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Problems and Prospects of Online Teaching and Learning at the Tertiary Level in Bangladesh

Mst. Rasna Afroz^{1*}

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ABSTRACT

The year 2020 was very challenging and pathetic due to the worldwide pandemic COVID-19. This pandemic caused a total halt to normal life. This was not only a medical issue, rather than sectors like the global economy, education, tourism, and many other sectors took disastrous damage and fell miserably. The educational institutions were closed immediately due to the wide-spreading infectiousness of the virus. But the situation was partially handled with the help of online curriculums and conferences. Bangladesh, like any other developing country, felt the urgency of taking the whole education system online. Confronting this miserable circumstance, the educational board of Bangladesh faced a lot of new problems arriving with the online system. Educational requirements were moved to web-based platforms in March 2020. This study is an attempt to illuminate and explore the problems and prospects regarding online education at the tertiary level in Bangladesh. The whole study explored the social, technical, and psychological obstacles that caused the behavioral, operational, and statistical changes that occurred to the system. It also attempts to show how the e-learning system can be improved in the future. An online survey-based questionnaire was created for collecting data from both the teachers' and students' perspectives. The findings were observed statistically and the result revealed that the participants have experienced many problems as well as some prospects can be found too which may make the online teaching and learning efficient. In the very end, some suggestions were recommended to develop the system further ahead.

INTRODUCTION

The present occurrence of Novel Corona virus (COVID-19) has spread worldwide within very short time which was first identified in December 2019. As it is a life threatening virus, the globe faces a great lockdown of all activities to prevent the prevalence of COVID-19, but this ongoing pandemic caused a serious disturbance in the field of education. Educational activities had almost ceased all around the world in the year of 2020 due to this lockdown. In order to face this crisis, the educationists started to find out the possible alternative ways to traditional education. Then they think about the online learning by which students can continue their study even staying at home. According to Hussain *et al.*, "Online learning is a distance learning system requiring no physical presence of the learner in the traditional classroom. In this system information and communication technologies (ICTs) are employed for effective delivery of the content at distant locations." (2020). So, in spite of having this turmoil, most of the institutions in many countries have already renewed their activities through online platforms in this lockdown.

Bangladesh is also seriously affected by COVID-19 and the situation is same as the other countries. The educational institutions of the tertiary level in Bangladesh took the initiative first to start online education in March 2020. Initially some private universities started online class for completing their half-done semesters and they continue their regular assessment. Later, the public universities also started online class to lessen session jams.

As the educational institutions are shut down for an indefinite period, the mental health of students also hampered due to their inactive life. So, online education makes a kind of displacement in their life. The students can also participate in different courses provided by other countries besides their academic study, such as Coursera is a global online learning platform with more than 200 leading universities where anyone can have access to different kinds of online courses from anywhere. They are getting an opportunity to enhance their knowledge because of this online platform. Furthermore, the students who study in a foreign country can also complete their session sitting at home in Bangladesh. But the students of engineering faculty are facing some difficulties with their experiments in laboratory, because they cannot go to their university and it is also not possible to complete those experiments in online classes. So, they are in trouble to complete their lab report in time. On the one hand, it resumed the postponed activities of education, on the other hand, owing to lack of experience and technical support in online platform, the concerned also faced many difficulties to minimize the educational gap, because the online learning and teaching are not much easy for the country like Bangladesh where vast majority of people live below poverty line and most of the students live in rural area with poor internet connection.

It is known that online education totally depends on technology. In the context of Bangladesh, only sixty percent people are educated and many of them did not have proper knowledge to communicate using

¹ Department of English, Bangladesh Army University of Engineering & Technology (BAUET), Qadirabad, Natore, Bangladesh

* Corresponding author's e-mail: rasnaafroz.bauet@gmail.com

technology. Nevertheless, now all are trying to confront the situation by gathering knowledge in this sector and this technology has already become more focal of our daily lives. Students also became habituated with the online platform like Google Classroom, Zoom, Google Meet and so on. Students not only need to be advanced in technology. They also need strong motivation for continuing their study in online classes. For this reason, the interaction between students and teachers is very essential. But there is communication gap between them due to many issues. As many researchers investigated the quality of online education from teachers and students perspective separately, it is needed to examine it from both students' and teachers' perspective at the tertiary level in Bangladesh. That is why, this study will focus on both teachers' and students' perception about problem and prospect of online teaching and learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many researches regarding effectiveness of online education. Most of the researchers gave positive result and very few of them gave negative conclusion about e-learning process.

Al-amin *et al.* carried a research on the status of the students of tertiary level in Bangladesh regarding their response on preparedness, participation and classroom activities. They surveyed over 844 students of several universities in Bangladesh and their research revealed certain limitations on online learning according to students' views. They find out that the students of a developing country like Bangladesh have an average preparedness for online education because of inconsistent participation, less scope of classroom activities, internet and electricity issues and so on. (2021)

Again Hussain *et al.* investigated the effectiveness of online education during Covid19 in Sargodha on one private and one government institutes and found that majority of the respondents feel comfortable using online tools, because this online learning fulfilled the educational needs of a student during this pandemic and make them independent learners at home. Also, online education gives a worldwide exposure to enlarge both students' and teachers' knowledge but has some limitations. However, they concluded by saying that online learning is the best alternation of conventional learning during Covid-19 even in the future if there is any pandemic like Covid-19, according to their survey result. (2020)

Baig also researched to investigate the effectiveness of online learning of tenth grade students in physics. He found out that the achievement among students of conventional learning was relatively low than online learning, because students get limited resources and collaboration in face-to-face learning whereas they can access in vast resource areas beyond four walls in online learning and it has many features. It also removes the geographical barriers by giving opportunity to the students and teachers to attend in any session at anytime from anywhere. (2016)

Yang enquires about positive and negative experiences of students in online learning. The study revealed that flexibility, cost-effectiveness, electronic research ability, ease of connection to the internet and well-designed class interface were the positive experiences. On the other hand, delayed feedback from instructors, monotonous instructional methods and poorly designed course content were students' negative experience. (2004)

Nguyen examined many studies and observed that about 92% online education studies find the e-learning system as at least effective (though not much better than conventional learning), about 3% studies argued that face-to-face learning is more effective than online learning and about 4% showed mixed findings. (2015)

Paudel found in his research that more than 70% participants think online learning as favorable for developing online research, getting huge resource of knowledge and connecting themselves with the global community. Again, more than 50% learners assure that online education gives them flexibility of time and space as well as authentic materials which they can learn in their own way. (2021)

Tabassum *et al.* examined online education during Covid-19 in Bangladesh from teachers' perspective and their survey result found that maximum teachers (79.8%) support elearning system to continue in this pandemic whereas very few of them (1.4%) think this process is not enough for the students to overcome their educational gap. (2021)

Coman *et al.* researched on the online learning from students' perception in Romania and they collected data from 762 students of two largest Romanian universities. The result of the research revealed the disadvantages of online learning. First of all, the higher education institutions in Romania were not prepared for exclusively online learning and the teachers did not have proper technical skills. Their teaching style was also improperly structured to the online environment. Moreover, the interaction between the students and their instructors was insufficient. (2020)

Chinnery explained in his work "CALL ME... Maybe: A Framework for Integrating the Internet into ELT" that the internet can be a tool as well as a tutor for the students for learning a language. Many Websites provide Lesson activities for students of every stage. Web based text and speech analysis (Corpora and concordances) platforms can offer mass-language analysis. Collections of numerous authentic samples can also be vastly useful for pronunciation. Online platforms and specific websites help the learners regarding their increasing creativity and communications. (2014)

Brenner illustrated in his work "Digital Stories: A 21st Century Communication Tool for the English Language Classroom" that digital mechanism helps the learning of any language easier. For the most parts technology regarding the learning to platform is easier to learn and maneuver. Time is a big challenge for the learning process. As well as the platform should not be harder than learning

the language itself. The contents should be well selected, saved and examined for the best result. (2014)

Flores explained in his study “Blended learning in the English class: does it work?” that how to conjure a realistic strategy for help learners to tackle the negative mentality towards the language. Blended learning concerns around most of the task to complete in the classroom. This idea rotates around the theoretical lessons and its practical implementations. Classroom becomes a practice area for learners. This idea gives opportunities both the teachers and the students to innovate new strategies and brings the positive results. (2018)

METHODOLOGY

a) Research Design and Technique: Qualitative and quantitative both research design was applied for this research work in search of the problems and prospects of online teaching and learning. Basically this study is based on online questionnaire and survey method. Both the open-ended and close-ended questions are asked in this questionnaire for this study.

b) Types of Data: Both primary and secondary data were used for this research purposes. In this research, primary data was collected by the author from the students and teachers of tertiary level in Bangladesh through online survey. Again, the secondary data was used in the literature review designed by different researchers on similar study.

c) Population of the Study: For this research, data was collected from students and teachers from different government and non-government universities in Bangladesh.

About 112 students from 28 universities and 41 teachers from 27 different universities were reached for the survey.

d) Data Collection: It was not manageable to collect data physically from the participants during pandemic. That is why data was collected virtually through e-mail, social media and phone calls.

e) Data Analysis and Processing: Microsoft Excel was used to convert the data collected through online medium into meaningful output information. At first, the data was classified into numerical chronology and data code was inputted in Excel according to questionnaire. Later the process data was adjusted into this research paper.

Results Analysis of Questionnaire Survey

The results of 25-items questionnaire survey common in teachers’ and students’ statements are inscribed in Table 1 in terms of mean and their differences. Here the results of teachers’ and students’ questionnaire survey are compared, and the problems are highlighted.

The results of students’ and teachers’ questionnaire survey have been categorized as ‘Strongly Agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Neutral’, ‘Disagree’ and ‘Strongly Disagree’ according to the following standard:

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

According to these values, the mean scores have been calculated for all the answers of all the statements and the differences have been given below:

Table 1: Comparative Study of the Results of Teachers’ and Students’ Questionnaire Survey

Statements for Teacher	Statements for Students	Mean Scores for Teachers	Mean Scores for Students	Differences
1. I can give full attention during my lecture in online classes.	1. I can give full attention to my online lecturer.	3.70	3.01	0.69
2. Online classes are as enthusiastic as the traditional classes.	2. Online classes are as effective as the offline classes.	2.21	2.37	0.16
3. I feel comfortable with the present technologies such as Google classroom, zoom, Google meet etc.	3. I feel comfortable with the present Technologies such as Google classroom, zoom, Google meet etc.	3.87	3.41	0.46
4. The devices are affordable to me for online classes.	4. The devices are much affordable to me for online classes.	3.90	3.17	0.73
5. I have ability to afford the internet services.	5. I have ability to afford the internet services.	4.14	3.60	0.54
6. The internet services available in my area.	6. The internet services are available in my area.	4.07	3.65	0.42
7. The students behave appropriately in online classes.	7. Students behave appropriately in online classes.	2.43	2.70	0.27
8. Students are getting appropriate education in online classes.	8. Students are getting appropriate education in online classes.	2.48	2.40	0.08
9. I am much skilled at using the technologies.	9. The teachers are skilled at using the technologies.	3.97	3.18	0.79

10. Online teaching is the best alternative of traditional teachings.	10. Online learning is the best alternative to the traditional learning.	3.58	2.89	0.69
11. The technologies are available at my home.	11. The technologies are available at my home.	4.14	3.5	0.64
12. I am more available in online teaching rather than traditional teaching.	12. The teachers are available more in online than in traditional learnings.	3.29	2.81	0.48
13. Online class is cheaper than the conventional class.	13. Online class is cheaper than conventional one.	2.70	2.57	0.13
14. I prefer traditional teaching more than online teaching.	14. I prefer traditional learning more than online learning.	3.97	3.98	0.01
15. I have previous experience of using Elearning platforms.	15. I have previous experience of using Elearning platform.	2.85	2.95	0.1
16. The timing of online classes is more flexible than that of conventional ones.	16. The timing of online classes is more flexible than conventional classes.	3.73	3.67	0.06
17. I am getting expected feedback from my students.	17. I am getting ultimate output according to my expectations from online learning.	2.51	2.52	0.01
18. Internet issues hamper my concentration during online teaching.	18. Internet issues hamper my concentration during online learning.	4.19	3.97	0.22
19. I provide course materials sufficiently in online classes.	19. My teachers provide course materials in online classes.	4.07	4.10	0.03
20. I give feedbacks to my students in a timely manner.	20. My teachers give feedback in a timely manner.	3.73	3.62	0.11
21. I motivate my students to attend online classes.	21. My teachers motivate me to attend online classes.	4.14	3.85	0.29
22. I am giving enough mental support to my students.	22. I am getting enough mental support from my instructors.	3.97	3.33	0.53
23. I am providing enough guidelines to my students for their upcoming job life.	23. My teachers are providing me enough guidelines for my upcoming job life.	3.65	3.44	0.21
24. I will prefer online classes in any situation in future.	24. I will prefer online classes in future.	2.75	2.48	0.27
25. Innovative teaching tools can be used more at anytime from anywhere in online classes rather than traditional classes.	25. It is easier for me to download learning materials anytime from anywhere.	3.90	3.48	0.42

There are less differences in mean scores between teachers' and students' survey. But some dissimilarities are conspicuous. Some problems are observed from those differences. In the above table we see that there are huge differences in mean in statements 3, 4, 5, 9, 12, 20, 22 and 25 between students and teachers.

Table Analysis of Different Opinions

In order to examine the problems of online learning and teaching, the results of those specific statements have been

given in tabular form for more interpretation.

In the above table, total 85.4% teachers agreed and 7.3% disagreed whereas 54.5% students agreed and 20.6% disagreed with the statement. Again, 25% students could not give any strong opinion for that statements, that means almost 45% students feel uncomfortable with the present technologies like Google Classroom, Zoom, Google Meet etc. On the other hand, only 14.6% teachers are unsatisfied with the statement. So, it indicates that students feel more uneasy than the teachers with the present technologies.

Table 2: Statement No. 3 (I feel comfortable with the present Technologies such as Google Classroom, Zoom, Google Meet etc.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	12.2%	73.2%	7.3%	4.70%	2.6%
Students	13.4%	41.1%	25%	14.3%	6.3%

Table 3: Statement No. 4 (The devices are affordable to me for online classes.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	9.8%	78%	4.9%	7.3%	N/A
Students	9.8%	35.7%	23.2%	25%	6.3%

The result mentioned in the above table showed that 87% teachers and only 7.3% disagreed with the statement. Conversely, only 45.5% students agreed and 31.3% disagreed where more 23.2% students are confused about that statement.

So it can be said that almost 54.5% students could not support the statement that the devices are affordable to them for online classes. Here, the result showed that teachers have the ability to afford the devices more than the students.

Table 4: Statement No. 5 (I have ability to afford the internet services.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	22%	73.2%	2.4%	2.4%	N/A
Students	12.5%	56.3%	12.5%	17%	1.7%

From the chart mentioned above, we see that there are 95.2% teachers and 68.8% student agreed that they have ability to afford the internet. On the other hand, 2.4% from teacher and 18.7% from student said, they

don't have the ability to afford internet. From the above scenario, we can see most of the teachers have the ability to afford internet. But a good portion of the student doesn't have that ability.

Table 5: Statement No. 9 (The teachers are skilled at using the technologies.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	17.1%	65.9%	14.6%	2.4%	N/A
Students	8%	38.4%	25%	21.4%	7.1%

The table illustrated above shows that 83% of the teacher and 46.4% of the students say that teachers are skilled in using the technology required for online education. But 28.5% students disagreed with the statement and

25% students could not give any strong opinion. So, according to students' view, teachers are not much skilled in technical field. In the table illustrated above, we can find that 46.4% of the teachers and nearly about 27%

Table 6: Statement No. 12 (The teachers are available more in online than in traditional learnings.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	9.8%	36.6%	31.7%	17.1%	4.8%
Students	6.3%	20.5%	29.5%	35.7%	8%

of the students agreed that teachers are more available in online class than traditional class. 22% of the teachers and 43.7% of the students disagreed with the statement. On the other hand 31.7% of the teachers and 29.5% of the

students are neutral with the statement. From the above discussion, we can say that availability of the teacher is not up to the mark.

From the above table we have seen that 78% of the

Table 7: Statement No. 20 (Teachers give feedback in a timely manner.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	4.8%	73.2%	12.2%	9.8%	N/A
Students	12.5%	51.8%	23.2%	10.7%	1.8%

teachers and 64.3% of the students agreed that the teachers provide feedback timely. From this we understand the teachers are conscious about providing feedback. 9.8% of the teachers and 12.5% of the students did not agree with

the statement. On the other hand, 12.2% of the teacher respondents and 23.2% of the student respondents were neutral. It shows that almost 35% students are displeased with their teachers' feedback. The data in the above table

Table 8: Statement No. 22 (Teachers are giving enough mental support to their students.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	14.6%	68.3%	17.1%	N/A	N/A
Students	15.2%	36.6%	25.9%	11.6%	10.7%

showed that 83% of the teachers and 52% of students agreed that the teachers are giving enough mental support to their students. 17.1% of the teachers and 25.9% of the students were neutral on this topic. 22.3% of the students disagreed whereas none of the teachers disagreed with the statement. It illuminates that nearly 50% students are confused about it.

The below table expounds that 80.5% of the teachers and 58.1% students agreed that innovative teaching tools, and learning materials can be used more at anytime from anywhere in online classes rather than the traditional classes. 7.3% of the teachers and 22.3% of the students disagreed with the statement. 12.2% of the teachers and 18.8% of the students are neutral about this. From the

Table 9: Statement No. 25 (Innovative teaching tools and learning materials can be used more at anytime from anywhere in online classes rather than traditional classes.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	17.1%	63.4%	12.2%	7.3%	N/A
Students	16.1%	42%	19.6%	18.8%	3.5%

discussion we can say that most of the teachers gave support to online teaching tools but a good portion of students are not benefitted from online learning materials

Table Analysis of Common Opinions

The following statements have similar opinion from teachers' and students' point of view. They have been

Table 10: Statement No. 17 (Teachers and students are getting expected feedback from online classes.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	2.15%	26.8%	2.75%	56.1%	12.2%
Students	1.7%	16.1%	31.3%	34.8%	16.1%

described to identify the common problems.

The results in the above mentioned table explicated the disadvantage of online learning and teaching over traditional learning. Only 28.95% teachers and 17.8% students agreed whereas almost 68% teachers and 50%

students disagreed with the statement. Again more 31.3% students could not give any strong opinion. It illuminates that teachers are not satisfied with the feedbacks from their students and most of the students are also displeased with their result.

Table 11: Statement No. 24 (I will prefer online classes in any situation in future.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	1.7%	22%	29.3%	41.5%	5.5%
Students	6.3%	17%	24.1%	24.1%	28.6%

The above table expounds that 23.7% teachers and 23.3% students agreed with the statement. On the other hand, 47% teachers and 52.7% students disagreed where more 29.3%

and 24.1% teachers and students respectively gave their opinion impartially. It signifies that maximum respondents do not prefer online classes in any situation in future.

Table 12: Statement No. 24 (I will prefer online classes in any situation in future.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	N/A	34.1%	9.8%	48.8%	7.3%
Students	6.3%	17.9%	17.9%	42.9%	15.2%

The data in the above table shows that only 34% teachers and 24.2% students agreed whereas almost 56% teachers and 58% students disagreed with the statements that

online class is cheaper than the conventional class. It indicates that the respondents think that online class is not cost effective when compared to traditional class. The

Table 13: Statement No. 8 (Students are getting appropriate education in online classes.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	N/A	22%	9.8%	63.4%	4.8%
Students	3.6%	8.9%	26.8%	45.5%	15.2%

above table contains the responses of the respondents about the statement that students are getting appropriate education in online classes. 22% teachers and only 12.5% students agreed with the statement. On the contrary, 68%

teachers and 60% students disagreed with the statements. It illuminates that a large number of teachers and students consider online learning as inappropriate way of learning. The results in table elucidate that 36.6% teachers and 40%

Table 14: Statement No. 8 (Students are getting appropriate education in online classes.)

For	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers	9.8%	26.8%	7.3%	51.2%	4.9%
Students	9.8%	30.4%	13.4%	38.4%	8%

students agreed with the statement, but 56% teachers and 46.4% students disagreed with the statement. It clearly indicates that most of the respondents do not have any previous experience of using e-learning platforms.

Observation of Short Questions

The respondents also had to participate in some open-ended questions in order to take more information

about online education.

Which platform do you think more user-friendly (Zoom, Google Meet or others)? Why?

Almost 80% participants chose "Zoom" as more user-friendly platform for online classes. The teachers argued that Zoom is good for conducting class and they have never felt the urge to switch from zoom as it provides

all the necessary services they require for their lecture. It is easier to use than other apps and it has some smart features, such as recording option in free version, whiteboard, screen sharing, waiting room and so on which make the virtual classroom lively and engaging. Both the teachers and students can share files in zoom chatting. This is not possible for Google Meet or any other platforms. Moreover, they can easily message someone directly or publicly in the chat box. Teachers can also meet more than one hour with many student in Zoom. Zoom received a higher rating because it is the most advanced and feature-rich professional video conferencing software. The most important part is that anyone can record their zoom meeting with any Gmail address and if there have slow network, concerns also can manage their meeting with zoom which is quite tough in other platforms. For this reason, Zoom is a more reliable and widely-used platform.

10% participants supported “Google Meet”, 8% participants chose “Google Classroom” and 2% participants graded other platforms. They observed that Google Meet is an unpaid platform and has no fixed time limitation. It is easily useable because of its syncing accounts with Google. Its user interface is also very eye-catching and it consumes less internet data. Moreover, it gives clear audio. Google classroom is good for assignment submission and it is the best platform for getting study materials from course instructors.

How would you rate the overall quality of the online education?

Almost 75% respondents rated the overall quality of the online education as “good” whereas only 10% participants considered it as “fair”, 8% “very good”, 5% “poor” and 2% participants thought that online education is “excellent”.

How can online teaching and learning be improved more? Please give your opinion.

The participants were asked to give their opinion about how online teaching and learning can be improved in future. They gave some valuable opinions to the question which have been discussed in the next chapter.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Identifiable Problems

The above mentioned analysis and observations disclosed some problems both for online teaching and learning at the tertiary level in Bangladesh. They have been discussed below:

Present technologies are barely comfortable for students

Students feel more uncomfortable more than the teachers with the present technologies. The reason can be insufficient knowledge or habit for using the tools like Google Classroom, Zoom, Google Meet and others. Students are habituated with traditional classes and most of them are only popular with social media. They never needed to use those platforms earlier. That

is why, these technologies are very much new to them. As most of them are using these for the first time, they cannot cope up with these situation. As a result, they feel uncomfortable. Moreover, the sound system of those technologies is also intolerable for long time and it makes the students exhausted.

Devices are hardly affordable

From the survey result it is seen that though teachers have the ability to afford devices, students do not. The main reason is a big number of the students belong to middle and lower class. They cannot afford expensive devices all the time and it is really tough to continue online classes using normal android phones. Moreover, other devices such as laptop, headphone or sound box, microphone, web cam etc. are also needed to continue online class properly, but it is not possible for all the students to manage adequate devices. As a result, many of them cannot continue the classes for device issues and they are also helpless for their economic problem.

Poor internet connection and maintenance

The biggest problem of online class is the internet issues. We know that network connection is very poor in the rural area and almost 50% students live in villages. Again, it is also not possible for them to afford internet services regularly as it is not very cheap in Bangladesh. Those who have broadband internet connection also confront disturbances some of the time. Though the teachers of tertiary level can afford much, a large number of students face difficulties to ensure their internet connection. Either their network is very unstable or they don't have the ability to afford it continuously.

Poor technical skills of teachers

Teachers are usually habituated to traditional class in Bangladesh. Very few teachers have the knowledge of technical fields, but most of them do not have proper skills to maintain all the things in online classes.

Lack of timely feedbacks from teachers

Feedback is the most important feature of any assessment which instructs the students how they will improve, so, it is very necessary to provide it in time. Many students do not get this feedbacks timely from their instructors in online education. In this “work from home” situation, some of the teachers, just like some students, are not familiar with the pressure as the traditional office time. It has been a little bit hard for teachers to catch up and manage the time for all the things.

Difficulties of using digital study materials

As we have discussed before, the experience of online classes was very unexpected and new to some of the students. As they were uncomfortable to use the platforms for online classes, downloading the study materials like pdf and slides was very new to the students. This problem was also boosted by some other problems

like internet issues, lack of concentrations from students, lack of availability of devices, lack of timely feedbacks from students and teachers etc.

Lack of concentration of students

Network connection is the most common problem with both the teacher and the students. This hampers the concentration of the students. Most of the times, students cannot understand the lecture regarding the issues caused by the network system. Further, many students also feel disturbed by their family members or other activities at the time of online class. As a result, they cannot concentrate fully to their lessons during online classes.

Inappropriate behavior of students

During online class, most of the students do not pay attention to their lessons. Sometimes they give excuses about their internet connection problem and some of the students also put off their camera to do other work at the time of classes. The lazy students get the opportunity to be silent and do not respond to any class.

Isolation

Online class can connect anyone from anywhere with the class. It is the great advantage of online class, but it makes the students isolated from one another. The opportunity to share and learn from other students is shrunk in online classes. The extracurricular activities which are performed during traditional classes are absent in online classes. Group discussion which is sometimes very effective for tertiary education is quite rare in online classes. Interpersonal relationship between students is getting worse in online classes.

Not being able to learn the whole lesson

Online classes depend on a lot of things like electricity, internet availability, devices etc. These things are unpredictable. Sometimes electricity or internet connection interrupts during classes. Mobile network is not reliable till now. Online classes are not much interactive as traditional classes. Sometimes students also forget to ask teacher what they do not understand during classes. Thus, they cannot learn the whole lesson in online class.

Unable to get expected result

Online classes are easier to learn at home, but sometimes it can be harmful for students. Here, technical issues play a vital role for their unsuccessful outcomes, because most of the students face device and internet issues which distract them to get proper lesson. Moreover, negative emotions such as anxiety, anger and boredom also increase in online learning which ultimately affect their result. Again, lack of in-person interaction is also the cause for not getting expected feedback in online classes. Another big reason is that many students do not take online class seriously. They think that it is easy to learn in online classes wherever they go or stay and online exam will also be easy to attend without taking sufficient preparation.

Teachers are also not getting expected feedback from their students. They are facing some problems for which all the time they cannot give proper education to their students. Thus, both students and teachers are not getting expected results.

Not getting appropriate education

During online classes there are many related problems which can be faced by the students. In online learning they cannot be attentive for all the time just looking at the screen. The technological issues hamper their concentration. Many teachers also hesitate to deliver their lecture in front of camera and they feel uncomfortable. This puts negative effects on the students' result.

Lack of experience

Most of the participants who took part on the survey have stated that they were not much experienced concerning online classes. The reason behind that can be the usefulness of these online platforms was not introduced to the users. They were very good at browsing the internet, search engines and social media platforms. That is why, it is a very new experience for them.

Inflexibility of online platforms

Most of the students and teachers have selected Zoom as more user-friendly platforms, because it has many features and is easy to handle, but the biggest problem is Zoom has two versions: paid and free. Teachers cannot conduct their classes more than 45 minutes using the unpaid version and it is really very tough to finish lecture and other activities within 45 minutes. For this reason, after ending the first class meeting, teachers have to arrange another zoom link if they need more time to finish the discussion. It distracts both students and teachers' concentration. Moreover, sometimes Zoom creates few technical issues much as it starts to get update by itself, slows the operating system of a device, shows "webpage not available" at the time of entering the meeting etc. Teachers also cannot meet more than hundred students in free version of Zoom. On the other hand, all the institutions cannot manage the paid version of zoom, because it is much costly.

Furthermore, this platform has restriction to record any session by android phone. Google Meet also has some issues. If the participants want to record meeting in Google Meet, they must need a mail address which is provided by any organization. They cannot record the meeting in Google Meet from any Gmail address. Google meet also requires strong internet connection. Participants cannot access it with a poor network.

Prospects

According to the survey result, we also got some prospects which are visible in the number of statements 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 16, 19, 20, 21 and 25. Though the result of those statements are creating some difficulties in present situation, but we hope that these will be fixed gradually

and online education will be more effective. Now some of the prospects are briefly discussed in the below:

Participants are getting used to the technologies

Most of the teachers and students are newly using the technologies related online education where they are facing some issues as discussed earlier. But when they will be habituated with those platforms and the technologies will also be improved in future, online class will be fruitful for them. It will help the participants to be active and fast learners.

Course materials are accessible from anywhere

We know that in traditional classroom we need printed materials and it is difficult to collect all kinds of necessary prompts all the time within four walls boundary. But both the students and teachers can easily access any kinds of material they need to continue their class in online platform which make the class more enthusiastic and creative. Even they can share these on their screen with other participants. It is easy to learn as well as cost effective. Thus, the learners will be able to learn whatever they want to and improve their skills as soon as possible by online education.

Class schedule is flexible

In traditional education system, there is a fixed office time when all the classes are scheduled. Beyond that time no class should be arranged. So if the students need any extra lecture, they need to fix it within the fixed time schedule. Sometimes it becomes difficult to organize that class because of lack of time. As a result, students may face troubles to solve their problems. But in online platform, both the teachers and students can arrange any extra class according to their preferable time. This flexibility of online education will make the students more relief from their institutional pressure. Overall, it is easy and effective one to build the communication between teachers and students as well as get connected for the academic and other purposes.

It is comfortable and hassle-free

The internet services, communication system and the software are developing day by day. As a result the online education will be more user friendly for both learning and teaching by reducing random connection lose, data lose, call dropping and other problems. Thus, online education will be more presentable as well as enjoyable and the participants can easily join the classes with hassle-free at home.

It increases time efficiency

We know that the applications and software those are being used in online class are not fully efficient or bug free. But if the network problem and software issues are solved, online learning might be the most effective way as the participants can join the classes from anywhere at anytime. Specially the cities like Dhaka with high density

population and traffic jam, online class can reduce the time loss of both students and teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation by the Respondents

The teachers and students proposed some essential actions for improving more online teaching and learning which they have realized from their experiences. Among all of the suggestions, the most effective opinions have been mentioned below-

a) Train up: Familiarity with technology and acceptance of the situation are key to flourish in future. That is why, the educational institutions should arrange workshops or seminars on using electric devices and dialogues to motivate both the teachers and the students. Both teachers and students need more trainings on the usage of technological tools so that they can be digitally competent and know how and when to use technologies keeping in mind the pedagogical needs of the students.

b) Technical support: The technological facilities and logistical support should be ensured for all in the first place. Online teaching and learning can be improved if we can make sure both students and teachers have even access to devices and internet connection. The teachers should have premium access to all the educational websites and platforms. The devices are used for the online classes should be more affordable. Moreover, good quality camera, microphone and using whiteboards can make the environment more like traditional classes.

c) Increasing strong interaction between the students and teachers: Both the teachers and the students need to grow a sensibility and an understanding of the changes that have occurred due to the pandemic. Teachers should dedicate the first five minutes of their class to ask their students how they feel, what difficulties they are facing and so on. These will make participants more ease and keen to interacting with their teachers. If students also show the same enthusiasm that a teacher shows in an online class, the teachers feel motivated and thus they can give more effort in a class and improve their performance.

d) Shortening the class time: It is very difficult to do online classes for 4/5 hours. The university authority should set up the class for limited hours. The best thing is to have synchronous classes where students can give their attention very easily. Specially, if it is a video lecture, it should be of short duration because students feel bored when they look at the screen for long time and it also disrupts their concentration. Even they suffer from severe headache.

e) Responsibility of the government: The government has to facilitate all regarding the price of the internet package and of the devices to the students. For online teaching, a platform is also necessary which will be provided by the government, where the students and teachers can access the information regarding their lessons. There must have all kind of online compiler which will help the students to do their lab work, though it is only possible for programming language

and simulation courses. If we think about circuit related project work, it will be complicated in online. But some recently developed platforms like “Tinkercad” can be proved helpful for the students and the teachers.

f) Responsibility of the authority: The authority can come up with some new ideas regarding

I. Providing scholarships and waivers

II. Preventing cheating

III. Solving connection problems.

g) Responsibility of teachers: The teachers or instructors should always motivate their learners and always encourage as well as support them mentally. Teachers need to think out of the box to make the classes more student-friendly and interesting. Sometimes they may allow the students to chat more openly and work together in a more conducive environment. By creating new ideas, teachers can make the online environment more enthusiastic so that students feel comfortable to attend their classes. Teachers may be very active and ensure that every student is joining the online classes. For the weak and absent students they can upload the regular class records and provide ongoing feedback to their students regularly. They can use personal and professional stories throughout the lessons to create a fun, safe, and effective learning environment. Finally, teachers have to focus on their planning and proper implementation of it as well.

h) Responsibility of students: Students can make groups during and after online classes in order to lectures, seminars, webinars or other learning events because teamwork is an integral part of the learning experience. Group work also challenges students to solve problems, share experiences and knowledge to achieve a common goal. They can organize mentoring programs pairing more experienced learners with younger participants so that they can share their experience and provide guidance to their younger ones. Further, they can use forums, chats, Facebook groups, or live question answer session. This not only strengthens learners’ engagement but also encourages peer-learning. The most important responsibility of the students is to behave appropriately in online classes. They should spend their learning time effectively.

i) Responsibility of the guardians: The guardians should ensure the students’ presence in the class attentively and provide their children with the study environment. This means, the students should be encouraged and motivated to attend online classes with full concentration by their family members.

j) Implementation of some effective activities: There are some efficient websites and softwares like YouTube, Power point, Prezi and so on which can add an interactive and visual element in online classes. Creating a supportive learning environment, interesting projects or videos by using the existing technologies can make the students more active in online classes. Furthermore, there is a need to learn how to make relevant e-learning contents on mobile because mobile learning allows the students to

access up-to-date course materials and relevant contents anytime, anywhere.

Instead of fixing traditional quizzes and slide presentations, more flexible and wider range of activities should be developed for assessing students’ knowledge and skills. One of the most important things that foster socialization and collaboration should be continued even in their online classrooms.

Recommendation by the Author

The research has helped the author to develop some insight into the online classes. This has ultimately results in some recommendation which is discussed below:

1. Overcoming the problems regarding online platforms: The online platforms should be suitable for low-end devices and the bugs should be fixed so that participants can use the features easily. Further, some features which distract online learning should also be controlled.

2. Putting the Camera on during the whole class: As students stay at home during online classes, sometimes they do not take them seriously and this triviality makes them more lethargic. As a result, they do not get their expected feedback from online classes. That is why, making themselves serious for online classes is more important. Putting camera on is one of the best ways to make them attentive.

3. Maintaining proper dress code: Another important thing is outfit. It is said that the secret of great style is to feel good in what you wear. That means when a student enters his virtual classroom with proper and polished dress, he will feel fresh and good and it also removes his laziness. Thus, the students can be benefitted more.

4. More interesting contents: In online classes, it is very hard to keep the concentration. For this reason, the contents should be interesting enough to hold the attention of the students.

5. Making creative questions: Teachers may be more careful about evaluating their students’ ability in online learning. The exact answer in the text book teaches them assimilate the knowledge whereas the creative questions increase their adaptability and ability to implement it in the real life. That is why, teachers may make different kinds of creative questions in online assessment platform so that students can think before answering the questions. This will reveal their creativity and they will also remain active during online learning.

6. Restriction on the use of other devices at the time of classes/examinations: The instructor/examiner should be careful if the students are using a “second device” for their advantage. At times, some students uses extra devices without letting the teacher know. This creates an unbalanced system where the results become biased and incorrect.

7. Parents meeting: It is necessary for the teachers to meet students’ guardians at least once in a semester, because some students do not care about their study and get unexpected marks in online assessment. If parents

meeting is called in a regular basis, students will be conscious of their study and try their best so that their parents will not lose face for them. The parents will be able to know about the progress of their children. Depending on that they can motivate them for being regular in online classes.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the current study was to find out the students' and teachers' perception about the problems and prospects regarding online learning and teaching. Those qualitative datasets were collected using an online questionnaire survey from students and teachers of different universities in Bangladesh. The survey result shows that participants gained both positive and negative experiences and faced little bit challenges during receiving online education. Most of the respondents rated the overall quality of online education as "good". This quality of online education implies that participants are not fully satisfied with this e-learning system and they also cannot avoid it totally as online education plays a vital role in their life during pandemic and it was also only one alternative to traditional classes. The most identifiable problems were technical issues, lack of interpersonal communication between the students and teachers, lack of experience, isolation, difficulties of using digital study materials, lack of concentration of students, and inflexibility of online platforms. In order to ensure the quality of online education, the administrator and instructors play a key role because they have the most responsibilities for conducting online classes. The learners also should give support to their instructors so that this system can run smoothly. The overall results show that online learning and teaching have enough problems but if the recommended observations can be implemented, online education will be more comprehensible as well as enjoyable and more advantageous in future for fulfilling the educational need.

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