

PROBLEM-BASED PROJECT FORM

Topic/Title	Learning challenges faced by Bangladeshi students during the pandemic.
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Group Details:

Name of the Group Members	ID No.
Nowshin Sumaiya	21301276
Mahira Mobashwera	21326026
Jannatul Ferdousi Shayba	21336009
Nishat Tabassum	21326029
Istiaq Mohammad	21321036

Hypothesis/Assumption:(Assumption about two causes and two effects related to the issue)

Bangladesh's reaction to COVID-19 was, in general, disorganized, uncoordinated, and chaotic. COVID-19 has made it a more concerning issue with a nationwide lockdown. The government took the initiative to start an online teaching system. It was to ensure continuous study. Most of the teachers in this country are not well trained in online teaching, and there are many remote areas where network systems are not that good. So students faced many problems regarding the internet, and sometimes they could not understand the teachings. As teachers were not used

to taking online teaching, sometimes they could not make students understand the readings. Though it was for the betterment of students and had affected them positively in many cases, these issues were very concerning.

Causes: 1. Poor technological facilities

2. Lack of trained faculties

Effects: 1. Unable to cope up with the advancing technologies

2. Unable to cope up with the upgrading standards as they could not learn in depth.

Research Methodologies: (Which data collection method will you follow and what type of articles do you plan to read? Explain the process.)

In this research paper, we have collected data from the secondary sources. That means most of the data used in this paper is from online based journal research articles. First of all, in the background section, we have discussed the background story behind the covid-19 pandemic and how it had started impacting on the education system in Bangladesh. According to the UNICEF report, we have seen that the education of many many children in our country has been disrupted during this pandemic. We have also tried to illustrate the causes by using two pie charts- one of them is discussing the mental health problems that the students are facing and the other one is discussing the lack of internet facilities because of which the education of the students are hampering. Secondly, we have worked on the expert opinion part where we have discussed causes, effects and solutions all researched by the experts. Here, the data of the first causes, effects and solution were collected from the Plos one online journal site. In this site, depression related problems and its causes, effects and solutions have been discussed. And then we have found articles from the World Wide Web Foundation, where one of the major causes for lagging in the education system were lack of proper technological usage. The third cause was lack of interaction and co-curricular activities and the data related to these were collected from the website of UNICEF. We also added the effects of these problems on our students which we derived from the reports of The World Bank and the website of The Asian School providing information on financial constraints in poor households and limitation of flourishing of special skills. In the end, we came up with two possible solutions from the same sources which briefly discuss support from family members and government initiatives to mitigate the internet issues that often seem unbearable. Thirdly, in the case study section, a case from “The Daily Star” has been

studied where we found out some statements given by a student of Dhaka University. He mentioned that he and his friends were facing problems in the online-based study system as they were not having proper technological facilities. And at the end, we have discussed in the researcher's note part, the comparison of the study with the hypothesis, the individual unique solutions and the observation. The result of the comparison was positive, just like we had assumed in the hypothesis.

Work Plan/Action Plan: (tentative; activities must be carried out equally by the members)

Date	Activity	Name of Person Responsible
12-04-2022	Hypothesis/Assumption	Istiaq Mohammad
13-04-2022	Research Methodologies:	Jannatul Ferdousi Shayba Mahira Mobashwera
13-04-2022	Background	Nishat Tabassum

12-04-2022	Expert	Jannatul Ferdousi Shayba (Cause 1, Effect 1, Solution 1), Mahira Mobashwera (Cause 2,3, Effect 2, 3, Solution 2)
12-04-2022	Case Study	Nowshin Sumaiya
13-04-2022	Researchers' notes	Istiaq Mohammad

Data Log of Research Articles

BACKGROUND (explain how the problem arose/how severe it is, and how people are generally suffering due to this problem - include facts, statistics, etc.) **Must include visual information here in the form of a chart, line graph, pie chart, bar/column graph, flow chart, etc. and report on it.**

Covid-19 is a contagious disease that spreads when people come into contact with one another. As a result, the government of Bangladesh put a lockdown on us, which had a significant influence on Bangladesh's educational system. The lockdown's impact on the educational system resulted in a slew of issues. According to the report, 'Situation Analysis on the Effects and Responses to COVID-19 on the Education Sector in Asia' (SitAn Report), released today by UNICEF and UNESCO, the education of 37 million children in Bangladesh and about 800 million children in Asia, including South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia, has been disrupted due to school closures since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. The schools, colleges and universities were closed and so everything became online-based. As a result, the students lacked enthusiasm, dedication and connection with the teachers in the online classes which ultimately made the quality of education fragile. Furthermore, Students are suffering from mental health issues due to not being able to join normal physical classes. Covid-19 spread is creating a psycho-emotional chaos, as countries have reported a sharp rise in mental health issues among their citizens, including anxiety, discouragement, stress, sleep disorder, and fear (Gritsenko et al., 2020; Savitsky et al., 2020), which has in turn increased substance use (Ahorsu et al., 2020) and occasionally self-destructive behavior (Gritsenko et al., 2020). (Mamun & Griffiths, 2020; Goyal et al., 2020). From May 6 to May 12, 2020, a survey was performed in the second week of May. The target population was students from all around Bangladesh who were enrolled in various colleges. The data for "basic information," "depression," and "anxiety" was gathered using an easy-to-understand survey. The e-questionnaire, created with Google Shape, was

distributed to the understudies via an online-based platform. Through various social platforms, university students from all divisions of Bangladesh were contacted and interviewed. According to the results of the study, 392 (82.4%) of students had mild to severe depression symptoms, while 389 (87.7%) had mild to severe anxiety symptoms. More than 60% of the pupils were male (67.2%), with the remainder being female, one in ten. Again, according to Tajbir Zihad Shaikat, a 14-year-old student, remote education isn't a long-term option for lifelong learning. School is more than just a place for academics; it's also a hub for a variety of extracurricular activities. Due to their excessive reliance on technology, they are rapidly losing social skills and talents. Moreover, students face difficulties learning online due to the network issues. According to Nishat Tahiya Promi, a 14-year-old student, online learning lacks the academic direction, assessment, and interactivity required in the classroom. Poor internet access, data expiration, and power outages frequently disrupt our classes. So, the situation of COVID-19 pandemic has created a barrier to the learning environment of the students.

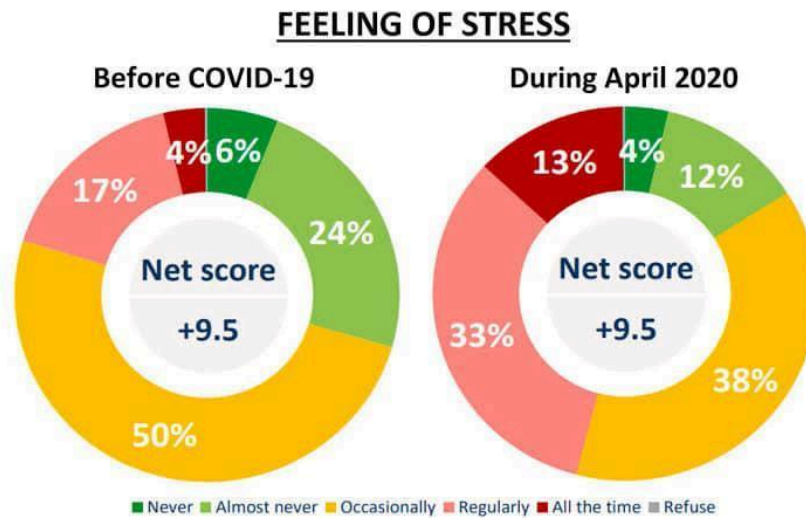


Fig: Mental issues related chart

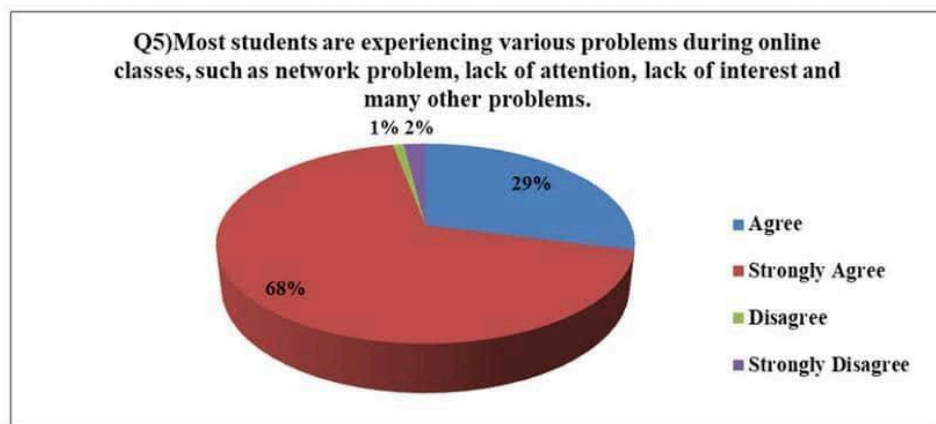


Fig: Internet issues related chart



EXPERT (explain three major causes, three major effects and two possible solutions from experts, specialists, authorities, etc. regarding the problem - each point must be well-elaborated with citations/facts/statistics/etc.)

Three main causes behind the learning problem faced by the students during the COVID-19 pandemic are depression and anxiety, technological unavailability and lack of interaction. First and foremost, survey was made with a total of 476 university students where it has been found out that they are facing learning difficulties due to depression and anxiety (Islam et al., 2020). From that survey, it has been known that around 82.4% of the students have moderate severe depression and 87.7% of the students were suffering from anxiety. That survey also concluded that the older students are having more depression because of this pandemic situation and as a result their studies are being harmed. When observed closely, around 75% of the students complained that they were academically lagging due to this lockdown as they were basically staying in their home being isolated for a very long period of time. Secondly, the biggest challenge of online classes during the pandemic for Bangladeshi students is lack of proper technological facilities. By technological facilities we mean internet access, availability of network and other devices. Due to lockdowns during Covid 19 pandemic, almost 1.5 billion students had to sit back at home which had only one alternative, online learning (World Wide Web Foundation, 2021). Among the school going students, 63% of them are disconnected from internet access (Unicef Telecommunication Union, 2020). Not only network connection, students who received internet access also have poor connection. Anik, a university student, states that during the online sessions, he often gets disconnected. To him, this experience is really painful and disturbing to concentrate on the lectures (Anik, 2020). In Bangladesh, 4G internet covers 95% of its population although 53% of the population are still using 2G or maximum 3G internet (World Wide Web Foundation, 2021). Moreover, the internet is also expensive in our country that most students cannot

afford. Besides, many students do not even own a device to participate in online learning. Some own old versions of Nokia mobiles that do not support internet usage (Anik, 2020). These problems often become unbearable for the students, especially those who reside in rural areas. Some students claim this to be a curse for the students who live in distant regions of Bangladesh (Suma, 2021). Thirdly, another major issue regarding online learning is lack of interaction, both verbal and co-curricular. Since the education institutes are shut down in peak points of infection outbreaks, students lack the opportunity to have teacher-student and student-student interactions online. The online classes do provide as much interaction opportunity as physical classes can ensure. We all remember the time when classes of elementary level were conducted on television in Bangladesh. This initiative definitely deserves appreciation in such a critical global condition, but at the same time it was just a one direction communication channel (UNICEF, 2020). The students could only listen to the teacher delivering lectures and had no chance to interact and share feedback on improving areas. Likewise, the opportunity was not availed for secondary and higher secondary students (Chowdhury, 2020). Not only verbal interaction, online schools do not offer the sector of co-curricular activities and socialization skills that furnish the students' learning experience overall. A lot of students are losing their social skills, staying in isolation and developing extreme dependency on technology (Shaikat, 2020). To sum up, students are facing challenges because of mental illness, lack of resources and communication gap between students and faculties which are making it difficult for them to continue learning in this pandemic situation.

There are some effects of the causes which are provoking learning difficulties in students during the pandemic. To begin with, the effects of the depression and anxiety causes are very severe on the mental health of the students (Islam et al., 2020). They said that they kept having the thought of not learning enough and as a result of that they were very stressed, depressed and anxious. And out of depression and anxiety, their regular study habits are disrupted and as a result they are failing to remain updated with their academic activities during the lockdown. No matter how much they try to study, there is always an unsatisfactory force which is keeping them away from their studies and as a result, they are lagging behind. Secondly, because of the lack of internet access and technology, many students are facing the pressure of financial constraints. Bangladesh just secured its position as a developed country recently and poverty is still a national issue. Moreover, Bangladesh was not ready to tackle the strike of the current pandemic situation countrywide. In this scenario, expecting every student to own a device to join online classes would only sound like a matter of mere luxury. Many students failed to pay school fees before the pandemic and affording a device for online classes at present would be something unimaginable. Going back to the elementary level classes on television in Bangladesh, among the talented students of 9th grade who obtained scholarships, only 55% of them could afford a TV to attend classes staying back at home (The World Bank, 2021). Another report says among the school going adolescents 34% of the household could not afford meals every day let alone buying devices and attending online classes (The World Bank, 2021). Thirdly, interactions and co-curricular involvement stimulates the growth of leadership, critical thinking, logical reasoning, analytical skills, problem solving, self confidence and discovery of specialized skills

along with installing a broad perspective mentality among students. In contrast, in this pandemic situation, staying at home attending online classes pushes the students into a loop of isolation. Everyone is there for them but at the same time no one is beside them. Along with this, many students get to discover their unknown talents in a wide range of fields through their participation in co-curricular activities which also enhances their academic performance. Unfortunately, these talents do not get a chance to flourish in online classes (Sarkar, 2020). Physical classes promote participation of students in debates, public speaking, sports, music, dance and many more. For many students it happens that they love to be engaged in these activities so much that they choose to make it their way of livelihood (The Asian School, 2019). To conclude, the previously stated causes have strong effects on Bangladeshi students including difficulty in upgrading academic performance, inducing financial crisis in poor households and limiting the blooming of specialized talents of many students.

There are two possible solutions which are given by the experts to help the students overcome the problems they are facing in their studies for the pandemic. Firstly, the parents as well as the government should be aware of the circumstance (Islam et al., 2020). Parents should be made conscious about the situation by providing pandemic response and recovery support by the government so that they can create a healthy and lively environment for their children without forcing them to do academic activities and studies. It will create a friendly relationship between the family members and the students can be in their comfort zone rather than being in a depressed condition. As a result of that, they can also be able to concentrate on their studies and go with the normal flow of

the academic activities. Secondly, to combat the challenge of weak internet connection our government can concentrate on improving infrastructure, internet stability and technological availability (Matsuda, 2021). Only ensuring internet availability is not enough, our students also require internet stability along with stable connection for undisturbed learning experience. Additionally, availability and cost effectiveness of imobile data, devices and technologies also seek attention from the authority (World Wide Web Foundation, 2021). Therefore, the supportive mentality of family members and government initiative to ensure internet accessibility can be the key solutions for Bangladesh to move forward and advance in the education sector even in covid 19 pandemic situation.

CASE STUDY (present a real-life incident or case from the perspective of the victim/target group) The information below should include causes, effects and possible solutions from the victim's perspective.

During the Covid-19 pandemic the government of Bangladesh ordered educational institutions to close down their campuses on March 17, 2020 (Jameel & Rainak, 2020). Afterward, educational institutions began to provide online classes. However, most of these institutions, as well as the professors who would be teaching these sessions, were unfamiliar with the online classes. Instructors faced a lot of difficulties while doing their jobs effectively (Jameel & Rainak, 2020). On the other hand, almost every student struggled a lot to attend online classes. Students faced many problems, for example technical issues, mental health issues, Infrastructural Problems, Lack of proper communication etc. We'll now discuss the difficulties that Bangladeshi students experience during the pandemic. Sizan Ahmed Jim, a master's student at Dhaka University, states that many of his classmates face various technical issues while joining online classes. Many of his friends, mainly from rural areas, have no Wi-Fi facilities at home. They need to use mobile data to attend online classes. Which is quite costly for them. Because of network issues they cannot join classes timely. Sometimes they go to nearby cafes or shops that provide Internet access (Tabassum & Mahtab, 2021). However, they are unable to attend classes regularly. Additionally, the teachers usually instruct them to collect class notes afterwards, but the university authority never helps these students with logistical support. Again, Sizan Ahmed Jim added that, there are also many poor students who can't afford smartphones. Without smartphones it is quite impossible to do online classes. They have the potential to study hard, but the circumstances are not in their favor. As a consequence, many of these students were forced to drop semesters altogether (Tabassum & Mahtab, 2021).

Causes:

1. Students from rural areas are not familiar with modern technologies.
2. Wi-Fi facilities are not available everywhere. Whereas, mobile data is quite costly.
3. Many students do not have smartphones, laptops, pc. They can't afford those devices.
4. Technical and network issues. As online classes are prone to technical issues.

Effects:

1. Many students were forced to drop semesters.
2. Students can't concentrate on their studies.
3. Students face mental health issues.

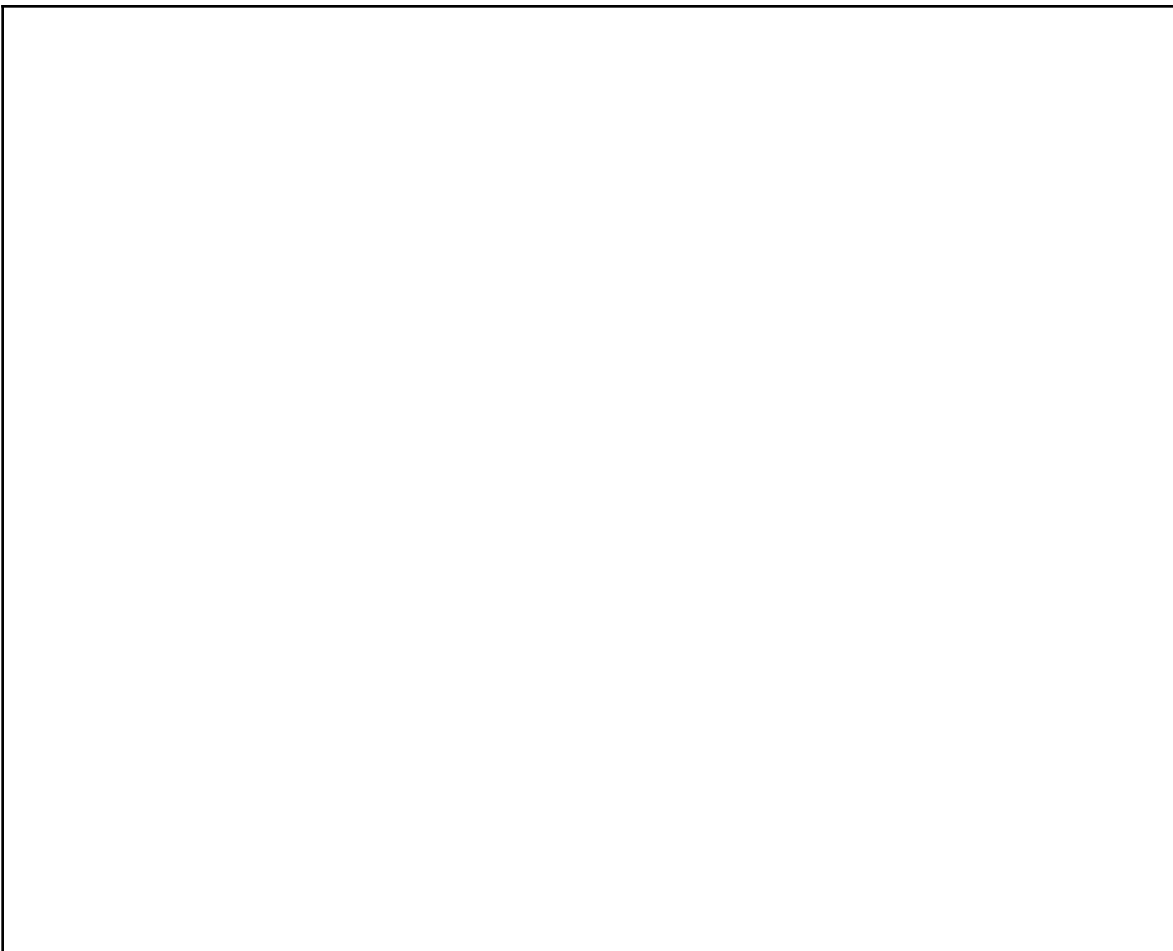
Possible solutions:

1. Free Wi-Fi facilities should be everywhere.
2. Many Organizations should come forward to provide smartphones to underprivileged students.
3. Arrange programs, seminars to teach rural students modern technologies.
4. Schools, colleges, and universities need to be more serious regarding those students who can't join online classes.

Researchers' notes on: (i) comparison of findings with hypothesis, (ii) individual and unique solution/s to the problem, and (iii) personal observation while working on the problem.

- 1. Comparison:** We found various connections with our hypothesis. First and foremost, we have observed authenticity between our assumed and discovered causes. For example, we found many problems students faced such as many of the poor students couldn't afford smartphones or laptops, wifi is not available in all areas so they had to pay for costly mobile data, poor internet connection in the rural areas. As a result it affected students as they couldn't concentrate on their studies, faced mental issues, and were forced to drop semester. We also discovered a similarity between our assumed and discovered effects. We presumed that people became less productive and had unhappy family lives as a result of their mental health issues. These effects were also confirmed by the research articles we read.
- 2. Individual Slotuitions:** A course for teachers should be arranged to train them for online teaching. Students should be provided with free internet access and support to afford devices. Teachers should be more concerned about students if they are understanding or not. We may create a support website where people can discuss their problems anonymously, as well as their personal experiences and how they overcame them. The website will categorize people who have similar problems.
- 3. Observation:** We discovered the true scale of the issue while working on this project. Previously, we had some ideas about the causes and consequences of students facing issues during the Covid-19 pandemic. We knew there was a problem, but we didn't realize how serious it was. For example, many students

were forced to drop studies due to financial issues and lack of support from authorities. Many passed the examinations but couldn't understand the basic reading materials and are going through hard times next semester. Some subjects are not suitable for online teaching rather for practical lessons which students are missing and facing problems. We should think of a way to eradicate these problems soon to make our students more qualified.



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