E-LEARNING INEQUALITIES FOR DISABLED STUDENTS IN BANGLADESH: COVID-19 PERSPECTIVE

Sharmin Ahmed[1]

Abstract

The education system is vital to eliminating societal inequalities. Internet-based learning systems launched in low- and middle-income countries by providing an equity vibe; however, Bangladesh's reality differs from this philosophy. Bangladesh adopted an e-learning strategy to perk up its literacy rate during the COVID-19 lockdown. However, the current situation has become complex due to insufficient internet network and technological setup, the market-generated welfare policy, little accountability of the state, and inadequate fund release to accommodate this new learning system. Disabled students got few benefits from the system; for instance, it reduced mobility crisis; hence financial, societal, and cultural blockades become uniquely problematic to some extent. The current article will analyse existing secondary literature to understand disabled students' academic future in Bangladesh, relevant policy, and practices to determine their citizenship rights.

Keywords: Inclusive education, e-learning, Disabled students, Citizenship, Education policy, COVID-19 pandemic

Introduction

Bangladesh Open University pioneered the internet-based learning (E-learning) system in 1992 through the country's national television channel BTV (Bangladesh Television). Later the rise of internet subscriptions generated online resources and skills. The growing smartphone usage reinforced the trend. Ten-minute school by Ayman Sadiq (sponsored by telecom company Robi Axiata Limited), Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Digital University, Muktopath, and Shikkhok.com popularized the online learning venture (Islam, 2019), even though their access, quality, and acceptance differ. Moreover, negligible academic papers indicate disabled students' participation in these projects. By this time, the world

[1] **Sharmin Ahmed**, Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Disorders, University of Dhaka, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh. Email: sharminahmed@du.ac.bd

came across increasing coronavirus infections that scrambled the traditional and unique education system and grossly impacted 40 million students' academic cycle (Asadullah et al., 2020). On 16 March 2020, the country announced, until further notice, the closure of all types of schools, colleges, and universities considering public health safety (The Daily Star, 2020), shattered disabled students' dream of social mainstreaming through learning. Although the situation becomes terrific because of the more prolonged negligence of the state as they are underprivileged and minor in number.

According to the Centre for Policy Dialogue, Bangladesh (2020), 19-20% of disabled students enrolled in primary education, whereas the number is non-mentionable at the tertiary level. Bangladesh developed its position in literacy by registering 97% of its child population, where 11% of disabled participants are in formal and non-formal education (UNICEF, 2014). During the COVID-19 outbreak, the precautionary social distancing decreased the infection rate through the multidimensional features of e-learning and socio-economic changes that happened in low-income families. Neurodevelopmentally disabled students undergo extra differences from physical and other intellectual handicaps; they become unattainable with the existing e-learning setup, though the disability-specific study materials are not available in Bangladesh. Furthermore, repetitive segregation between impaired and non-impaired students reinforced cultural stereotypes, elimination, distrust, and dropping expectations for disabled students at the initial stages of education (Barton, 1997; Lipsky & Gartner, 1996). A handful of unique and inclusive teaching teams facilitate the community.

Realities of education system and access of disabled students

In Bangladesh, disabled children encounter deprivation from the mainstream education system for adjustment issues with the school environment and peer group, inadequate supportive devices, infrastructural and transport barriers, and demoralizing behaviour of family and teachers (Khan & Anisuzzaman, 2011, P-17). Therefore, the changed situation of COVID-19 reduced some of these barriers, but others increased massively. For example, e-learning reduces mobility issues and environmental problems; however, cumulative economic pressure burdens the family, increasing abused behaviour and discouraging education. According to Save the Children (2020), only 12% of respondents can continue their studies, 65% are slightly involved, 23% withdraw themselves, and 17% are disabled.

On the other hand, disabled students are encouraged toward special education

rather than mainstream. These push factors turned more vital in the hierarchy of knowledge. Policy making process of understanding disability issues from a non-disabled standpoint proves insufficient, linear, and deceitful (Watson et al., 2012, P-224). Therefore, the idea of disablement subjugated in the knowledge sphere ultimately portrayed them as a burden on the policy web (Easton, 1953). Bangladesh's national curriculum encourages a more examination-based teaching system, less time to understand the depth of knowledge field, policy obliged understanding of teachers, and resource constraints pulled out disabled students from the mainstream. However, the disadvantages will not be visible immediately. Over time, students may discover the secrets without any chance to recover. A high flow of examinations cannot properly assess a student's understanding or support their physical and mental conditions. However, it justifies excluding disabled students from such a pressurized learning system and straining out potential labourer hunting projects for the capitalist state. Inclusive education systems are market-generated systems to exclude disabled students from mainstream education, indicating less equipped realities of these alternative ways of teaching. The E-learning system is nothing but another form of segregation to reinforce the digital and democratic divide for disabled students. The gap spreads wide to generate multidimensional class differences and uneven structural power.

Citizen rights and realities of disabled people

Constitutionally, Bangladesh acknowledges equal political, social, and economic rights and indifference to any physical or disadvantageous condition in articles 15 (d), 19, 27,18, and 29 (BRAC, 2018). Later, the Protection of Person with Disabilities Act 2013 was enacted to ensure these constitutional principles more intensively. Besides, Bangladesh approved the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2007, acknowledging the importance of disabling the community in sustainable development ventures. Bangladesh's national education policy 2010, comprehensive early childhood care and development policy 2013, national skills development policies 2012, and a national strategy for the person with disabilities skills development 2013 reinforces the objectives (UKAID, 2020). However, disability rights are yet to achieve. Their de-facto citizenship sustained due to inadequate institutionalization, less in-depth knowledge about various disabilities, linear intellectual support, budgetary issues, and traditional cultural understanding trapped the disabled community (Hossain, 2015). In addition, the governmental accountability process is also frustrating in ensuring their mainstreaming in society.

Technological accessibility deviation depends on economic status, which is why the global digital divide between poor and rich countries. Developing countries' low investment in technical procurement pushes them toward a political equation. Gradually, the country faces deprivation in hi-tech device access and distribution. In some cases, developing countries are working harder for their economic development or encouraging inequal commercialization in the state to avail these technologies. As a result, socially and financially disadvantaged groups, such as the disabled community, face extra marginalization in accessing the internet, computer, and other supporting devices.

Financial management of education sector

Bangladesh expresses a statutory egalitarian approach for teaching, whereas it is implemented for primary to secondary education only. However, when disability comes into consideration, family income, parental educational qualification, size and structure of the family, and gender of the disabled child turn into dominant factors in deciding how they will get the investment from their families though household economics considers a family as a productive unit (Becker, 2009). Because, in developing countries, disabled communities are not decisive voters, and the democratic state system shares more intensive relations with its citizens through voting (Teixeira, 1987). Moreover, there are influential factors of disability isolation from political rights exercises. Suppose the disabled community got limited chances in educational acceleration, inappropriate and low salaried jobs to fulfil their extra expenditures to survive, followed by more protracted poverty, mobility crisis, and extra effort to become prominent in social activities. In that case, political elites can drive them towards a backseat in political practices (Kruse et al., 1998). Therefore, they cannot bargain for their required portion of public funding, which eventually causes underinvestment in the long run. On the other hand, public investment implies the nation's benefits, and market policy determines how the state understands disabled citizens. According to Stiglitz (2000), government expenditure policy breaks down the process into these steps: 1. the demand of the program, 2. market failure chances, 3. alternative programs, 4. features of the program, 5. the interest of the private sector, 6. efficiency consequences, 7. distributional outcome, 8. equity-efficacy, 9. public policy objectives, and 10. political interest (Stiglitz, 2000, P- 262). Bangladesh is a middle-income country with a massive population burden and can hardly ensure compulsory education at primary and secondary levels. On the other hand, private educational institutions are too expensive to access for low-income groups. Therefore, neither government initiatives can

provide the extra effort, and money for disability enrolment nor the private sector is interested in including them. Some NGOs (non-governmental organizations), for instance, BRAC, Save the Children, etc., work to provide education for the disabled community in a non-formal approach. Besides, they mostly satisfy their donors' interest in the country. During the COVID-19 lockdown, global conglomerates played observer or investor roles due to an unpredictable circumstance of viral infection. State apparatuses were more concerned about saving their productive citizens' lives, running the economic cycle as far as possible, and investing more in health and vaccination to overcome the anarchy. However, the state chose the ICT sector as the second option to invest from public funding to continue their activities. As a result, they can continue economic, educational, social, and health care services, avoiding any community that needs more effort to survive, such as disabled students. Bangladesh continued the e-learning education system through its national television and sponsoring mobile data and smartphone devices for vulnerable communities. However, these initiatives can hardly help disabled students, especially neurodevelopmental disabilities. The country failed to provide updated educational material and services to continue its education. Moreover, overlooking their operational efficacy, changed or disrupted family financial status, societal and psychological tension due to infection spread, transcendental web space, and logistic availability crisis can be considered indirect discouragements for participatory democracy in the country (Hussain, 2021).

Excessive technological integration to continue the "new normal" settings sustained socio-economic changes from micro to macro level through frequent structural changes (Hussain, 2021). Bangladesh's growing economy and expanding digitalization encounter difficulties developing exclusive messages and material and implementing policies for disabled students during such a paradigm shift. Additionally, inadequate funding, the absence of an innovative formulation strategy, and reluctance at decision-making levels put the disabled community at risk to exercise their fundamental rights.

Insurance facilities are mostly privatized in Bangladesh as it is not a welfare state by nature; only some community health insurance services are there. Even government service holders receive nominal health care allowances without any insurance scheme for formal and informal staff (Hamid, 2014). Moreover, insurance penetration and social protection are low (Rockefeller Foundation, 2013). The premium charge-based private insurance scheme encompasses a smaller community of leading non-governmental organizations like BRAC and ICDDR'B (Molla & Chi, 2017).

Additionally, the country has a deficit budget fulfilled by foreign donations and debts (Bangladesh Ministry of Finance, 2020). In 2020 total budget was $5.68 trillion, prioritized health and economic recovery due to novel COVID-19; however, mishandling in revenue mobilization, disruption in public investment, and intensified budget deficit with national and international loans (CPD, 2020) ultimately prohibit budget planning and implementation. The country's education budget remains same in 2019-20 fiscal year, and teachers' efficacy, infrastructural defects, and students' dropout hindering proper management of the budget (CPD, 2020). Fred W. Riggs's prismatic societal model, a robust system tool to analyse transitional society's complexities due to emerging industrialization fused culture and pluralistic norms (Basu, 2021), is correlated with the pandemic-generated circumstantial changes in education. For instance, Bangladesh's digitalization found very few feasibility studies to judge its convenience, economic capacity, and requirement of its demographics. However, the ruling government is electorally abided by to ensure this digitalization interlinked with global development agendas of SGD; overlooks the country's conventional administrative system to implement it. Precisely, the sustainable development goals are also found epistemic, hegemonic, and disregarding its historical base of global poverty (Gabay & Ilcan, 2017, P-337).

Major Challenges to overcome inequalities

Traditional economic agenda-setting

According to Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Council (BTRC), Bangladesh found 112.713 million internet users by January 2021, most of whom are mobile internet users (103.191 million). Another study on online education shows that 68.9% of respondent students rely on expensive and inaccessible mobile internet service among whom 57.9% encounter financial burden for regular usage, and 16.5% complained about inadequate network coverage (Islam et al., 2020). Regarding the neoliberal welfare concept, education is a social investment, creating active members of the labour market (Marshal, 1963). Correspondingly, the democratic system supports few higher education facilities for the less privileged class to broaden the elites' gain from tertiary education (Busemeyer, 2009). Public-private partnership is also vital to enhance educational development, which hardly accommodates disabled students because of primitive medical model-oriented understanding and uncertainty on their materialistic future returns.

In addition, schooling has a socio-economic outcome (Hallinan, 2006, P-507), and

a discriminatory class structure allows few disabled representatives to sustain their strategic "equity" concept in welfare politics. Conglomerates are apprehensive about disabled people's political standpoint against market policy and prevailing educational structure, which fulfils their required workforce supply chain (Collins, 1979).

The existing societal construction formulated on the competitive market system which is reinforcing disabled community's anatomical and neural incapability (Yeo, 2005) through inequal distribution to resources, forceful augmentative technologies, and some tricky national and global agendas. For instance, education as a social investment, producing active members to serve the labour market (Marshal, 1963). Therefore, schooling has a socio-economic outcome (Hallinan, 2006, P-507) which allows few disabled representatives to sustain in their strategic "equity" concept.

They used to choose their envois who fulfil their political intentions parallelly to depict a fake reality of the community's mainstreaming. For example, the democratic system supports few higher education facilities for the less privileged class to broaden the elites' gain from tertiary education (Busemeyer, 2009). Bangladesh's education policy hardly shows any framework to allow more inclusive nature in their system; however, their publications and project works to ensure inclusion is still going on through national and international funding. The fourth Primary Education development program 2018-2023 (PEDP4) claims to accommodate more disabled students in primary education (UNICEF, 2021), on the contrary the report exhibits statistical data from 2011 which is not representative.

Disproportionate technological resources in urban and rural areas

E-learning is the most promising alternative to a physical learning system; however, its accomplishment depends on students, trainers, and logistic supports (internet access, network availability, smartphone, or laptops) (Rohman et al., 2020). Moreover, distance learning's perceptual, pedagogical, technological, and social challenges create hindrances during the COVID-19 pandemic (Ferri et al., 2020). At the same time, the disabled community's geographical position determines their access to the internet and technical devices. It also indicates their economic, educational, and community interaction in the new standard of world order during and after the recent pandemic (Chadwick, 2013). For instance, a study on wealth index of disability shows rural households are in financially insolvent category in Bangladesh especially Barisal, Khulna, Rajshahi and Rangpur, where

only essential living materials are available comparing with an urban household (Tareque, 2014, P-3). Television, radio, or laptop these are luxurious products which they can hardly afford. Besides, technical problems are more crucial in Bangladesh, interlinking with monetary management, device literacy, and connection factors. Therefore, rural area inhabitant who have more prevalence of one and more disabilities are expected to have these troubles more frequently than an urban area tenant.

On the other hand, alternative approaches were less tried. New Zealand and Australia dedicated television channels for teaching and postal services to send education material for personal learning (OECD, 2020). Bangladesh launched television teaching without materials and an assessment framework which provoked students' distraction. According to a Bangladesh Education Reporters Forum study, 89% of primary and secondary students were unwilling to broadcasted television education services. Also, 54% of students encountered extra educational expenditure to continue their respective educational institution's online classes, which indicates public funding wastages (The Daily Star, 2020). Additionally, teachers and administration's technical and academic inefficacy cause extra difficulties, though they come to this profession through a corrupted appointment process (Billah, 2021). Such circumstances increase the unjustified burden for both disabled and non-disabled students, especially in the countryside.

Metropolitan areas are facilized with digital telecommunication and web-based infrastructure, whereas the situation is the opposite in rural and remote regions, impacting national economic growth (Salemink et al., 2017). In 2019, 62.9% of the country's demographics remained in urban areas (Statistica.com, 2019). However, most of these populations are migrating from the agricultural labour market (Afsar, 2001), eventually provoking low standard accommodation and health services and physical and mental insecurity (Afsar, 2003, P-23). During COVID-19 lockdown and, until further notice, the closure of educational institutions, low and middle-income countries faced immense crises for lacking remote teaching and learning predicament (UNICEF, 2020). Bangladesh's 2020-21 fiscal year budget allocation remains unchanged comparing the previous one (Alamgir, 2020), which lacks inducement for a new typical e-learning system. Moreover, the ICT ministry got 18% more allocation compared to 2019 (Dhaka Tribune, 2020). Bangladesh is heading towards 5G network service, which is practically more youth and metropolitan areas concerned. However, the officials found less understanding about the technologies (Sakil, 2018, P-230). Additionally, the National ICT policy is equivocal, structural, less socio-economical, and incomprehensive

to ensure "Digital Inclusion" of the country's vision 2021 and the Digital Bangladesh concept (Aziz, 2020, P-304). Moreover, its receiving actors need to make thoughtful decisions to adopt an innovation (Kneuer & Harnisch, 2016, P-548), which is hardly possible for special need-based community for instance, multidimensional disabled students, without any formal model. Bangladesh is in a "purely transmission" stage, overlooks proper implementation, privacy, and online security threats through encryption might create unusual suffering (Internet Society, 2021). Therefore, the digital divergences create anxiety for students and parents about their academic future. According to a study on 149 children with various neurodevelopmental disorders of Bangladesh indicates, 42.3% parents/caregivers responded to get adequate learning support during educational institution closure due to COVID-19 lockdown, however, 51% respondents got very few supports even having adequate internet and e-learning access (Nisha & Bakul, 2022). Along with that, 59.7% participants responded that their children are not capable enough to continue home based learning, and the reasons are unawareness about e-learning availability (14%), sitting in front of smartphone, computer or television screen is problematic for a long time (13.4%), poor internet connectivity due to moving to rural areas (3.4%) and some were indifferent about e-learning (2.7%). As Bangladesh undergoes through high data scarcity about its disabled demographics, these recent data indicate, multidimensional issues regarding disabled students' online education, which remains unattended.

The country's economic capacity may not address various learning needs, however, disguising the community from the process and policy, causes a violation of social equity and justice. Moreover, it started the digitalization process from an influential argument, providing 'democratic' vibes, anticorruption oriented and people's friendliness which is not happening for disabled community.

E-learning platforms are parallelly challenging for non-disabled students and teachers, although innovative guidance and stimulus may ease the situation. It depends more on personal learning, which contrasts with Bangladesh's traditional learning system (Burns, 2019). Extreme poor and illiterate families may not support disabled children in education. However, training with good incentives may encourage them to make necessary efforts.

Impact of poverty in disability education and lifestyle

Bangladesh as a developing country introduced significant poverty reduction strategies during its democratic state practices. However, its economic growth and

resource distribution is questionable. Global experience indicates that relatively higher poverty reduction cannot ensure corresponding economic growth (Ahmed, 2013), which is related with Bangladesh's steady economic development and controlled population growth perked up its per capita income from 1990s; whereas the World Inequality Report 2022 indicates, 44% of total national income seized by 10% population (Byron & Rahman, 2021 Daily star). Additionally, the Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2016 indicated country's less employment generation in job market, increasing corruption, and low investment in health, education, and social protection prolonging the inequality (Byron and Rahman, 2021). Disability encounters higher multidimensional poverty because of their low educational accomplishment, higher living expenditures especially the health spendings, and less access in job market (Mitra, Posarac & Vick, 2013). According to a pre-pandemic study on inequalities of disability in Bangladesh shows, higher number of economically insolvent disability found in rural areas (Barishal, Khulna, Rajshahi) with women from 15-34 age group and male from 5-24 age group (Tareque, Begum and Saito, 2014, P- 3). This situation became worse due to COVID-19 pandemic, which has a detrimental impact on their regular monetary earning, food consumption, and access to formal health and social services (Hasan et. Al., 2021 P- 1364). However, being a country with higher disability prevalence (6.94% in 2019 by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics), Bangladesh worked very few to overcome pre-existing vulnerabilities of social isolation, poor economic status, dependency on household income, inequal personal water and hygiene access (Sen and Hoque, 2017, Mactaggart et. Al. 2018). It is also one of the first countries that adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), failed to assure its implementation. As a result, impaired community's "deserving poor" (Halper, 1973) condition prevailed to interrogate their citizenship. Their physical difference allows other citizens to justify their deprivation due to traditional social order (Peck, 2001) and generates institutional inequity in exercising their rights (Beresford, 1996).

Along with that, the country provoked to adopt market generated welfare policies and follow global agendas for instance UN created sustainable development goals to keep its international outlook safe; however, Arendt (Azar, 2019) explained, `Universal' and `inalienable' human right is a controversial idea, ultimately encourages authoritarian state system which only understands the physical territory and citizens' able-bodism to 'facilitate' its sovereignty. She also explained human right as a subject of political consideration and context to achieve. Bangladesh undergone through the failure of democratic institutionalization, tarnished

electoral culture, and highly antagonistic approach amid the major political parties (Bangladesh Awami League and Bangladesh Nationalist Party) both ideological and individualistic issues. Therefore, the political structure become fragile, noncooperative, and leader centric. The frequent amendments of the constitution also added extra vulnerability in the process. As a result, human rights are highly subjective in such state system.

Bangladesh's reigning political party is driven by corporates, as they are members of parliament, holding advisory positions, and significant donors. Therefore, poverty reduction, social identity building, and political futures are interlinking market strategies. Bangladesh's cash-generating model of disability care encourages nominal financial support rather than an individualistic lifestyle, indicating more societal devaluation. Empowerment deserves system adoption and changes to support vulnerable communities (Kestenbaum, 1992), which is not happening in the country.

Learning through information technology and their adaptation

Bangladesh government dedicated a national television channel to ensure distance learning during the lockdown. It is entitled "Amar Ghor Amar School" (My Home, My School). According to UNICEF, e-learning is an option to continue education during lockdown; yet an accessibility crisis may prevail (UNICEF, 2014). The service encompassed primary and secondary levels; higher secondary and tertiary levels must rely on internet-based learning. Mostly tertiary education is the worst sufferer due to technological limitations of teachers and institutions to arrange online examinations and assessments. However, the existing television-oriented education process is unsuitable for various disabilities as their assistance requirements differ. Parents failed to support them due to their technological and educational lacking.

According to a study, 95% of developmental disabilities live in low and middle-income countries (Kumm et al., 2021), requiring media backing to establish their rights, overcome economic vulnerability, and gain state benefits. Disable students and their families contribute to the country's development; they are still lagging due to unawareness. Besides, the government justifies disability welfare with the cash transfer only, concealing policy mishandling under developing identity. Media projection must highlight their social needs, avoiding the unwanted culture-generated stigma. Social media may perform better for its alternative identity than mainstream media and create awareness. However, mainstream media serves the

capitalist mode of production and reproduction to ensure benefit for their owners. As a result, media broadcasted education failed to address various disabilities' learning, obscured from the public sphere.

Culture and welfare policy linkage

Binary comparisons among the policies and disabled and non-disabled realities became a matter of concern. Culturally undermining community faces vulnerability, deteriorating Bangladesh's development and economic rise in the long run. Disabled marginalization has a cost; instead, their inclusion as a development contributor is cost-effective and sustainable. Bangladesh's cash transfer welfare strategy only increases their dependency on the state, a potential economic burden for the future; intentionally reinforced by the privatization process to exhibit government failure and their importance in state management.

Public and private school authorities are less accountable for disabled students' education though there is a jurisdiction issue between the education and social welfare ministry. However, disabled students' education concerns the social welfare ministry, lacking logistic and expert support compared to the education ministry. As a result, the uneven collaboration did not work practically.

Consistent budget cuts for education, disability development, an unplanned cash transfer system, and an old-school development framework ensured extreme marginalization for various disabilities. Only by analysing gross spending data, the internal management issues will not be concealed. Per capita expenditure and its ratio comparing the whole budget will exhibit how much the disbursements help the disabled community. According to Anwar et al. (2019), grossly 8.5 USD expenditures for the impoverished disabled community is nothing but a satire of welfare. Economic growth, population trends, and the maturity level of social safety net services are vital actors in welfare policy (Wilensky, 1975). however, Bangladesh's politicians and secretariat officials are allegedly responsible for abusing public funding and offices for private gain, causing development resource wastage (Hasan, 2007, P-5). On a broader perspective, Dreze and Sen (1991) defined the South Asian welfare strategy as "protective" in terms of its trend to rescue the highly vulnerable from exclusion. Therefore, the state generates a disability minority model to exclude them from the mainstream with their unconscious consent. State's action supports neoliberal society's domination of the labour market; spread contaminated thinking to aggravate human body ideas to compete in productivity parameters and good labour for the system (Watson

& Vehmas, 2019, p- 45). The capitalist system brilliantly conceals its social welfare flaws by accusing disabled citizens. Education is a social investment for the capitalist system to create ideal labour, whereas less investment and more profit may achieve. Disable students require more investment and less profit; thus, they are left behind as a residual of society. Foucault's discipline and punishment indicate the same idea. From Bangladesh's perspective, the digital enclosure was supposed to ensure more flexibility, accountability, and government transparency. While language barrier, expensive software, low internet bandwidth, and poor technological literacy reinforce the digital divide (Rahman, 2007). Rural areas are mostly lagging, though the technology market is not affluent, nor the rural inhabitants' awareness is favourable of the government's unequal practices (Salemink, 2017 P-363).

Consequently, disabled students from rural areas suffer extreme deprivation in the e-learning system. Urban dwellers have had facilities, although the monetary struggle is crucial. Above all, Bangladesh's social welfare policy is reluctant towards disability issues, and informal accountability lacks a quality control mechanism (Hallinan, 2006).

Bangladesh's Disability Education: Walking on the Long-run payoff road

Precisely, Bangladesh follows an incomplete model of disability (medical model), which cannot accommodate all types of abilities in development administration and their implemented policies.

Bangladesh's national education policy also undergone through a bumpy road from the public sphere to neoliberal privatization with the help of its democratic regimes. Elected democratic governments are more interested in development through privatization (Kabir, 2013, P- 159). Ardent presented an enigmatic formula "the right to have rights" which questions establishment of international human rights concept, as long as the target community can secure their political identity in the state. However, political identity is very linear and static understanding, where multidimensional requirements of a disabled citizen can hardly accommodate. Therefore, marginalizing their citizenship rights or limited mainstreaming (physical disability) ensure 'better' governance, less accountability followed by fewer investments are preferred. Such circumstances are familiar in global south, where the state system is less democratic and economic roadmaps abide by the neoliberal policies induced by their benefactor countries (Odeh, 2010). Bangladesh's economic, education, and social protection policies follows

'international standard' overlooking their capacity to adopt it. For instance, the country's ruling political party, Bangladesh Awami League was committed to ensure a people centric development approach in state system, however, ill prepared to handle the COVID-19 situation and its obvious outcomes. Such mess was not atypical comparing with other countries, however, the administration's deliberate negligence to develop systematic governance, accountability, and failure to control recognized corruption formed compounding problems as well as smudged the linkage between accountability, transparency, participation, and inclusion, the four critical embodiments of development concept (Carothers & Brechenmacher, 2014). Such complexes did not emerge overnight. The country's democratic backsliding gradually developed a "Hybrid Regime" where electoral fairness is controversial, deliberate legal pressure on political oppositions, widespread corruption, and delicate civil society were identified (The Daily Star, 2022). As a result, citizenship rights are narrowed down over these years. Furthermore, disabled community was scattered, unaware of their rights, lacks leadership, and constant economic regression made their citizenship status more complicated during the pandemic. According to another study on educational impact of COVID-19 in Bangladesh indicated fatal learning loss because of sudden cessation of schooling, grade related incompetency, technology generated inequalities, lack of assistive devices for poor and rural resident disabled students, uncertainties in vocational training, rise of child labour and dropout, and domestic abusive behaviour (Ahmed, 2019); will linger disability student's suffering for a long time.

Arendt's idea of 'right to have rights' derived from "statelessness" and "political evil" concept formulated in early twenty first century (Grimaldi, 2012), however, it is highly relevant with the current capitalist economic system efficaciously institutionalized side-lining process through uneven development. Dispossessing certain communities and social elements by categorizing as 'harmful' for 'development' and reproducing them (Smith, 2010); state disowning its own citizens' right in its territory through the same essence of statelessness or evil of Arendt. The only difference is the situation happens in a sovereign territory. On the other hand, neoliberalism contradicts with territorial or sovereign control on free market economy eventually making their marginalized communities (disabled people) stateless; overwhelming the "global village" idea, where they are hardly identified. For instance, education policy documents frequently underline social justice, inclusion, and equity type words, yet try to merge economic rationalism and social justice to follow the global trend; in due course pick up their expected labour force and oversee the rest.

Recommendations

Though the e-learning difficulties for disabled students comprise compounding problems, below mentioned ideas may guide towards a possible solution:

1. Redesign the existing curriculum to adopt the e-learning system is a holistic approach addressing both disabled and non-disabled students.

2. Enrich easily accessible and free mobile applications for special need-oriented children to ensure better understanding.

3. Arrange Training sessions for rural tenant disabled students and their teachers about e-learning with the help of government and non-government support.

4. Digitalization of special learning materials for instance, braille, sign language, appropriate audio-visual resources, mobile applications and arrange necessary assistive low- and high-tech devices to ensure highest accessibility and attendance of disabled students.

5. More inclusive national education, economic, and ICT policies rather than separate policies.

Conclusion

Bangladesh is trying to achieve sustainable development goals in its economic take-off stage. Therefore, side-lining disabled communities will hamper its motive and create a financial burden for the future. While setting up an accessible system is comparatively more straightforward. So, it is high time to work on capacity building for the disabled community as a development contributor. Nonetheless, the nation's cultural understanding demands modification through media production and intellectual development. The pandemic-generated crisis reflects outdated policy and practices toward the disabled community that may resolve by realistic planning and an innovative workforce.

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