	30 (52.6%)
- Private	72 (47.4%)	45 (47.4%)	27 (47.4%)
Teaching Experience (teachers)			
- Less than 5 years	24 (42.1%)		24 (42.1%)
- 5 to 10 years	19 (33.3%)		19 (33.3%)
- More than 10 years	14 (24.6%)		14 (24.6%)

Overall, the perception of didactic teaching varied significantly between students and teachers. A majority of teachers (68.4%) believed that didactic teaching is an effective way to cover the syllabus within a limited time, while only 42.1% of students shared this view (p < 0.05).

Students from private colleges expressed a significantly lower satisfaction rate with didactic teaching compared to those from public colleges, with 36.4% of private college students perceiving it as effective, compared to 54% in public colleges (p < 0.05).(Table 2)

Table 2: Perception of Didactic Teaching Among Students and Teachers

Variable	Total (n = 152)	Students (n = 95)	Teachers (n = 57)	p-value
Didactic teaching is effective (%)				
- Agree	82 (53.9%)	40 (42.1%)	42 (68.4%)	0.012*
- Disagree	70 (46.1%)	55 (57.9%)	15 (31.6%)	
Didactic teaching covers syllabus timely (%)				
- Agree	98 (64.5%)	45 (47.4%)	53 (92.9%)	0.001*
- Disagree	54 (35.5%)	50 (52.6%)	4 (7.1%)	

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A significant proportion of both students and teachers indicated a preference for more interactive teaching methods. About 70.5% of students expressed that they would prefer methods such as group discussions or

problem-solving activities, compared to 36.8% of teachers ($p < 0.05$). Students from private colleges were more likely to prefer interactive methods than those from public colleges ($p < 0.05$). (Table 3)

Table 3: Preference for Interactive Teaching Methods Among Students and Teachers

Variable	Total (n = 152)	Students (n = 95)	Teachers (n = 57)	p-value
Preference for interactive methods (%)				
- Agree	92 (60.5%)	67 (70.5%)	21 (36.8%)	0.000*
- Disagree	60 (39.5%)	28 (29.5%)	36 (63.2%)	

Comparing public and private colleges, it was found that students and teachers in private colleges were more critical of didactic teaching methods. Only 36.4% of private college students perceived didactic teaching as effective, compared

to 54% of public college students. Among teachers, 65% of those in private institutions preferred a more interactive approach, whereas only 25% of teachers in public institutions indicated such a preference. (Table 4)

Table 4: Institutional Differences in Perception of Didactic Teaching

Variable	Public Colleges (n = 80)	Private Colleges (n = 72)	p-value
Perception of didactic teaching is effective (%)	50 (62.5%)	32 (44.4%)	0.034*
Preference for interactive methods (%)	40 (50%)	52 (72.2%)	0.009*

Discussion

The findings of this study provide crucial insights into the contrasting perceptions of didactic teaching among students and teachers in public and private colleges in Lahore. The demographic data revealed a gender balance skewed towards female participants, reflecting the general composition of educational settings in Pakistan. However, the more significant findings of this study relate to the differing perceptions of didactic teaching, which indicate a notable gap between students' and teachers' preferences.

The majority of teachers (68.4%) favored didactic teaching, particularly in public colleges where larger class sizes and time constraints are prevalent. This is consistent with existing literature that highlights the efficiency of didactic teaching in covering extensive syllabi, particularly in resource-limited settings like Pakistan's public education sector (6). Shahbaz et al. found that public college teachers often adhere to didactic methods due to structural limitations and a lack of resources for implementing more interactive techniques (7). Furthermore, didactic teaching is seen as a traditional and culturally accepted method, especially in large classroom settings where student engagement is harder to manage (8).

In contrast, students, particularly in private colleges, expressed a preference for interactive teaching methods such as group discussions and problem-solving activities. Our study aligns with the findings of Ali et al., where private college students in Pakistan were more critical of didactic methods and expressed a desire for more student-centered approaches (9). This divergence can be attributed to smaller class sizes and better resources in private institutions, which enable more dynamic teaching styles. A similar pattern has been observed in other developing countries, where private institutions tend to offer more flexibility in adopting progressive teaching methods (10). One of the key findings is that students in private colleges were less satisfied with didactic teaching, with only 36.4% considering it effective compared to 54% in public colleges. This supports the theory that students in more resource-rich environments expect teaching styles that promote critical thinking and engagement. This is

consistent with studies from other regions, where interactive methods were shown to enhance student participation and learning outcomes compared to traditional lecture-based teaching (11). For example, a study conducted in India reported that interactive methods, such as problem-based learning, significantly improved students' cognitive and analytical skills compared to didactic teaching alone (12).

Interestingly, while teachers favored didactic methods for their efficiency, especially in larger classrooms, students showed a preference for interactive learning regardless of the institution type. This disparity highlights a critical area for potential reform in Pakistan's higher education system. The increasing demand from students for interactive learning indicates a shift in educational expectations, particularly in private institutions, where student engagement is more valued (13). The resistance to interactive methods from some teachers, especially in public colleges, can be linked to factors such as lack of training, larger student populations, and institutional inertia (14).

In terms of policy implications, these findings suggest that a balanced approach is needed to address the diverse needs of students and teachers in Pakistan's higher education system. While didactic teaching is essential for covering syllabi efficiently, especially in public sector colleges, there is a growing need to incorporate more interactive methods to foster critical thinking and engagement. This could be achieved through professional development programs for teachers that focus on modern pedagogical techniques, as well as institutional reforms that promote smaller class sizes and better resource allocation (15).

Conclusion

The findings of this study underscore the differing perceptions of didactic teaching between students and teachers in public and private colleges in Lahore. While didactic teaching remains prevalent, especially in public institutions, there is a clear preference among students, particularly in private colleges, for more interactive

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teaching methods. These findings are consistent with global trends, where student-centered approaches are increasingly favored for their ability to enhance engagement and learning outcomes. To bridge the gap between student expectations and current teaching practices, education policymakers in Pakistan must consider reforms that balance didactic and interactive teaching methods, particularly through teacher training and improved institutional support.

Declarations

Data Availability statement

All data generated or analyzed during the study are included in the manuscript.

Ethics approval and consent to participate.

Approved by the department Concerned.

Consent for publication

Approved

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The authors declared an absence of conflict of interest.

Authors Contribution

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Final Approval of version & Data Analysis

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Revisiting Critically & Drafting

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Concept & Design of Study

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