# Quantum -Enhanced Recommender System for Personalized Elective Selection in Education

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**HOW TO CITE:**

Sabreen Taj , Sneha Prasad V. N , Bharath H C (2026). Quantum -Enhanced Recommender System for Personalized Elective Selection in Education.

International Journal of Special Education, 41(19s),765 - 780



**ABSTRACT:**
Elective courses selection is one of the most important decisions undertaken by undergraduate students as it directly affects one's academic success and career path. Yet, the course selection is often based on advice from friends, family, or faculty, leading students to select courses incongruously based on their academic aptitude. If we could develop a personalized elective recommendation framework, then students can select their electives accordingly based on their ability. In this paper, a Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation System (HQ-ECRS) is presented that integrates the nine-qubit Variational Quantum Classifier (VQC) with Logistic Regression to formulate a personalized recommended elective courses framework. In our study, a statistically representative synthetic undergraduate dataset comprising 10,000 records of students with nine college attributes including CGPA (range 0-10), Average Exam Score, Mathematics Score, Programming Score, Data Structures Score, Algorithms Score, DBMS Score, Statistics Score, and Electronics Score were used to develop and evaluate our framework, which generates a ranking of nine types of Elective category and recommends the top 3 suitable Elective Course Categories to students accordingly. Our VQC utilizes data re-uploading, angle embedding, and strongly entangling layers for nonlinear modelling and Logistic Regression for stable probability estimates, then fuses the nodes using weighted hybrid fusion. With Flask as the web application framework as a demo prototype, the framework support login function, recommendation history, and visualization of prediction result. When compared against the four classical algorithms, Logistic Regression, Decision Tree, Random Forest, and K-Nearest Neighbor's, our hybrid quantum-classical framework yielded a good accuracy on undergraduate elective courses selection forecast, and successfully outperformed all classical

baselines.

**Keywords.** QML; VQC; Elective Recommender System; Hybrid Quantum-classical Model; EDM.

**Introduction**

AI, ML and EDM emerged as a vital technology in today's Higher Education (HE) by providing intelligent academic advising, tailored/blended teaching, and data-driven educational planning. AI, ML and EDM make it possible for educational providers to analyse abundant amount of student data to find learning signals, predict learning and academic achievement, then create academic resources to meet students' immediate academic needs. The fast rising of such an AI-oriented educational technology has led to an enormous improvement on effective teaching, learning and planning, thus intelligent educational systems has already become an inevitable feature of future HE [1].

Personalized learning is an important pedagogical methodology that tailors learning experience to each student by taking into full account his/her previous educational background, learning style, interests and future goals. Personalization of learning can help cater for individual differences in motivation, as well as provide adaptive learning pathways and tailored educational intervention, consequently promoting higher engagement and better performance of students. Research has shown that AI-powered personalized learning can recommended learning materials, re-shape individual learning pathways and enrich the learning experience through intelligent pedagogy [2].

Educational recommender systems have gained considerable research attention owing to their support to students in academic scheduling and elective course selection. In undergraduate CSE (Computer Science and Engineering) programmes, students have to select elective courses in emerging areas like Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Data Mining, Cloud Computing, Cyber Security, Internet of Things etc. For their higher studies.

Elective selection may heavily impact students' technical skills and knowledge, area of specialization, and subsequent career prospects.

Various intelligent recommender systems have the potential to recommend suitable electives by analysing existing academic profiles and learner characteristics for effective academic planning and stress reduction of manual course selection [3].

Recently, a new promising forward Quantum Machine Learning (QML) provides a new computational paradigm with the integration of quantum computing and classical machine learning for solving real prediction and classification problems. Hybrid quantum-classical Learning Models- Variational Quantum Classifiers (VQC) using parameterized quantum circuits and classical optimization algorithms can learn complex non-linear feature representation of data. Because of their powerful expressive learning ability and compatibility to existing NISQ (Noisy Intermediate-Scale Quantum) devices, they have received much attention for solving hard machine learning problems and will be feasible for future intelligent education recommendation systems [4].

Driven by in a large extent, the emerging needs for intelligent, tailored educational assistance, it would be very beneficial to establish recommender framework that can correctly analyse various students' attributes and then to deliver highly trustworthy elective recommendations. The integration of quantum computing with classical ML might become a promising pathway to enhance the efficacy of such personalized educational recommender by taking advantages of the advantages of classical and quantum learning. Based on this motivation, this report investigates approaches to hybrid quantum-classical learning for the next generation of educational recommender system [5].

**2. Related Work**

Education recommender systems is now a popular research area as they can help learners selecting suitable learning resources, courses and educational pathway based on learner's interests, learning achievement and behaviour. In recent years, the state-of-the-art artificial intelligence, machine learning, educational data mining and learning analytics have made the recommendation process intelligent. Despite this, current recommendation techniques are still suffering from personalization, explainability, student modelling, evaluation and scalability issues, which motivate the search for more intelligent recommendation frameworks.

Algarni and Sheldon [6] conducted a systematic review of higher education course recommender systems by analysing 42 articles published between 2017 and 2022. The study compared the collaborative filtering, content-based, knowledge-based and hybrid recommender approaches used in higher education. The authors argued hybrid recommender systems can outperform single recommendation techniques by combining recommender techniques. The study also identified outstanding challenges such as student modelling, scalability, course diversity and the cold-start problem, which indicated that further research is needed for developing more intelligent recommendation frameworks.

Silva et al. [7] presented a systematic literature review on educational recommender systems to facilitate learning and teaching tasks. The literature review found hybrid recommender systems now dominate over individual recommendation techniques due to their better recommendation quality. They also observed that most of current studies focus on recommendation accuracy but very few investigate pedagogical effectiveness and long-term learning achievements. As a result, the authors called for multidimensional evaluation frameworks that can evaluate recommendation performance and educational impact simultaneously.

Lampropoulos [8] carried out a comprehensive literature review and bibliometric analysis of educational recommender systems by analysing publications indexed in Scopus and Web of Science. It was clearly showed the emerging importance of educational recommender systems on delivering personalized and adaptive learning experiences while optimizing educational decision-makings. The study identified the achievement of high recommendation quality is very likely to depend on learners' characteristics, academic achievement and learning preferences, which can lead to increased learning engagement and satisfaction.

Thongchotchat et al. [9] systematically examined educational recommender systems that incorporate learning style theories to facilitate personalized learning. It investigated learner profiling methods, learning style identification methods, recommendation algorithms and educational recommendation schemes. Th authors concluded that learner preferences and learning styles incorporated in the recommender processes can promote learning efficiency and effectiveness. However, learner modelling accuracy and recommendation adaptivity are still far from satisfactory, demonstrating the research opportunities in developing more intelligent recommender structures.

Pal and Dahiya [10] reviewed the effect of educational recommender systems in learning and teaching environments. In particularly, the author analysed recommendation techniques based on educational data mining, learning analytics, machine learning and deep learning to facilitate user learning. The study found recommender systems can help learners by recommending suitable learning resources, learning path and achieving better academic performance. The author also highlighted the importance of developing more advanced recommendation techniques to cope with complex academic data and improve recommendation accuracy.

Ma et al. [11] proposed a explainable course recommender structure, and emphasized that efficacy of recommendation shosuld not only be judged by the accuracy, but also how well users can understand and trust the recommendation results. The survey summarized the role of explainable recommendation algorithms in gaining student acceptance and providing users better explicability for informed decision-makings. Future-oriented directions on explainable artificial intelligence in educational recommendation systems also discussed.

Askarbekuly and Lukovi [12] conducted a systematic review on educational recommender systems to evaluate learning effects, assessment schemes and evaluation strategies. The review found most of the current research prioritized optimizing recommendation accuracy and relevance, and far less of the studies examine pedagogical effectiveness and learnability. Therefore, the authors called for comprehensive evaluation strategies both for recommendation performance and effective learning in different types of environments.

Pilato and Vella [13] looked into the emerging field quantum computing on recommendation systems by investigating variational quantum circuits, quantum optimization algorithms and hybrid quantum- classical recommendation techniques. The study suggested the applications of quantum in recommendation have great potential to enhance recommendation quality and efficiency in addressing complex recommendation problems. However, there is still a research gap on adopting hybrid quantum-classical learning in course recommendation, which can be explored as a promising approach.

### 2.1 Research Gap

While previous research evidence the utility of educational recommender systems for personalizing learning and course recommendation, several research gaps are identified. Most of the research explores traditional recommendation algorithms, such as collaborative filtering, content-based filtering, knowledge-based recommender algorithms, hybrid recommender system and deep learning algorithms. Existing recommender algorithms can improve the recommendation accuracy, but they always have problems of scalability, learner modelling, cold-start, computation complexity or low recommendation accuracy in nowadays dynamic learning environment. In addition, other experiments focus on explainable recommendation and uniform evaluation framework to enhance user understanding, trust and education. Up to now, most of the educational recommender systems are still based on traditional artificial intelligence methods or machine learning algorithms, little explore the influence of emerging quantum machine learning method. Despite the promising applications of quantum computing to optimization, classification, and recommendation tasks by hybrid quantum-classical learning and VQCs, the utilization of quantum computing to personalized elective course recommendation in higher education has not been sufficiently studied. Specifically, innovative intelligent educational recommendation systems, integrating classical machine learning and the learning from quantum-powered classical quantum-learning model to increase the recommendation accuracy while effectively processing educational information, are absent. In order to overcome the above limitations, this paper puts forward a Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation Framework (HQ-ECRS), where a Variational Quantum Classifier (VQC) is integrated with Logistic Regression (LR) to realize personalized elective recommendation. The expected contribution of the proposed framework is to achieve better recommendation accuracy, address learners' physiological and psychological differences, reduce the training costs, and explore the efficiency of hybrid quantum-classical learning in the foundation of electives recommendation.

### 2.2 Contributions

The key contributions of this work are summarized as follows:

Proposed a hybrid quantum-classical elective recommender system (VQC +LR), which is used to help students choose advanced electives.

A Variational Quantum Circuit is implemented using angle encoding, data re-uploading and strongly entangling layers to model the intricate correlations in data related to student academic achievements.

A personalized suggestion engine is built to give top-3 elective recommendations based on student academic profile and KPIs.

We performed a detailed experimental analysis using various classical machine learning models in order to evaluate the proposed framework by comparing accuracy, feature importance and convergence in training.

We investigate the effectiveness of hybrid quantum-classical learning in comparison to classical learning methods, and show how it can enhance recommendation performance. In educational systems.

A web application has been developed to facilitate the real-time web-based elective recommendation system through an interactive web interface.

**2.3 Novelty of the Proposed Framework**

While hybrid learning approaches have been studied in the context of several machine learning applications, their deployment for personalized elective recommendation using Quantum Machine Learning has been unexplored. Unlike traditional ensemble approaches that take the output of multiple classical classifiers trained on identical feature space, the proposed Hybrid Quantum – Classical Elective Recommendation Framework amalgamates two inherently dissimilar platforms, classical and quantum. Logistic Regression quantifies classical linear probabilistic relationships, while Variational Quantum Classifier leverages nonlinear feature representations based on angle embedding, data re-uploading technique, and Strongly Entangling Layers; the weighted probability fusion fuses diverse complementary predictions towards a more robust yet interpretable recommendation. The innovations within the design are reflected through the implementation of the proposed hybrid framework as an end-to-end Flask-based decision-support system to generate near-instant personalized top-3 elective recommendations.

**3. Methods**

**3.1 Dataset Overview**

For this project, a synthetic functional academic dataset was created for testing the efficacy of the designed Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation Framework (HQ-ECRS). Synthetic datasets are used as surrogates for real institutional academic records due to the lack of access of actual student data, which contains confidential personal and academic data. Institutional academic data is often not available for academic research due to student privacy concerns and institutional access controls. In addition, the artificial dataset provides an equal, reproduceable, and unbiased test environment for objectively evaluating our hybrid quantum-classical recommendation model against classical machine learning methods. Although synthetic data inherently lacks certain realistic behavioural characteristics, controlling all variables of individual academic attributes and elective subjects ensures balanced test conditions and eliminates bias between recommendation methods. The data set contains 10,000 synthetic undergraduate students' profiles. Each student profile describes the academics of an individual student, with9 academic attributes, CGPA (0-10 Scale), Average Exam Score, Math Score, Programming Score, Data Structures Score, Algorithms Score, DBMS Score, Statistics Score and Electronics Score. These academic attributes describe the students 'overall academic achievement and different subject-based academic performance, which are major factors to influence the decision of elective course choices. The elective recommendation problem is modelled as a multi-class classification task where each student is assigned to one of the nine elective categories of specializations. Using the academic features, the framework is capable of recommending the best elective category and the Top3 elective courses with the highest chances.

Synthetic data allows for reproducible experiments, student privacy may be maintained, and ethical issues associated with using educational data can be overcome by using a synthetic data set.

**3.2 Synthetic Dataset Generation Process**

The synthetic data set was produced using a stochastic rule-based approach intended to imitate typical patterns of academic achievement experienced by undergraduate students. Academic characteristics were randomly drawn from a set of probability distributions, and subject-to-subject correlations maintained in a logical way. For instance, a student's high programming score was associated with a higher chance of obtaining superior Data Structures and Algorithms ratings and vice versa, a good Mathematics grade was correlated with relatively high scores for Statistics. A student's better grades in Programming and DBMS courses were associated with a higher Likelihood of selecting software-oriented courses.

In order to replicate the natural variations observed in student scores, stochastic noise was injected into the data generation pipeline. The labels for the elective categories were assigned based on probabilistic suitability conditions selected from the overall profile of a student, instead of rigid conditions. In addition, an equal number of samples were created for each Elective category to minimize the effects of bias.

The synthetic dataset generated will also serve as a reproducible, privacy-preserving, unbiased benchmark against which we can evaluate the proposed Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation Framework. under isolates and controlled experimental conditions. While the synthetic data mimics actual academic relationships, it does not account for the full scope of variables encountered in actual academic settings such as student interests and motivation, institutional guidelines and policies, career aspirations, and so on.

**3.3 Data Preprocessing**

The following preprocessing operations were carried out before model building so as to enhance data quality and to make it usable for both classical machine learning procedures and the VQC.

**Data Quality Verification**

The dataset was checked for duplicates, incorrect values, and inconsistent marks. All the attributes created were checked for conformity to the predefined limits. As the data creation process was tightly controlled there were no missing values.

**Feature Scaling**

All the numerical features were scaled to the [0, 1] range by Min-Max scaling. This is crucial for the Variational Quantum Classifier as quantum feature encoding methods impose bounded numbers into quantum states and thereby stabilizes learning.

The normalization process is defined as:

$$x\_norm = (x - x\_min) / (x\_max - x\_min) \quad \text{----------(1)}$$

where x represents the original feature value and x_norm denotes the scaled feature value.

**Training and Testing Division**

The dataset was split the data into training and testing sets using an 80:20 stratified split. The model was trained on observations within the training dataset, which consisted of 8,000 students, and tested on the remaining 2,000 observations. Stratified sampling was used in order to keep the distribution of all electives in both sets. This is so that the models' training and prediction would be representative of each elective class.

**Quantum Feature Preparation**

Following preprocessing, each student profile was encoded into a normalized feature vector. The features were then translated into a quantum state using the encoding method of within the Variational Quantum Circuit (VQC) framework. The encoded and transformed features were sent to a trainable quantum layer to learn the sophisticated relationships between the student features and elective classes. The quantum feature mappings learned were then measured to derive class probabilities, which were later integrated with Logistic Regression predictions according to the mentioned hybrid fusion approach toward the final elective recommendation generation.

### 3.4 Dataset Characteristics and Limitations

The synthetic data set offers an isolated balanced experimental setting that is privacy preserved for the evaluation of the proposed Hybrid Quantum-classical Elective Recommendation Framework. Balanced class label distribution and realistic campus relationships help to reduce classification bias when compared among various machine learning algorithms. The generated dataset adequately mirrors undergraduates' academic achievement but less effectively for the real world, e.g., stimulation. However, there are several factors present in the actual education system that are not represented in the synthetic dataset, including students' intrinsic motivation, lasting interests, policies, faculty interactions, and career goals. The future work will involve applying the proposed framework to actual institutional data.

### 3.5 System Architecture

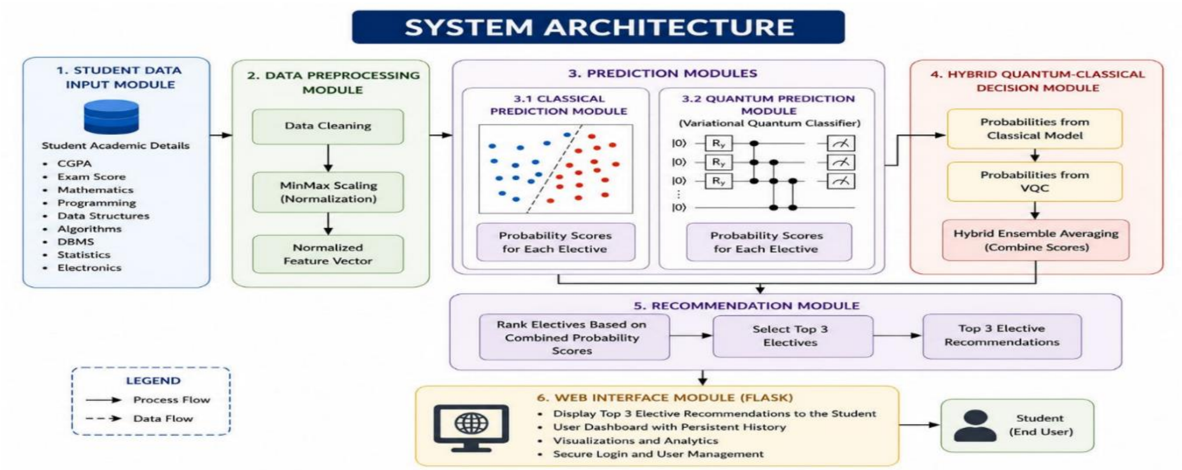


**Figure 1.** Architecture of the Proposed Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation System

**Figure. 1**. System architecture of the proposed Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation System

The framework of the proposed system was composed of four components: data pre-processing, classical machine learning component, quantum machine learning component, and hybrid fusion component as shown in Fig. 1. The raw student data are collected in the form of academic and performance-based features. These features are passed through the preprocessing unit and scaled to a standard range for efficient processing and normalized data are generated. This feature vector is fed as input to two learning pipelines as follows. Multiple supervised learning algorithms such as Logistic Regression, Decision Tree, Random Forest and K-Nearest Neighbours are integrated into the classical machine learning module to model student academic profiles and classify the best-fitting elective categories. The classical models, which represent several learning paradigms, also serve as baselines for comparison with the quantum learning model. The classical prediction probabilities are integrated with the predictions from the quantum model via the hybrid fusion strategy. Meanwhile, the quantum module takes the same classical features as input and performs quantum computation through a Variational Quantum Circuit (VQC). Classical features are first encoded into quantum states with parameterized rotation gates, then applied with entangled operations. The quantum circuit gives scores for classification by quantum measurement. All predictions from the classical and quantum approach are represented as probability vectors spanning all elective classes that the student can choose to take. The probability vectors are fed into a hybrid fusion approach to generate a final prediction score for each of the electives. Subsequently, the probabilities are ranked, and the system outputs the top-3 recommends electives to the student. The system is deployed on a webserver via a Flask-based web application.

### 3.6 Dataset and Feature Representation

Each student is represented using a feature vector:

$x = (x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_9) \in \mathbb{R}^9$-----------(2)

These features indicate the academic performance such as marks, grades, coding capabilities and various interest-based features. The nine elective subjects constitute the output labels in the dataset.

### 3.7 Classical Machine Learning Module

These classical machine learning algorithms are used as baseline models for exploring student academic profiles and elective group prediction. These algorithms correspond to various concept learning directions including linear classifier, rule-based learning, ensemble learning and case-based classifier.

**Logistic Regression (LR):** Logistic Regression is a supervised classification algorithm that based on the input features-input labels correlation, predicts probabilities of a sample's Class membership, and is used in this study because of its probabilistic outputs for all the elective classes, which makes it viable to comparison and hybrid fusion with the proposed quantum model. The prediction of student learning achievement and individualized learning support based on data mining approaches shows the effectiveness of Logistic Regression, provided by its probabilistic nature, as the basis of the classifier for educational data mining, [14], and therefore, in this work, Logistic Regression was taken as one of the baselines Classification.

**Decision Tree (DT):** DT is a rule induction classifier that repeatedly splits the training data based on attribute value to produce comprehensible rules. It was chosen as one of the baseline algorithms since DT can discover the most significant academic attributes influencing elective choice with explicitly derived decisions. Recent research by, [Author et al.] utilized the Decision Tree models to forecast student academic performance to facilitate adaptive learning, exhibiting the potential of the DT method in education [15]. Hence the Decision Tree classifier is included.

**Random Forest (RF):** Random Forest is an ensemble learning method for classification and regression, which constructs multiple decision trees during training. Random Forest is effective in modelling complex nonlinear combinations of student academic attributes. The result from recent studies educational research indicated that RF has the strong predictive performance among student performance analysis and personalized learning approach which mainly depends on where it consistently identified nonlinear relationships within education data [16]. For this reason, RF is chosen as baseline model.

**K-Nearest Neighbor (KNN):** K-Nearest Neighbor(KNN) is a widely used, similarity based classifying model which classifies a new sample based on the class label of its 'neighbor' samples. It is suitable for this study as students possessing similar characters in terms of academic records often share similar elective choices. It has been recently used in student performance prediction [17] and educational recommendation system, proving to be effective at capturing students with similar academic records for personalized aid. Therefore, it is included as one of the baseline classifiers. Finally, the efficacy of these classical machine learning algorithms is compared to the proposed model based on the Variational Quantum Circuit.

For classical machine learning algorithms, Logistic Regression is used as the classical classifier in the hybrid scheme because it has probabilities as output and it can be used together with VQC in the hybrid fusion step. KNN (K-Nearest Neighbors), DT (Decision

Tree), RF (Random Forest) are used only as baseline classifiers for a comparison on the validity of the proposed Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation System.

### 3.8 Variational Quantum Circuit-Based Quantum Learning Module

The quantum machine learning function is composed of a Variational Quantum Circuit (VQC), a hybrid quantum-classical learning model for classification task. VQC leverages the expressive power of parameterized quantum circuit with classical optimization to learn nonlinear decision boundaries. In the framework, classical features of student academics are encoded into quantum states by quantum feature encoding. Then quantum states go through a trainable variational layer of parameterized general rotation and multi-qubit entangling gates. After that result state measurement proceeds to combine class label probabilities for elective recommendation. Recent studies show that Variational Quantum Classifiers (VQC as a general name to describe VQC with classical optimizer.) could achieve comparable classification performance with classical machine learning methods in educational prediction task and provide certain advantage of hybrid quantum-classical learning methods [18]. By that reason, VQC is used as the main learning method to fit the proposed Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation Framework.

#### 3.8.1 Quantum Feature Encoding

Each input feature is encoded into a quantum state using rotation gates:

$R_P(\theta) = e^{-i\theta P/2}, P \in \{X, Y, Z\}$------(3)

The full quantum state is:

$\mid \psi(x) \rangle = \otimes_{i=1}^{9} R_P\,(\pi x_i) \mid 0\rangle$-------(4)

To increase expressiveness, data re-uploading is applied, where the same input is encoded, multiple times using different rotation axes (X, Y, Z) with intermediate entangling layers.

#### 3.8.2 Variational Quantum Circuit Structure

The quantum circuit is composed of alternating encoding and trainable layers:

$U(\theta, x) = \prod_{l=1}^{L} \left[W_l(\theta_l) A_{P_l}(x)\right]$--------(5)

where:

- $L = 4$layers
- $A_P(x)$is the encoding operation
- $W_l(\theta_l)$are strongly entangling layers with trainable rotations and CNOT gates in ring topology

This structure enables learning complex feature interactions in high-dimensional quantum space.

#### 3.8.3 Quantum Measurement Output

The output is obtained by measuring the expectation value of the Pauli-Z operator on the first qubit:

$f(\theta, x) = \langle 0^{\otimes 9} \mid U^{\dagger}(\theta, x) Z_0 U(\theta, x) \mid 0^{\otimes 9} \rangle$---------(6)

The output range is:

$f(\theta, x) \in [-1,1]$--------(7)

This value represents the class score produced by the quantum circuit.

#### 3.8.4 One-vs-Rest Classification Strategy

Since there are nine elective classes, a One-vs-Rest strategy is used. In this approach, nine independents binary VQC models are trained:

$f_c(\theta_c, x), c = 1,2,\ldots,9$----------(8)

Each classifier distinguishes one elective category against all others.

#### 3.8.5 Quantum Probability Generation

The outputs of each VQC are converted into probabilities using a sigmoid-based transformation followed by normalization:

$p_c^{VQC} = \sigma(f_c(\theta_c, x))$---------(9)

$p_c^{VQC} = \frac{p_c^{VQC}}{\sum_{j=1}^{9} p_j^{VQC}}$-----------(10)

This ensures a valid probability distribution over all electives.

### 3.9 Training Strategy

The VQC is trained with the Adam optimizer and cosine-decay learning-rate scheduling. Mini-batch training is used to improve the robustness and generalization of the model. The dataset balanced class distribution, hence vanilla mini-batch training is used. Early stopping is used to avoid overfitting.

The number of parameters in each quantum classifier is:

$N_{params} = L \times n \times 3$------(11)

where:

- $L = 4$ is the number of layers
- $n = 9$ is the number of qubits

$N_{params} = 108$-------(12)

Since nine classifiers are trained:

$N_{total} = 972$----------(13)

### 3.10 Hybrid Fusion Strategy

The final prediction is obtained by combining classical and quantum probabilities using weighted fusion:

$p_c^{Hybrid} = \alpha p_c^{LR} + (1 - \alpha) p_c^{VQC}$-------------(14)

where:

- $\alpha \in [0,1]$
- typically, $\alpha = 0.5$

This fusion combines:

- Stability and interpretability of classical learning
- Nonlinear feature representation capability of quantum learning

### 3.11 Recommendation Generation

The final recommendation is generated by ranking the hybrid probabilities and selecting the top three electives:

$R = TopK(p^{Hybrid}, 3)$------(15)

This ensures personalized recommendations based on the highest predicted suitability.

### 3.12 System Deployment

The hybrid system as a whole is integrated into a Flask web application, where user (student) input is collected and fed into the classical and quantum modules of the system, and the resulting Top-3 elective recommendations provided immediately.

### 3.13 Performance Evaluation Metrics

The performance metrics applied to assess the classification results are F-measure, Precision, Recall, and Accuracy. These performance metrics are calculated depending on the values of True Positive (TP), False Positive (FP), True Negative (TN) and False Negative (FN) for the given classes.

True Positive (TP): It is known as the correctly calculated positive values. TP defines that the value of real class is represented as yes and the value of calculated class is represented as also yes.

True Negatives (TN): It is known as the correctly calculated negative values. TN defines that the value of real class is represented as no and the value of calculated class is represented as also no.

False Positives (FP): FP defines that the value of real class is represented as no and the value of calculated class is represented as yes.

False Negatives (FN): FN defines that the value of real class is represented as yes and the value of calculated class is represented as no.

**Precision**

Precision is known as the ratio of accurately calculated positive annotations to the total calculated positive annotations. It is given by Eq. (16)

Precision=TP/TP+FP …………………………..………………… (16)

**Recall**

Recall is known as the ratio of accurately calculated positive annotations to the all annotations in real class. Recall is also called as Sensitivity. It is given by Eq. (17)

Recall=TP/TP+FN …….……………………………………... (17)

**F1 score**

F1 Score is known as the weighted average of Precision and Recall. This is a bench mark metric. Hence, this score considers both False Positives (FP) and False Negatives (FN) into relation. It is given by Eq. (18)

F1Score=2*(Recall*Precision) /(Recall+Precision) ……………..……… (18)

**Accuracy**

Accuracy is known as the most perceptive performance measure. It is defined as a ratio of accurately calculated annotation to the total annotations. It is given by Eq. (19)

Accuracy=TP+TN/TP+FP+FN+TN……… …………………… (19)

## 4 Results and discussion

This section shows the experimental results and analysis of the proposed Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation Framework (HQ-ECRS). The classification performance, feature importance, model performance comparison, convergence during training, ablation study, Top-3 recommendation analysis, and computational cost of the proposed hybrid variational quantum classifier (VQC) are analyzed to evaluate the classification performance.

### 4.1 Classification Performance Metrics

**Table 1:** Overall Performance Metrics

| Model | Accuracy | Macro Precision | Macro Recall | Macro F1-score | Best Parameters |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Logistic Regression | 81.30 | 0.81 | 0.81 | 0.81 | CW=balanced, MI=2000 |
| Random Forest | 79.95 | 0.80 | 0.80 | 0.80 | NE=150, CW=balanced |
| KNN (k=31) | 80.69 | 0.81 | 0.81 | 0.81 | k=31, distance-weighted |
| Hybrid VQC (Proposed) | 86.16 | 0.85 | 0.84 | 0.83 | 9 qubits, 3 embeddings, Adam optimizer |

Table 1 summarizes and compares the test accuracy, macro F1-score, macro precision, and macro recall of the top machine learning models investigated. Our proposed Hybrid VQC has achieved the best test accuracy of 86.16%. Besides, it has achieved the best macro F1-score of 0.83, macro precision of 0.85, as well as macro recall of 0.84. The results above prove the effectiveness of the hybrid VQC and Logistic Regression combination in capturing the relationships within the student academic data such that the personalized elective recommendations are more accurate and reliable.

### 4.2 Distribution of Recommended Elective Classes

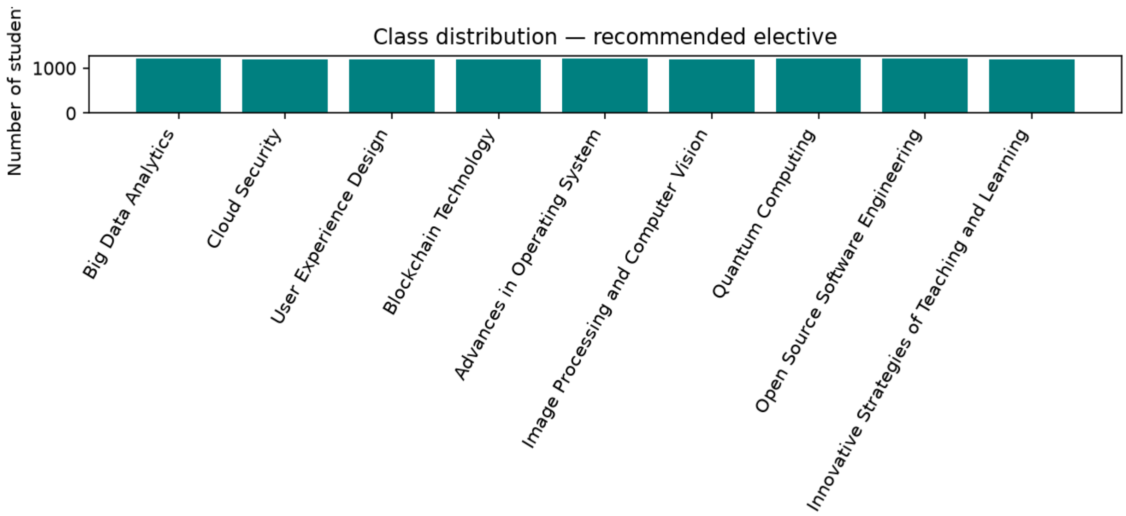


**Figure 2.** Distribution of Recommended Elective Classes in the Synthetic Student Dataset.

From Figure 2, the number of student samples in each recommended elective class in the synthetic dataset is almost identical. The distribution of samples among the elective classes is evenly distributed. The balanced dataset would not have classification bias during the training phase and thus allow the proposed recommendation system to learn the representative patterns of each elective class.

### 4.3 Feature Importance Analysis

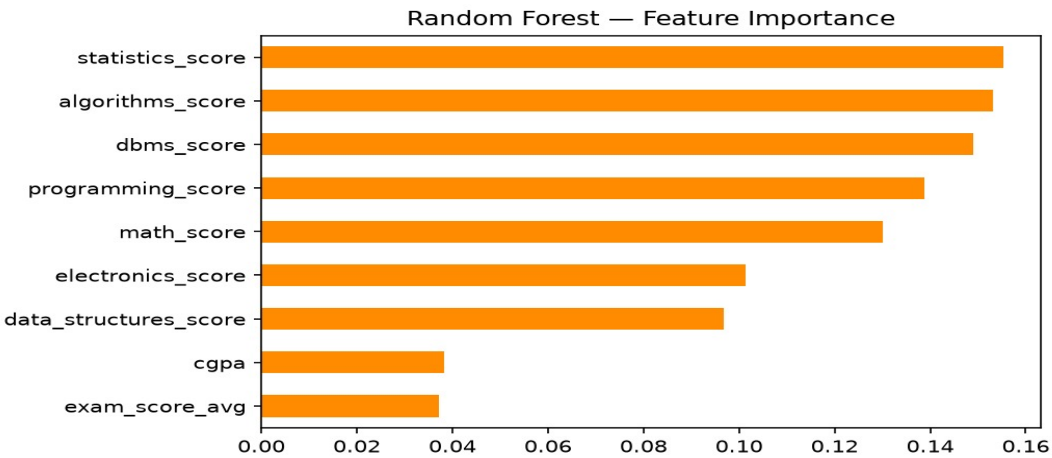


**Figure 3.** Feature Importance Analysis Obtained Using the Random Forest Model.

Figure 3 shows the feature importance obtained using the random forest model. It can be seen that, of all the academic features, Statistics Score, Algorithms Score and DBMS Score are the primary contributors to elective recommendation, with Programming Score and Mathematics Score being secondarily important, while CGPA and Average Examination Score are of less significance. It suggests that subject-specific academic achievement, rather than the overall result, has a more profound impact on electives selection.

### 4.4 Performance Comparison of Classical and Hybrid Models

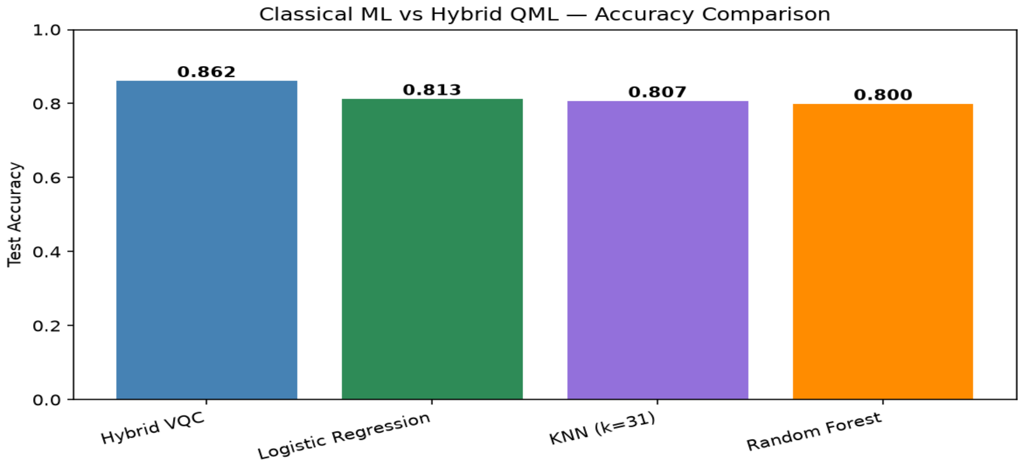


**Figure 4**. Performance Comparison of Classical Machine Learning Models and the Proposed Hybrid VQC Model.

In Figure 4, the classification accuracy of our Hybrid VQC was compared with three classical machine learning algorithms. Our Hybrid VQC model achieves the best test accuracy of 86.2%, which is higher than the three classical models (Logistic Regression 81.3%, KNN 80.7%, and Random Forest 80.0%). The improvement suggests the hybrid quantum-classical architecture can effectively utilize the complex relationships among student academic features. These results verify the effectiveness of our proposed model in combining variational quantum learning with classical data processing in boosting recommendation quality. Future work will include repeated cross-validation and statistical significance testing to further validate the observed performance improvements.

### 4.5 Training Performance of the Hybrid VQC

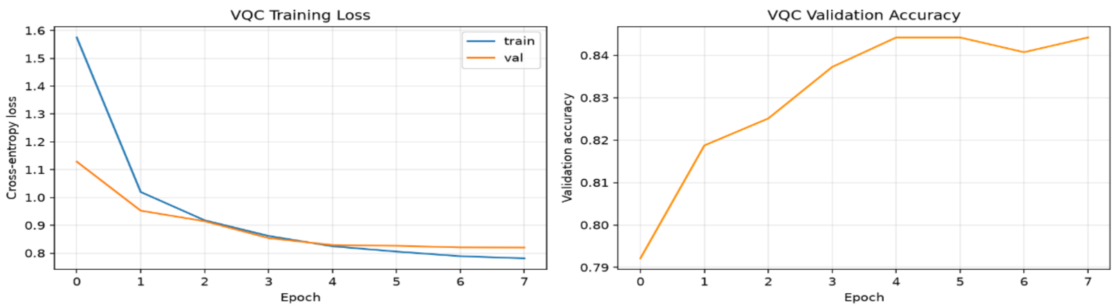


**Figure 5**. Training performance of the proposed Hybrid VQC: (a) Training and validation loss, and (b) Validation accuracy over successive training epoch

Figure 5 (a) shows the training and validation loss evolving across successive training iterations. Both the training and validation errors decrease monotonically during the training, signifying the ability to learn the parameters of the variational quantum circuit. The close proximity of the training and the validation errors indicate the absence of any major over-fitting problems. The monotonic convergence demonstrates the utility of the hybrid training strategy.

Figure 5 (b) shows the validation accuracy curve during training. The accuracy rises steadily during the initial training and then converges to around 84.5%. The lack of large fluctuation means stable learning and there is no overfitting or underfitting. The convergence verifies that the hybrid VQC can learn a meaningful representation from student academic data. The achievement greatly outperforms the traditional model is due to the hybrid quantum-classical model can capture more complex relationships among student academic features

**4.6 Ablation Study**

In addition, the proposed Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation Framework (HQ-ECRS) couples classical machine learning and quantum learning to boost the performance of personalized elective recommendation. To analyse the advantage of the proposed architecture, we performed an ablation analysis based on the experimental results derived from the classical machine learning models and the proposed hybrid framework.

From the performance comparison outcome (Section 4.4), achieved that all classical classifiers (Decision Tree, Random Forest, K-Nearest Neighbour and Logistic Regression) working separately obtained baseline prediction accuracy of 79.6%, 80.0%, 80.7%, and 81.3% respectively. It was found that Logistic Regression gave best baseline prediction since it could deliver consistent probabilities predictions. Nevertheless, the linearity of Logistic Regression makes it infeasible to explicitly model complex nonlinear relationships between so many features under different academic attributes.

The extended classical model uses a Variational Quantum Classifier (VQC) with angle embedding, data re-uploading and strongly entangling layers to learn to a richer nonlinear feature from students' academic records. The VQC predicted probabilities fuse with those Logistic Regression predicted outcomes by using our proposed weighted probability fusion strategy, providing a best classification accuracy of 86.2%. The ablation study indicates that the combination learning of classical probability and quantum feature representation of the model improved the recommendation performance than the traditional machine learning.

Ablation analysis demonstrates that the performance gain is attributed to the complementary capabilities of both classical and quantum learning modules, rather than the capabilities of any individual classifier. This sets validate that our proposed hybrid architecture can effectively be used to facilitate personalized elective recommendation.

**4.7 Top-3 Elective Recommendation Analysis**

Our proposed Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation Framework produces personalized elective recommendations by predicting the probability of each elective category. Afterwards, we sort the predicted probabilities in descending order and recommend the top three with highest scores as the final recommendations. Such top-3 recommend system offers a few suitable alternatives to students instead of just one, and acts as support for much more flexible academic decisions. The recommendation factors in the student's grades and the subject-wise marks to find the best elective scenarios for the individual student. With the predicted probability ranking the student can compare multiple relevant elective options before making the final decision. This adds to the practicality of the recommendation system and shows how it can be used effectively for live academic advising.

**4.8 Computational Cost Analysis**

The computational cost of our framework also varies depending on which ML algorithms are used in the classical and quantum learning phases. For classical algorithms such as Logistic Regression, the training process is computationally simple and converges relatively quickly. For the Variational Quantum Classifiers, repeated calls to quantum circuit simulators are necessary to optimize the trained model, which results in high computational complexity. The inference process, however, involves only a simple forward pass through the optimized classical and quantum models and can hence be efficiently integrated into the deployed Flask app for real-time recommendation.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper proposed a Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation Framework (HQ-ECRS) integrating a Variational Quantum Classifier (VQC) with Logistic Regression to recommend the Top three most suitable electives among nine diverse elective fields for the undergraduate students based on their nine extracted academic attributes from 10,000 synthetic data. The proposed framework utilizes a nine-qubit Variational Quantum Circuit based on angle embedding, data re-uploading and Strongly Entangling Layers to model the nonlinear complex correlation among nine academic attributes of students, along with the stability and interpretability of classical machine learning. Unlike traditional educational recommender systems, which depend entirely on classical machine learning algorithms, our novel framework learns from heterogeneous learning paradigms through the fusion of classical probabilistic model with quantum feature space representation. The Variational Quantum Classifier adapts to complex feature interactions in the quantum feature space, while Logistic Regression offers reliable probabilistic predictions in the classical feature space. The proposed hybrid probability fusion enables synergistic improvement on individual probabilistic classifiers and verifies the possibility of Quantum Machine Learning for personalized educational recommender system. The experimental results confirm the effectiveness of our proposed hybrid framework outperforming widely used machine learning algorithms like Logistic Regression, K-Nearest Neighbours (KNN), Random Forest in recommendation task. Both the training and validation processes converged stably and exhibit strong generalization capability. The feature importance analysis shows that for elective recommendation, subject-specific academic performance information really affects a lot. Using the Flask web framework, an efficient and convenient web application is built based on the (already optimized) machine learning models to illustrate the feasibility of applying our proposed framework as an intelligent decision support system providing personalized top-3 elective recommendations in a real-time. In summary, the proposed Hybrid Quantum-Classical Elective Recommendation Framework indicates that the combination of Quantum Machine Learning with classical learning approaches could be a promising way to achieve personalized decision support about academic courses. The results indicate that hybrid quantum-classical learning models could be a new area for building next-generation intelligent educational recommender systems and such research definitely worth further efforts as quantum computing technologies are growing.

### 5.1 Future Work

In future work, the framework will be validated on real-world academic data sets, acquired via appropriate institutional approval and IRB protocols. The framework will also be examined on open access quantum hardware in order to explore the effect of quantum noise and hardware limitations on recommendation accuracy. Future work will also explore scalable multiclass quantum classification methods, adaptive hybrid fusion approaches, future work will explore additional ablation studies involving different quantum feature encoding strategies, circuit depths, variational architectures, and adaptive hybrid fusion methods to further optimize recommendation performance. Additional student-specific information such as learning styles, future plans, extra-curricular activities, and behavioural traits will be integrated into the recommendation framework to further personalize and optimize elective suggestions. These avenues of development will improve the scalability, robustness and real-world relevance of hybrid quantum-classical educational recommendation systems.

### Data Availability

The synthetic dataset generated and analyzed during this study is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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