# Digital Technology in Bangladesh Higher Education

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NOWADAYS technology affects practically all activities in our life. The digital technologies have covered the operation of all levels of education from kindergarten to doctoral studies. The new technology has even started challenging higher educational institutions worldwide to redefine their student constituencies and teaching practices. Bangladesh has just started journey by new vehicle equipped with digital technologies and run by local national experts and technologists.

The higher educational institutes in Bangladesh, particularly private universities are opening new departments related to digital technologies. The Peoples University of Bangladesh is one of the oldest private universities that have departments like Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) and Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering (ETE). The departments are rich in digital technologies. I teach students of both departments when topics like Satellite Communications, Radio Communications, Data Communications, Optical Fiber Communications, LASER and nanotechnology automatically become part of our discussions. Teaching modern technology subjects with full confidence is very interesting and exciting. The reason is, the students found very curious about the innovative subjects that still considered in Bangladesh, the subjects for white people.

Attending my class, self-confidence of the students develops day by day. In, a class of two hours duration, most of time utilized in answering questions about the topics, devices with applications, status of Bangladesh in relation to topics, future of Bangladesh, problems and solutions, possibility of students' inclusions in nation building activities with digital technology.

Interestingly the students have discovered their knowledge in Physics and Mathematics of higher secondary level is enough to understand the technologies of satellite communications, fiber optics etc. They need just an experienced and qualified guide who can answer their questions according to their requirements. The concerned teacher must have academic, industrial and research experience at home and abroad. Otherwise, technology-based higher education will never emerge in the country. Only the costly certificate holders cannot solve these problems.

At the initial stage, a survey conducted among the students who attended classes and the researchers realized that students are interested in just a certificate that they need for their career developments. After three classes on Satellites, I found the students very thirsty for modern technology knowledge. They are more interested to learn about availability of satellite communications in Bangladesh. Our neighbor countries have launched their Satellites in the space orbits, but Bangladesh has yet to do that. It indicates our national crisis in technology field.

The students of Bangladesh have no scope of observing Satellites physically while revolving around the earth in fixed orbits but the Internet has made things easier to them. From the websites they can learn details about the Satellites and this learning has encouraged them significantly. Opportunity of open discussions increases their confidence as well.

This is research-oriented course that I teach at Peoples University of Bangladesh. Here learning occurs outside the traditional educational environment, with the World Wide Web used to deliver interactive education programs, especially in higher education. Questions and issues of why and how the Web be used as a delivery mechanism are causing concern. I like to share some of the results of my observations and discussions with students of Telecommunications at the Peoples University. A significant number of students could not attend classes regularly but they share their requirements with the classmates and sometimes with me over phone or emails to have answers. They are happy with their classmates for cooperating them. They maintain a peaceful atmosphere everywhere because of the benefits they gain through digital technology.

The digital technologies have also generated many conflicting claims and predictions as to the present, and mainly future, effects that the Internet and World Wide Web might have on higher education environments. On one hand, the emergence of the new technologies has broadened access to many new student clienteles and in such a way contributed greatly to social equity in higher education; and on the other hand, the continuous development of advanced and complex technological infrastructures widens the digital divide between developed and developing countries, and between rich and poor. Most academics in advanced countries have adopted eagerly the technological capabilities provided by the Internet in their research activities, and at the same time, many professors still feel reluctant to incorporate technologies in their teaching. The digital technologies gave rise to many new providers of higher education and increased the competition in the academic global market, and at the same time, we witness a growing trend of collaborations and convergence of academic practices enhanced by the new media.

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