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an academic professional journal

From Assistance to Misconduct? Generative AI and the Future of Academic Integrity in Bangladeshi Higher Education

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EDITORIAL

Knowledge advances when curiosity is transformed into inquiry, and inquiry into thoughtful scholarship. It is in this spirit that we present the inaugural issue of *The JCESC Luminary*, marking a significant step in our continuing pursuit of academic excellence and intellectual enrichment. With a view to fostering a spirit of inquiry and scholarly engagement, the journal seeks to provide a meaningful platform for sharing ideas, exploring emerging issues and contributing to the wider body of knowledge.

The breadth of subjects represented in this issue reflects the richness of contemporary scholarship and the many dimensions through which knowledge shapes human life. The contributions encompass education, language learning, islamic studies, information technology, artificial intelligence, military affairs and broader social concerns. From the challenges of English language learning in the secondary classroom to the significance of humility in human life, the articles engage with questions that are both relevant and thought-provoking.

The issue also engages with some of the defining developments of our time. The transformative influence of workplace automation, the opportunities and challenges presented by generative artificial intelligence, and the growing concern for academic integrity invite us to reconsider how technology is reshaping education, employment and society. The exploration of the Warsaw Pact, meanwhile, offers an important historical and strategic perspective on alliance systems and their continuing relevance to contemporary international affairs.

We gratefully acknowledge the vision and steadfast support of **Brigadier General S. M. Saifur Rahman, afwc, psc, Chairman of JCESC,** whose foresight and encouragement have been instrumental in advancing this initiative. His commitment to nurturing a culture of intellectual development has provided valuable impetus to this academic undertaking.

We also extend our sincere appreciation to all the authors whose thoughtful contributions have enriched this inaugural issue, and to the members of the Editorial Board and all those whose dedicated efforts have made its publication

possible. Our gratitude goes equally to those whose careful editorial, academic and organizational efforts have helped bring this issue to completion.

As *The JCESC Luminary* begins its journey, we look forward to its continued growth as a forum for ideas, reflection and constructive academic discourse. We hope that this modest beginning will inspire further inquiry, encourage scholarly endeavour and illuminate new pathways in the pursuit of knowledge.

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WORKPLACE AUTOMATION: TRANSFORMING JOBS, INDUSTRIES, AND SOCIETY

Afsana Haque, *HSC 2025, JCESC*

ABSTRACT

This paper provides a comprehensive examination of workplace automation and its transformative effects on jobs, industries, and society. Drawing on empirical data from international organizations, industry reports, and peer-reviewed literature, the study analyzes the scope, trajectory, and implications of automation technologies including artificial intelligence, robotics, and machine learning systems across diverse economic sectors. The research employs a systematic literature review methodology supplemented by secondary data analysis from the World Economic Forum, Goldman Sachs Research, McKinsey Global Institute, and the International Labor Organization.

Key findings indicate that while automation technologies are projected to displace approximately 85 million jobs globally by 2025, concurrent creation of an estimated 97 million new roles suggests a net positive employment effect of 12 million positions. However, significant distributional consequences emerge workers in routine cognitive and manual occupations face disproportionate displacement risk, while demand increases for roles requiring digital literacy, critical thinking, and socio-emotional skills. Sectoral analysis reveals manufacturing, customer service, and transportation as most vulnerable to disruption, whereas healthcare, education, and creative industries demonstrate greater resilience. Geographic disparities are pronounced, with advanced economies exhibiting higher automation readiness alongside elevated workforce exposure.

The study concludes that successful navigation of this transition requires coordinated policy interventions including robust reskilling programs, social safety net modernization, and human-AI collaboration frameworks. Recommendations emphasize proactive workforce development, industry-academia partnerships, and adaptive regulatory approaches to maximize automation's economic benefits while mitigating adverse social consequences.

Keywords: *workplace automation, artificial intelligence, job displacement, workforce transformation, industry 4.0, reskilling, labor market policy*

Introduction

The contemporary workplace stands at an inflection point characterized by unprecedented technological disruption. Automation encompassing artificial intelligence, robotics, machine learning, and advanced software systems is fundamentally restructuring how work is performed, organized, and valued across

global economies. This transformation extends beyond mere efficiency gains to encompass profound shifts in occupational structures, skill requirements, and the very nature of human labor (Acemoglu & Restrepo, 2018). Understanding these dynamics is essential for policymakers, industry leaders, and workers navigating an increasingly automated future.

Workplace automation refers to the application of technology to perform tasks previously executed by human workers, ranging from routine manual activities to complex cognitive processes. The current wave of automation differs qualitatively from preceding industrial revolutions in several respects: the pace of technological diffusion has accelerated dramatically, the scope of automatable tasks has expanded beyond routine activities to include non-routine cognitive work, and the complementary relationship between human capabilities and machine performance has become increasingly nuanced (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014).

The economic implications of automation are substantial. McKinsey Global Institute estimates that automation could contribute up to $15.7 trillion to the global economy by 2030, while Goldman Sachs Research projects a 7% increase in global GDP attributable to artificial intelligence alone (Briggs & Kodnani, 2023). Concurrently, the World Economic Forum anticipates that while 85 million jobs may be displaced by 2025, 97 million new positions will emerge, yielding a net positive employment effect of 12 million roles globally (World Economic Forum, 2023).

However, these aggregate figures obscure significant distributional consequences. Empirical evidence suggests that automation benefits and costs are unevenly distributed across demographic groups, geographic regions, and industry sectors. Workers in routine-intensive occupations, particularly data entry clerks, administrative assistants, and manufacturing operatives, face elevated displacement risk, while individuals possessing advanced technical skills, creative capabilities, and socio-emotional competencies experience enhanced labor market opportunities (Autor, 2015).

The societal implications of automation extend beyond immediate employment effects to encompass income distribution, geographic mobility, gender equity, and social cohesion. Concerns regarding technological unemployment have prompted renewed interest in policy interventions including universal basic income, robot taxation, and expanded social services. Simultaneously, optimists emphasize automation's potential to eliminate dangerous, tedious, and degrading work while creating opportunities for more fulfilling human endeavors.

Literature Review

i. Theoretical Foundations

Automation effects employment through two opposing mechanisms: displacement, where technology replaces human performed tasks, and reinstatement, where new tasks

and occupations are created, increasing labor demand (Acemoglu and Restrepo, 2018). The task-based approach further classifies occupations by routine or non-routine, and cognitive or manual tasks (Autor et al., 2003). Frey and Osborne (2017) estimated that 47% of U.S. employment was at high risk of computerization, generating substantial academic debate and prompting refinement of risk assessment methodologies.

ii. Automation Technologies: A Taxonomy

Workplace automation includes several major technologies. Robotic Process Automation (RPA) automates repetitive, rule-based digital tasks such as data entry and invoice processing. AI and Machine Learning perform more complex tasks involving pattern recognition, prediction, and natural language processing. Generative AI extends automation to knowledge-intensive work by generating text, code, images, and other content. Physical automation, including industrial robots, collaborative robots, autonomous vehicles, warehouse robots, and drones, increasingly automates manufacturing, logistics, inspection, and delivery tasks.

iii. Empirical Evidence on Employment Effects

Recent studies show that automation and AI have varied effects on employment. AI assistance has increased worker productivity, particularly among less-experienced and lower-skilled workers (Brynjolfsson al., 2023; Noy and Zhang, 2023). However, studies in Denmark and the United States found limited evidence of significant effects on earning, working hours, or unemployment to date (Humlum & Vestergaard, 2024; Gimbel et al., 2025). At the same time, AI exposure varies across occupations and demographic groups, with younger and entry-level worlers potentially facing greater risks (Brynjolfsson al., 2023; Eloundou et al., 2024).

Automation effects vary substantially across industries. Manufacturing has experienced continued growth in industrial robot application, while customer service has seen increasing AI integration and some employment reductions. In contrast, AI in healthcare and education has largely complemented human workers by improving productivity and supporting new roles rather than directly replacing staff (OECD, 2024).

iv. Geographic and Demographic Dimensions

Geographic analysis indicates significant variation in automation exposure and readiness across regions. Advanced economies exhibit higher automation adoption rates with 60% of occupations potentially affected, compared to 30-40% in emerging markets (IMF, 2024). Within countries, automation risk concentrates differently by gender: analysis indicates 58.87 million women in the U.S. workforce occupy positions highly exposed to AI automation compared to 48.62 million men, reflecting occupational segregation patterns.

v. Emerging Research Frontiers

Current research frontiers include investigation of generative AI's distinctive impact characteristics, analysis of human-AI collaboration models, and assessment of

automation's effects on job quality beyond quantity metrics. The concept of skill compression whereby AI assistance disproportionately benefits lower-skilled workers, thereby reducing performance inequality has emerged as a significant theme with important implications for wage distribution and career progression dynamics.

This paper addresses the multifaceted dimensions of workplace automation through systematic analysis of available evidence. The following sections articulate research objectives, methodological approaches, and key findings regarding automation's impact on employment patterns, industry transformation, and societal adaptation. By synthesizing diverse data sources and analytical perspectives, this study aims to contribute actionable insights for stakeholders seeking to navigate the automation transition effectively.

Objectives

The specific objectives are:

i. To examine the effects of workplace automation on employment, including job displacement, creation, and transformation across different occupations and industries.

ii. To assess how automation is transforming industries, business processes, productivity, and workforce requirements.

iii. To analyze the broader social and economic implications of workplace automation, particularly its effects on income distribution, skills, mobility, and social inequality.

iv. To identify occupations and sectors that are more vulnerable to automation based on the nature of their tasks and technological feasibility.

v. To evaluate existing policy measures and workforce strategies, including reskilling, education, social protection, and regulatory approaches.

vi. To propose evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, educational institutions, and industry stakeholders to maximize the benefits of automation while reducing its adverse effects.

Methodology

This study employs a systematic literature review methodology supplemented by secondary quantitative data analysis. The approach integrates multiple evidence streams to generate a comprehensive understanding of workplace automation's complex effects.

i. Research Design

The research design follows a convergent mixed-methods framework combining qualitative synthesis of academic literature with quantitative analysis of employment and economic data. This approach enables triangulation across data sources and methodologies, enhancing the reliability and validity of findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

ii. Literature Search Strategy

A systematic search was conducted across academic databases including Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar, and Econ Lit using combinations of keywords: workplace automation, artificial intelligence, job displacement, labor market transformation, robotics, industry 4.0, and workforce adaptation. The search encompassed publications from 2015 to 2025, prioritizing peer-reviewed journal articles, working papers from established research institutions, and reports from international organizations.

Inclusion criteria required sources to: (1) address automation's effects on employment or industry structure; (2) present empirical evidence or rigorous theoretical analysis; (3) focus on OECD countries or provide globally comparative perspectives; and (4) be published in English. Sources were excluded if they lacked methodological transparency, presented purely speculative projections without empirical foundation, or focused exclusively on technical automation developments without labor market implications.

iii. Data Sources

Secondary quantitative data were extracted from authoritative sources including: the World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Survey (2023); Goldman Sachs Global Economics Research (2024); McKinsey Global Institute automation reports; International Labor Organization (ILO) employment statistics; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) skills surveys; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics occupational projections; and peer-reviewed meta-analyses of automation's employment effects.

iv. Analytical Framework

Analysis proceeds through three interconnected lenses: (1) occupational task decomposition assessing automation exposure at the task level; (2) industry-level adoption and productivity analysis; and (3) macroeconomic modeling of displacement and creation effects. The risk classification framework categorizes occupations along two dimensions: technical automation feasibility and economic implementation viability, yielding four risk categories: high risk, moderate risk, emerging risk, and low risk.

v. Scope and Delimitations

This study focuses primarily on automation's labor market implications within OECD member countries and major emerging economies, acknowledging that automation dynamics in least-developed countries may differ substantially due to different industrial structures, institutional capacities, and factor endowments. The analysis emphasizes recent developments from 2015 to 2025 while drawing on longer-term historical patterns where relevant for contextualization. The study deliberately adopts a broad perspective encompassing multiple automation technologies rather than focusing exclusively on a

single technology category. While this breadth enables a comprehensive overview, it necessarily sacrifices some technical depth regarding specific automation modalities. Readers seeking detailed technical analysis of technologies are directed to specialized engineering and computer science literature.

Data Collection

Data collection for this study proceeded through systematic extraction and synthesis of quantitative and qualitative information from multiple authoritative sources. The process encompassed three primary data categories: employment statistics, industry adoption metrics, and economic impact projections.

i. Employment and Labor Market Data

Employment statistics were compiled from the International Labour Organization's ILOSTAT database, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook, and Eurostat Labour Force Survey. These sources provided occupational employment levels, wage distributions, and projected growth rates across industries and geographic regions. Displacement estimates were derived from Goldman Sachs Research (2024), which analyzed task-level automation exposure across 900+ occupations using machine learning classification of job description data.

ii. Industry Adoption Metrics

Automation adoption data were extracted from the World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Survey 2023, encompassing responses from 803 companies across 27 industries and 45 economies. The survey measured current and projected adoption rates for artificial intelligence, robotic process automation, autonomous systems, and humanoid robotics. Supplementary data were obtained from McKinsey Global Institute's automation potential analysis, which estimated the percentage of technically automatable tasks by industry sector using task decomposition methodology.

iii. Economic Impact Projections

Macroeconomic projections were synthesized from multiple sources including Goldman Sachs Research GDP impact estimates, PwC AI economic outlook, and academic computable general equilibrium models. Productivity impact data were drawn from controlled experimental studies by Brynjolfsson et al. (2023), Noy and Zhang (2023), and Merali (2024), who measured AI's effects on task completion speed, output quality, and worker earnings across diverse occupations.

iv. Data Quality and Limitations

Several limitations warrant acknowledgment. First, automation is a rapidly evolving phenomenon, and available data may not capture the most recent technological developments. Second, projection methodologies vary across sources, potentially introducing comparability challenges. Third, aggregate statistics may obscure important heterogeneity at the individual, firm, and local labor market levels. Fourth, the

COVID-19 pandemic generated substantial labor market disruptions that complicate attribution of employment changes to automation specifically.

Data Analysis

Analysis integrates quantitative secondary data with qualitative insights from the literature review.

Outcomes

Analytical Findings: This section presents analytical findings regarding automation's employment effects, industry transformation patterns, and geographic distribution.

i. Job Displacement Projections by Sector

Figure 1 presents projected job displacement by industry sectors for 2025 and 2030. Manufacturing and customer service exhibit the highest displacement volumes, reflecting the concentration of routine manual and cognitive tasks susceptible to automation. Transportation displacement projections incorporate anticipated autonomous vehicle deployment timelines, while retail estimates reflect self-service technology and automated inventory management adoption.

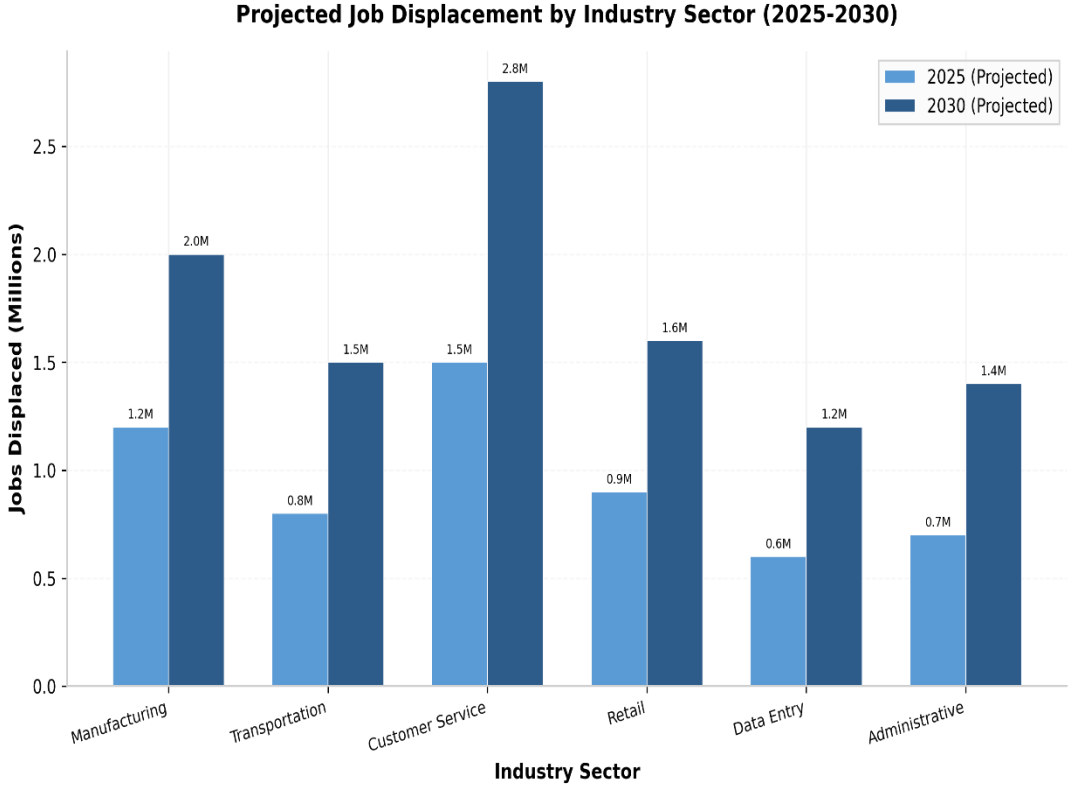

Fig. 1: Projected Job Displacement by Industry Sector (2025-2030). Sources: Goldman Sachs Research (2024), McKinsey Global Institute, World Economic Forum.

Analysis indicates that displacement effects are not uniform within sectors. Within manufacturing, assembly line roles face substantially higher risk than quality assurance or custom fabrication positions requiring tactile dexterity and aesthetic judgment. Similarly, customer service displacement concentrates in routine inquiry handling, while complex complaint resolution and relationship management functions demonstrate greater resilience.

ii. Automation Adoption Rates by Industry

Figure 2 compares automation adoption rates across industries between 2022 and 2025. Technology and financial services sectors lead adoption, driven by high data processing volumes and regulatory pressures for operational efficiency. Healthcare demonstrates accelerating adoption, particularly in diagnostic imaging, drug discovery, and administrative workflow optimization.

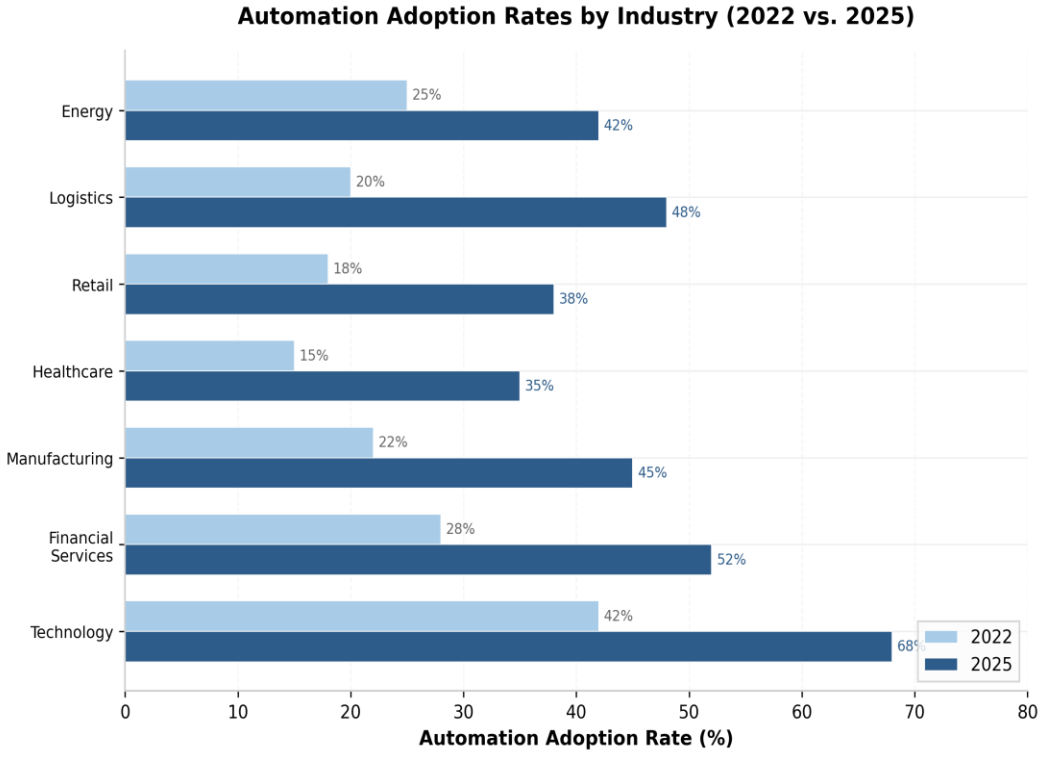

Fig. 2: Automation Adoption Rates by Industry (2022 vs. 2025). Source: World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Survey (2023).

iii. Task Automation Potential Distribution

Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of task automation potential across occupations. Approximately 25% of occupations face high automation risk (>70% of tasks automatable), encompassing data entry, basic customer service, routine manufacturing,

and simple administrative functions. An additional 35% face moderate risk (30-70% task exposure), where partial automation reshapes job content rather than eliminating positions entirely.

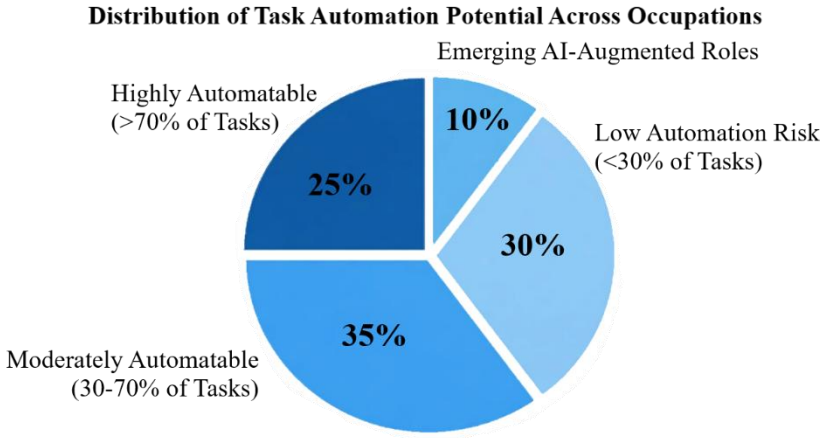

Fig. 3: Distribution of Task Automation Potential Across Occupations.

iv. Economic Impact and Job Creation

Figure 4 presents projected AI economic contribution to global GDP alongside estimated new job creation. The data reveal parallel growth trajectories suggesting that economic expansion driven by AI generates substantial employment opportunities, albeit requiring different skill profiles than displaced positions.

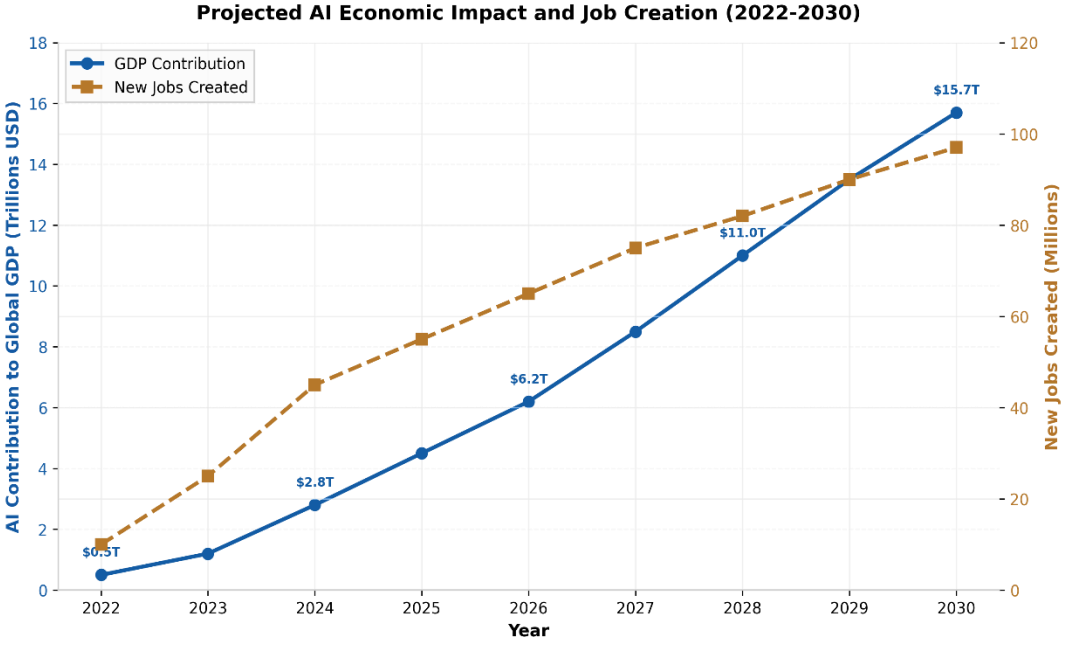

Fig. 4: Projected AI Economic Impact and Job Creation (2022-2030). Sources: PwC AI Economic Outlook, Goldman Sachs Research, World Economic Forum.

v. Regional Automation Readiness

Figure 5 presents a regional automation readiness index incorporating digital infrastructure, education quality, regulatory environment, and innovation ecosystem indicators. North America and Western Europe demonstrate the highest readiness, while Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia face significant capacity constraints. These disparities suggest potential widening of global economic inequality absent targeted intervention.

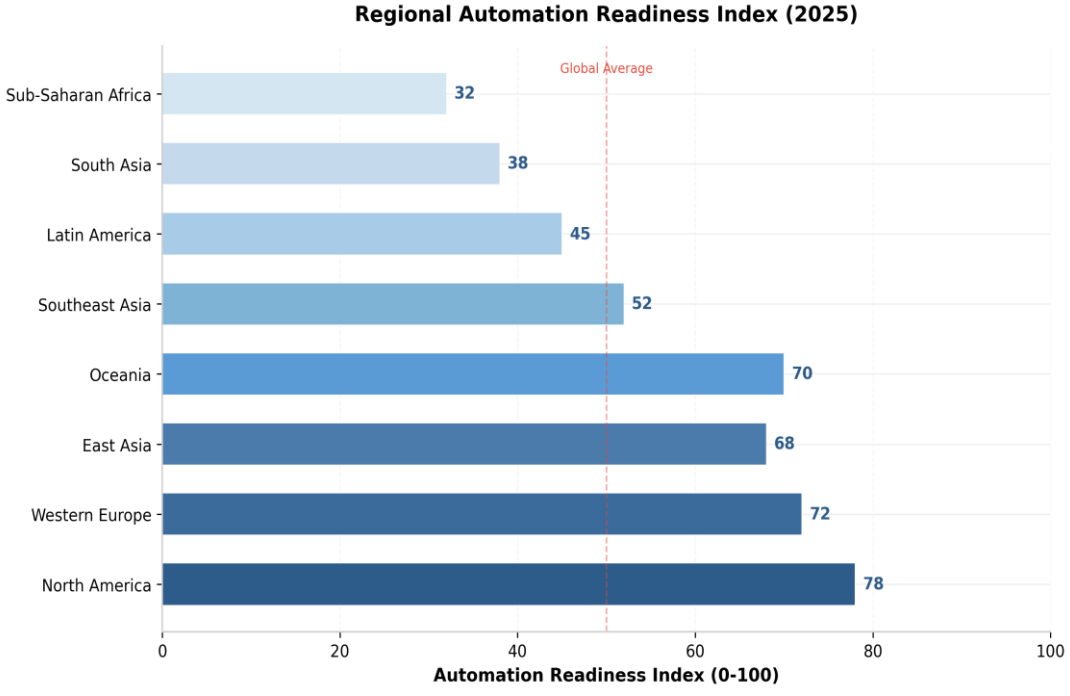

Fig. 5: Regional Automation Readiness Index (2025). Composite index incorporating digital infrastructure, human capital, regulatory environment, and innovation capacity dimensions.

vi. Skills Demand Transformation

Figure 6 documents the shift in employer skills demand between 2020 and 2025. Digital literacy, AI/ML knowledge, and adaptability demonstrate the most pronounced demand increases, while traditional administrative skills show relative decline. Notably, socio-emotional skills including emotional intelligence and collaboration maintain strong demand, supporting the hypothesis that human-centric capabilities complement rather than compete with AI systems.

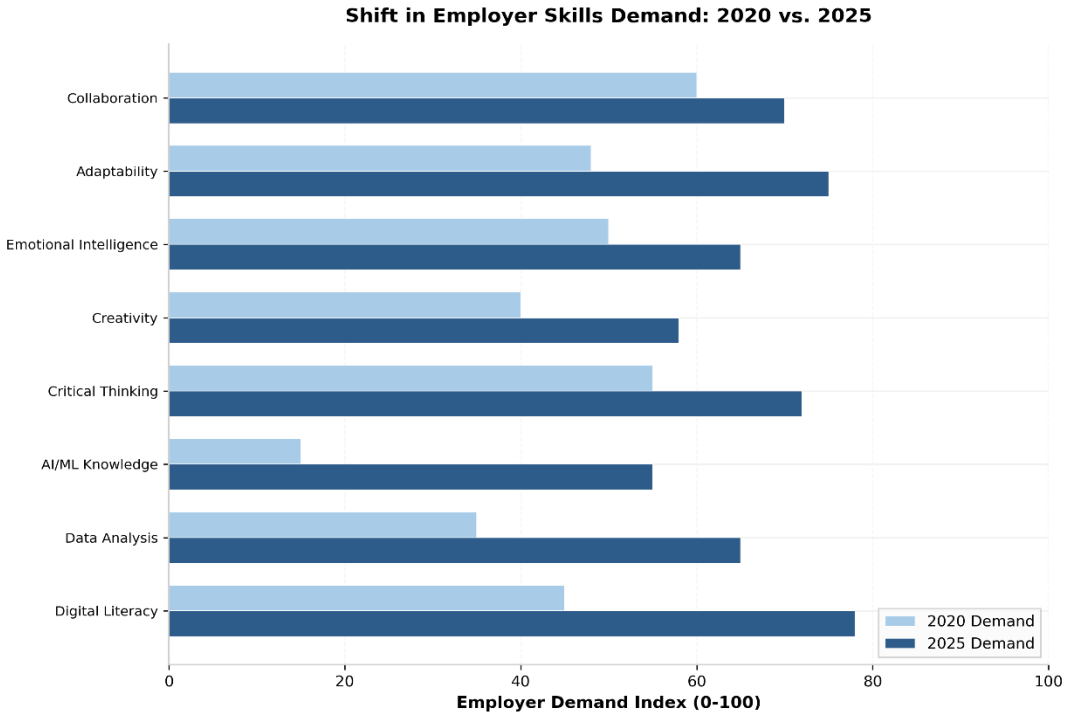

Fig. 6: Shift in Employer Skills Demand: 2020 vs. 2025. Source: World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Survey (2023), OECD Skills Outlook.

vii. Key Statistics Summary

Table 1 summarizes key quantitative findings regarding automation's employment and economic effects. The data reveal both the magnitude of anticipated disruption and the substantial opportunities associated with AI-driven economic transformation.

Table 1: Summary of Key Automation Impact Statistics.

Indicator	Value	Source
Global jobs at risk (2025)	85 million	World Economic Forum (2023)
New jobs projected (2025)	97 million	World Economic Forum (2023)
Net employment effect	+12 million	World Economic Forum (2023)
AI GDP contribution (2030)	$15.7 trillion	McKinsey Global Institute
U.S. jobs exposed to AI	~300 million	Goldman Sachs Research (2024)
Workers needing career change (2030)	14% globally	OECD (2024)
Entry-level hiring reduction	66% of enterprises	High5 Research (2025)
AI-related job creation (2024)	~119,900 roles	ITIF (2024)
Productivity gain (AI-assisted)	14-66%	Brynjolfsson et al. (2023)

viii. Comparative Sectoral Analysis

Comparative analysis across sectors reveals distinctive automation trajectories shaped by industry-specific factors. Manufacturing automation has proceeded furthest in automotive assembly, electronics fabrication, and food processing, where standardized production processes justify substantial capital investment. However, even within manufacturing, significant variation exists: custom fabrication, artisanal production, and prototype development retain substantial human labor requirements due to non-routine problem-solving and tactile dexterity demands.

Financial services illustrate a different pattern, where regulatory compliance requirements, customer relationship management, and complex advisory functions have slowed automation in certain domains while accelerating it in others. Algorithmic trading and fraud detection have achieved high automation levels, while wealth management and commercial lending retain substantial human judgment components. The sector demonstrates how automation reshapes job content even when it does not eliminate positions entirely.

Healthcare presents perhaps the most nuanced pattern, where clinical automation coexists with intensified human care demands. Diagnostic imaging AI has enhanced radiologist productivity while creating new roles in AI quality assurance and human-AI diagnostic consultation. Surgical robotics has transformed operative procedures without reducing surgeon staffing needs. Meanwhile, aging populations in advanced economies generate growing demand for direct care workers whose interpersonal skills resist automation.

Principal Outcomes: The analysis yields five principal outcomes contributing to understanding of workplace automation's multifaceted impacts:

i. Net Positive but Distributional Consequential Employment Effects

Contrary to dystopian scenarios predicting mass technological unemployment, aggregate employment effects appear modestly positive. The World Economic Forum projects net job creation of 12 million positions globally by 2025, while Goldman Sachs estimates that historical patterns of technology-driven job creation will broadly persist. However, these aggregate figures obscure significant distributional consequences: workers in routine-intensive occupations face disproportionate displacement risk, while individuals with complementary skills experience enhanced opportunities. The transition generates winners and losers, with adjustment costs concentrated among vulnerable populations.

ii. Sectoral Variation in Vulnerability and Opportunity

Industry analysis reveals substantial heterogeneity in automation exposure. Manufacturing, transportation, customer service, and data processing face the highest displacement risk, while healthcare, education, creative industries, and professional services demonstrate greater resilience. Importantly, even within high-risk sectors,

certain roles retain comparative advantages where human judgment, emotional intelligence, physical dexterity, or creative problem-solving remain essential. The emergence of AI-augmented roles combining human oversight with machine capabilities represents a significant growth category.

iii. Skill Polarization and Compression Dynamics

Automation generates dual skill dynamics. On one dimension, demand polarization concentrates opportunities at high-skill (AI development, complex analysis) and low-skill (personal care, manual services) extremes, potentially hollowing middle-skill employment. On a second dimension, AI assistance produces skill compression whereby lower-performing workers experience disproportionate productivity gains, potentially reducing skill-based wage differentials. These dynamics have important implications for education policy, career guidance, and social mobility.

iv. Geographic Disparities in Readiness and Resilience

Regional analysis reveals significant disparities in automation of readiness and adaptive capacity. Advanced economies with robust digital infrastructure, quality education systems, and innovation ecosystems are better positioned to capture automation benefits while managing transition costs. Developing regions face dual challenges: elevated displacement risk in labor-intensive manufacturing and services, combined with limited institutional capacity for reskilling and social protection. Without targeted intervention, automation may exacerbate global economic inequality.

v. Temporal Dimension: Gradual but Accelerating Transition

The automation transition exhibits gradual rather than abrupt characteristics, with adjustment occurring primarily through task reallocation, attrition-based workforce evolution, and incremental job content transformation rather than mass displacement. However, the pace has accelerated notably since 2022, with generative AI capabilities expanding the scope of automatable tasks beyond prior projections. The window for proactive adaptation is narrowing, heightening the urgency of policy and institutional responses.

Conclusion

This study has examined workplace automation's transformative effects on jobs, industries, and society through a systematic review of empirical evidence and quantitative findings. The findings support several key conclusions.

First, workplace automation represents a structural rather than cyclical transformation of labor markets. Unlike temporary economic fluctuations, automation-driven changes reflect fundamental technological capabilities that will continue evolving. The aggregate employment effect appears modestly positive, with projected job creation slightly exceeding displacement. However, the quality, distribution, and accessibility of new

roles differ substantially from those being eliminated, generating significant transition challenges.

Second, the burden of adjustment is unevenly distributed. Workers in routine cognitive and manual occupations, particularly those with limited educational attainment or specialized technical skills, face disproportionate displacement risk. Geographic concentration of vulnerable industries compounds these effects in certain regions. Conversely, individuals possessing digital literacy, critical thinking capabilities, creative skills, and socio-emotional competencies experience enhanced labor market opportunities. These distributional dynamics have important implications for social cohesion and economic inequality.

Third, industry transformation patterns reveal both disruption and opportunity. While manufacturing, transportation, and customer service face substantial automation pressure, healthcare, education, and professional services demonstrate resilience and growth potential. The emergence of AI-augmented roles combining human oversight with machine capabilities represents a promising pathway for workforce adaptation.

Fourth, the temporal trajectory suggests gradual but accelerating change. Current evidence indicates adjustment primarily through task reallocation and incremental transformation rather than mass displacement. However, generative AI's rapid diffusion since 2022 has expanded automatable task boundaries, potentially compressing adjustment timelines. The window for proactive preparation is narrowing.

Finally, institutional readiness varies substantially across contexts. Advanced economies with robust education systems, social safety nets, and innovation ecosystems are better positioned to manage the transition. Developing regions face dual challenges of elevated exposure and limited adaptive capacity. International cooperation and targeted capacity building are essential to prevent automation from exacerbating global inequality.

In sum, workplace automation presents neither utopian promise nor dystopian threat, but rather a complex transformation requiring proactive, evidence-based management. The outcomes for workers, industries, and societies will depend substantially on the policies, investments, and institutional adaptations implemented in the coming decade.

Recommendations

Based on the analysis presented, the following recommendations are offered for policymakers, educational institutions, industry leaders, and researchers.

i. **Strengthen Reskilling and Lifelong Learning:** Governments and organizations should expand accessible reskilling and upskilling programs, with emphasis on digital literacy, AI, data skills, and other competencies required in an increasingly automated workplace.

ii. **Promote Human-AI Collaboration:** Organizations should adopt automation strategies that complement human capabilities rather than focusing solely on job replacement, while ensuring appropriate human oversight and transparency.

iii. **Modernize Education and Training:** Educational institutions should integrate AI literacy, computational thinking, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration into curricula and strengthen industry–academia partnerships.

iv. **Improve Social Protection:** Governments should strengthen unemployment support, portable benefits, and other social protection measures to assist workers affected by technological displacement and changing forms of employment.

v. **Support Affected Workers and Regions:** Targeted support should be provided to workers and communities experiencing significant automation-related job losses through entrepreneurship, training, infrastructure, and employment initiatives.

vi. **Encourage Further Research:** Future studies should examine the long-term effects of automation on employment, earnings, job quality, and worker wellbeing, particularly in developing economies.

Limitations

This study is subject to several limitations that should inform interpretation of findings. First, its reliance on secondary data limits control over variable definitions, temporal coverage, and geographic scope. Second, differences in projection methodologies across sources create challenges in comparing long-term estimates. Third, the emphasis on OECD countries and global data may not fully reflect automation trends in developing economies. Fourth, the rapid development of technologies, particularly generative AI, may reduce the long-term validity of some findings. Finally, the study focuses primarily on employment quantity, with limited analysis of job quality, including wages, working conditions, autonomy, and skill utilization. Future research should address these dimensions more comprehensively.

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CAUSES OF WEAKNESS IN ENGLISH AMONG THE STUDENTS OF CLASS IX AND X

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ABSTRACT

Although English as a foreign language has been taught in primary and secondary schools in Bangladesh, there is a persisting weakness in English among the students of Class IX and X. This study investigates the factors responsible for this weakness among the students of the secondary level who are completing their secondary education and are preparing to enter the higher secondary level. To identify the problems, two sets of questionnaires were developed and administered to the students and teachers. After collecting the responses of these two groups, the responses were analyzed, processed and assimilated into one piece. The analysis identifies the major factors that are contributing to students limited English proficiency among the students of classes IX and X. Major findings indicate that students at the secondary level face several challenges in learning English. Many students experience fear of English and have difficulty following English-medium instruction, while teachers report low levels of students' attentiveness and competence. The study also identifies shortages of English teachers, inadequate professional training, frequent changes in textbooks, and limitations in textbook quality as major barriers to effective English language teaching. Furthermore, the low salary of secondary-level teachers appears to negatively affect their motivation and, consequently, the quality of teaching.

Keywords: *English language learning; secondary education; English proficiency; English-medium instruction; barriers to English learning.*

Introduction

Action research is a form of applied research in which practitioners systematically examine their own practices with the aim of improving them. Kurt Lewin, a German experimental psychologist, coined the word "Action Research." Action research for teachers means a research methodology that is more involved with the professional life of teachers. When a teacher systematically examines the effectiveness of teaching methods and practices in the classroom, this process may constitute action research. Thus, among all the definitions of Action research, the most practical and effective definition is given by Emily Calhoun in her book *How to Use Action Research in the Self-Renewing School:* "Action research is a fancy way of saying let's study what's happening at our school and decide how to improve it."

Action research has a special significance for the teachers of Bangladesh. As a developing country we are still striving to have a firm educational system in the country. The country's development largely depends on the education of its countrymen. Action

research for the teachers is a prime way to bring development in the educational system. Several factors highlight the potential relevance of action research for teachers in Bangladesh: a) By conducting action research the teachers of Bangladesh can find out the system that would be the best for the country; b) Bangladesh lacks resources for teachers training; action research can contribute a lot in the professional development of the teachers; c) The ideas that are used in the educational sector have mostly arrived from the Western world; d) By conducting action research, teachers in Bangladesh can develop ideas and solutions to address local problems; and, e) Action research requires team work, thus the teachers of Bangladesh can improve the democratic values among themselves and, eventually, contribute to the democracy of the country.

Literature Review

Although English language weakness among students in Classes IX and X and its adverse effects have received considerable attention, insufficient research has been conducted to identify the factors responsible for this problem.

Bhuiyan et al. (2006), a group of students from the Department of English, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet, under the supervision of Mr. Himadri Sekhar Roy, Assistant Professor, conducted a study on a related topic titled *"Problems of Learning English in Secondary and Higher Secondary Levels in Sylhet Town."* The researchers collected responses from 524 students and 12 teachers and identified several factors contributing to difficulties in learning English. Their major findings included: (i) English is not the students' first language; (ii) there is a lack of well-trained teachers; and (iii) students face difficulties with vocabulary and grammar, which reduce their interest in learning English.

The study recommended improving teacher-student communication, making textbooks more engaging, recruiting qualified English teachers, improving teachers' remuneration, avoiding frequent changes in textbooks, and ensuring continuity between different educational levels.

Although the study provides valuable insights, its scope is relatively broad compared with the focused nature of action research. Action research generally addresses a specific problem within a particular context. Nevertheless, the findings and recommendations of Bhuiyan et al. (2006) provide useful background for the present study, particularly in identifying factors associated with students' weaknesses in English.

Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the major factors responsible for the academic weaknesses of students in Classes IX and X in selected schools in Bangladesh.
2. To examine the learning-related difficulties faced by students of Classes IX and X.

3. To investigate the factors contributing to students' poor academic performance at the secondary level.
4. To explore the challenges faced by teachers in addressing the learning difficulties of students in Classes IX and X.
5. To suggest appropriate measures for improving the academic performance and learning outcomes of students in Classes IX and X.

Methodology

The study employed a Scheduled Structured Interview method, in which all respondents were asked the same questions using identical wording and in the same sequence.

Data Collection

Data were collected from three schools within the Sylhet City Corporation area. According to a pre-arranged schedule, questionnaires included in the Appendix were administered to randomly selected students and teachers. The respondents were as follows:

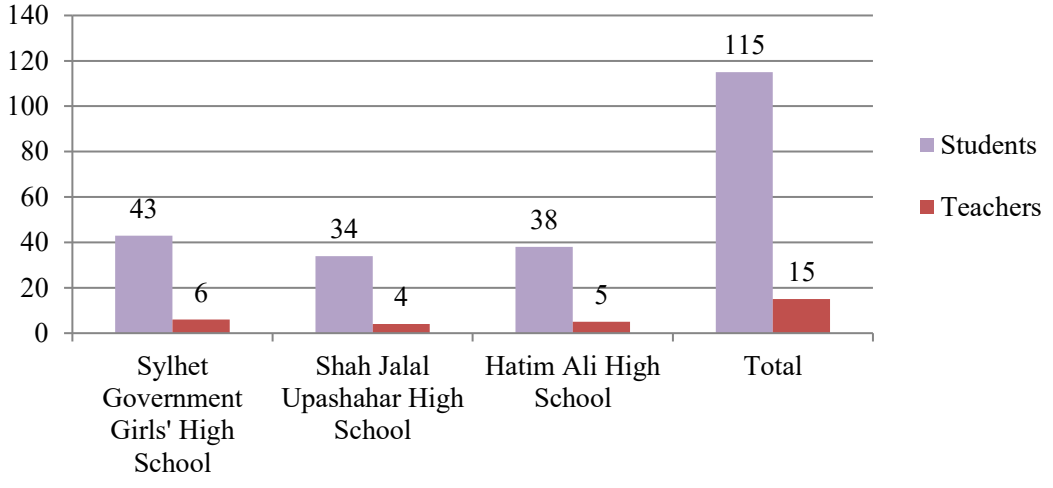

Fig. 1. Information about the respondents.

Data Analysis

Two separate sets of questionnaires (consisting of 10 questions each) were made for students and teachers. The responses of 115 students and 15 teachers have been analyzed.

Outcomes

Students' Responses:

Figures 2 to 11 give a visual representation of answers that got from the students of three schools.

a. Fear of English language

In response to the first question, "Are you afraid of English?" 58% of the students asserted that they are afraid of the subject, while 40% said that they are not scared of the subject. Only 2% refrained from answering either yes or no.

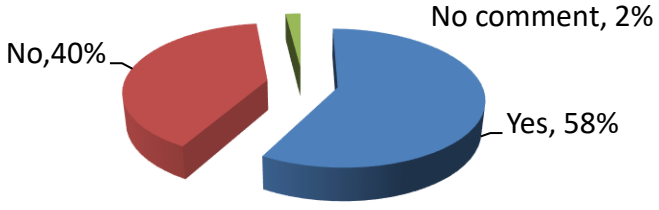

Fig. 2. Fear of English language

b. Interest in Attending English Classes

Figure 3 explains the responses of the students to the question "Do you like to attend the English classes? Even though the majority earlier confirmed that they are afraid of the subject, 53% of the same group of students mentioned that they fancy attending English classes. 41% of them said they do not like to attend the classes; only 6% could not decide what to say

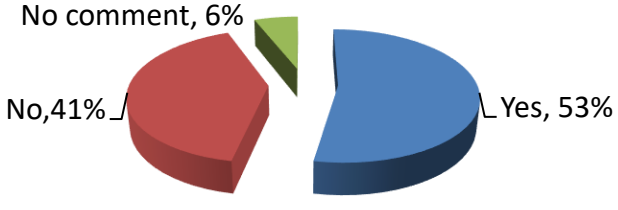

Fig.3. Interest in attending English classes

c. Students' Perception of the Importance Of English

When confronted with the question "Do you feel the importance of learning English? the answer was almost unanimous. 80% of the students are positive about the importance of learning English. Only 15% said that they don't feel the importance of the language. A 5% could not decide which answer to choose (Fig.4).

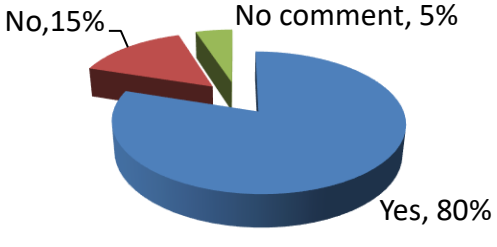

Fig.4. Students' perception of the importance of English.

d. Preference for Conducting English Classes in English

Figure 5 represents the responses of the students to the question on whether they want to have their English classes delivered in English. Of the total student respondents, 43% want to have their classes in English, while 56% think that it should not be, and a 1% did not give their comment.

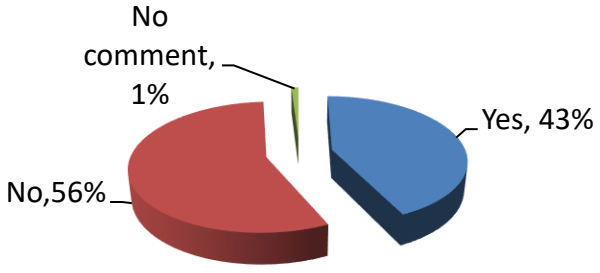

Fig.5. Preference for Conducting English Classes in English.

e. Students' Interest in English Classes

According to fig.6, 53% of the students find the English classes interesting against a 41%, who do not get any interest in English; 6% of them did not comment.

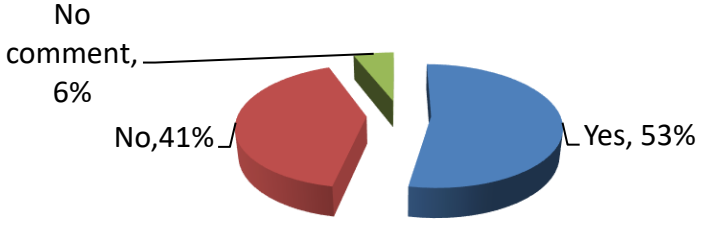

Fig.6. Students' interest in English classes.

f. Students' Ability to Understand Lectures Delivered in English

Figure 7 shows that when class lectures are delivered in English, 35% understand the lecture without any confusion whereas a majority of 63% of students does not understand the lecture, 2% of the students did not give their comments.

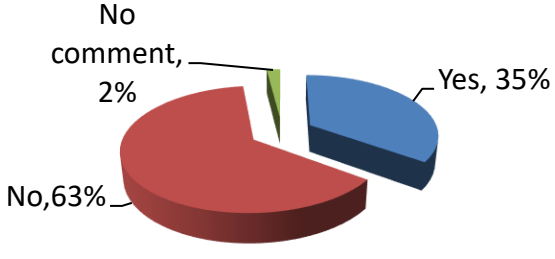

Fig.7. Students' ability to understand lectures delivered in English.

g. Availability of Sufficient Teachers

According to 59% of the students, there are not sufficient teachers in their respective schools, whereas 41% of the respondents think that the number of teachers is adequate (Expressed in fig.8).

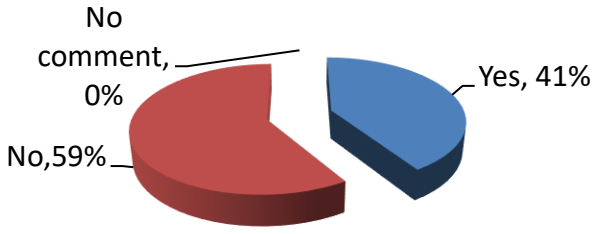

Fig.8. Availability of sufficient teachers.

h. Competence of English Teachers

From figure 9, it is shown that 52% of the students think that their English teachers are capable enough to teach them English, as opposed to a 43% who think that the teachers are not enough competent to teach them English.

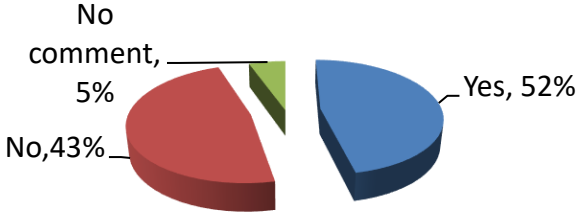

Fig.9. Competence of English teachers.

i. Students' Interest in English Textbooks

When the students were asked about the textbooks, 32% students said that their English books are interesting, while a 67% of students find their books not interesting. Only a 1% did not give their comments (fig.10).

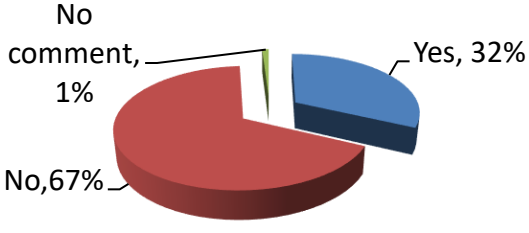

Fig.10. Students' interest in English textbooks.

j. Students' Dependence on Memorized Answers

Figure 11 expresses the findings of the lat question in the student's questionnaire. 67% of the students confirmed that they always memorize their answer, whereas a 31% said that they not always memorize their answer. Among the respondents 2% did not give their comments.

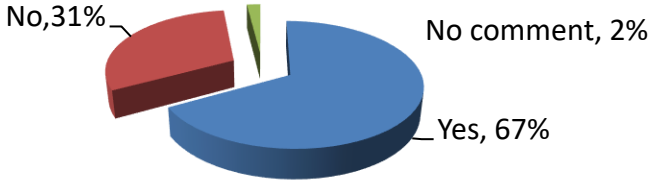

Fig.11. Students' dependence on memorized answers.

Teachers' Responses:

The responses of the teachers to the 10 questions that were asked in the questionnaire are represented through Figures 12 to 21.

a. Students' Attentiveness to English Learning

According to figure 12, 56% teachers think that most of their students are attentive towards their studies, as opposed to 43% teachers who opined that most of their students are not attentive towards studying English.

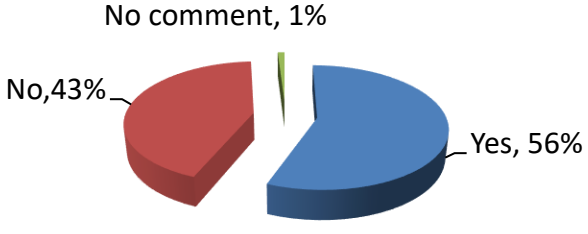

Fig.12. Students' attentiveness to English learning.

b. Students' Ability to Cope with English Classes

Of the same group of teachers, 41% think that students are competent enough to cope with English classes, 59% teachers think that students are not competent to tackle English classes (fig.13).

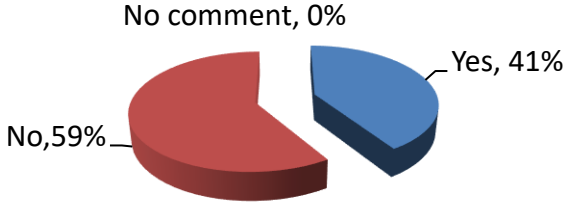

Fig.13. Students' ability to cope with English classes.

c. Preference for English as the Medium of Instruction

A major portion of the teachers (76%) believe that medium of instruction in an English class should be English where 20% teachers think that it should not be English. 4% did not make any comment in this regard (fig.14).

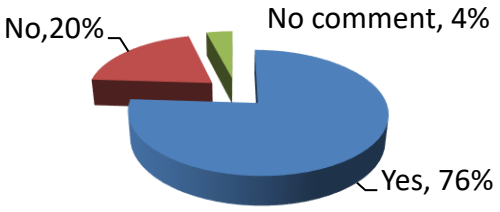

Fig.14. Preference for English as the Medium of Instruction.

d. Students' Ability to Follow English-Medium Lectures

According to figure 15, 36% teachers think that students can comprehend class lectures when delivered in English; 63% of the teachers think that students cannot understand lectures when they are given in English. Only a 1% did not comment in this connection.

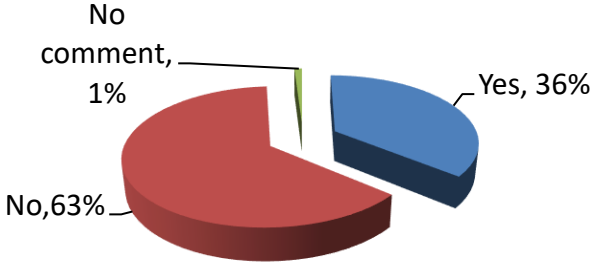

Fig.15. Students' ability to follow English-Medium lectures.

e. Suitability and Standard of English Textbooks

As represented in figure 16, 57% teachers think that textbooks are not suitable for the students and that they are not up to an optimum standard; whereas 43% teachers are satisfied with the suitability and standard of textbooks.

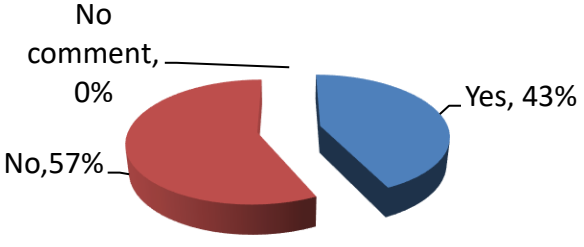

Fig.16. Suitability and standard of English textbooks.

f. Teachers' Views on Frequent Changes to Textbooks

A large majority (77%) of teachers do not support constant changes in textbook, whereas only a 22% of the teachers are in favor of constant changes in textbooks. 1% teachers restrained themselves from making any comment (fig.17).

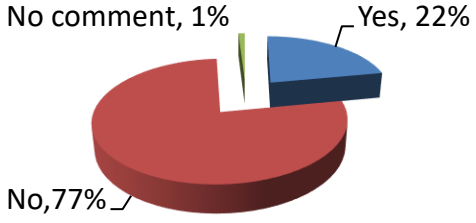

Fig.17. Teachers' views on frequent changes to textbooks.

g. Sufficiency of Teaching Staff

It appears that shortage of teaching staff is a major loophole in the academic arena; 85% teachers confirmed this in the survey. Only a 14% think that the number is sufficient, whereas 1% did not make any comment (fig.18).

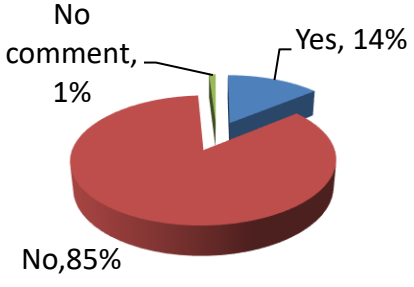

Fig.18. Sufficiency of teaching staff.

h. Effect of Teacher Shortage on Teaching

Of these teachers 82% also think that shortage of teachers creates a negative impact on the existing teachers, while 18% teachers think this does not have any effect on the teachers (fig.19).

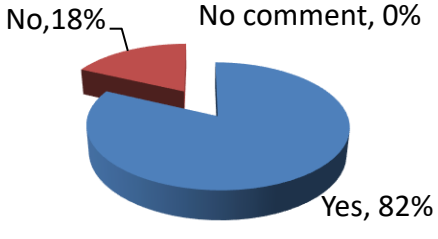

Fig.19. Effect of teacher shortage on teaching.

i. Teachers' Training in ESL

Figure 20 revels that 78% of the participating teachers have not had any training on teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) whereas only 22% informed that they have been to some sort of training on ESL.

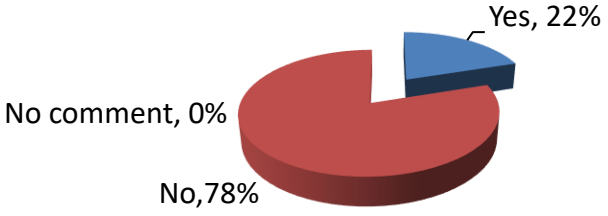

Fig.20. Teachers' training in ESL.

j. Teachers' Perception of Salary Adequacy

According to figure 21, 90% of the teachers suffer from acute job dissatisfaction when the salary is in question. A meager 10% expressed their satisfaction with their pay.

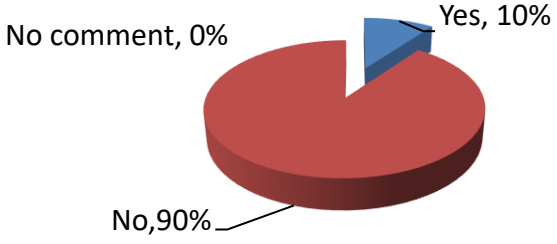

Fig.21. Teachers' perception of salary adequacy.

Based on the results of the above information, findings are as follows:

i. Major portion of students in class IX and X are afraid of English; nevertheless, most of them like to attend English classes. According to the teachers, most of the students are neither attentive in their classes nor competent enough to cope with the English classes;

ii. Most of the students do not welcome having English classes delivered in English; on top of that, a major portion of the students fail to understand their teachers when they give lectures in English. Teachers, on the other hand, do believe that the medium of instruction in an English class should be English. They also concur on at this point with the students that students fail to comprehend lectures when delivered in English;

iii. Shortage of teachers is a major drawback in the secondary level when English teaching is concerned; this has been confirmed by both teachers and students. As there is a shortage in teaching staffs, existing teachers are naturally overloaded with classes, which results in a negative impact upon their quality of teaching;

iv. Lack of training is another setback among the teachers of secondary level. A major share of our teachers is not trained in teaching English, which has also been reiterated by the learners;

v. Textbooks that are designed to be followed in English classes appear to be another problem area. Rapid changes in designing them create problem among both teachers and students. In addition to that, standard of textbook is yet to reach an optimum level; and

vi. Most of our secondary level teachers are underpaid. This has an adverse effect on their life and as a result they are less motivated in imparting classes at a standard level.

Conclusion

This study examined factors contributing to weakness in English among Class IX and X students in selected secondary schools in Sylhet City Corporation. The findings indicate that fear of English, difficulty understanding English-medium instruction, reliance on memorization, and limited interest in textbooks hinder effective language learning. Institutional challenges, including teacher shortages, inadequate professional training, frequent textbook revisions, and low remuneration, also affect the teaching and learning environment. Addressing both learner and institutional factors through improved teacher development, appropriate instructional strategies, and better learning materials may support stronger English language outcomes. However, the study is limited to a small sample of selected urban schools.

Recommendations

i. Teachers at the secondary level should be trained up so that they can be familiar with the latest trends in teaching English. Training will also enable them to make classes more interesting; as a result, students would be keener in their participation in English classes;

ii. Rapid changes in textbooks should be avoided. The concerned authority should go for textbooks that would be followed for at least 10 years;

iii. The salary structure of secondary level teachers needs to be revised. An ill-paid teacher cannot teach well;

iv. Fresh recruitments should be made at the secondary level teaching;

v. The medium of instruction in an English class should be English; however, teachers should be extra careful with those students who fail to understand them in this situation. Proper training would be helpful for the teachers for it will show them a way out to conduct classes in English without the interference of the first language.

Limitations of the Study

Although there has not been any shortcoming in good intention, this study may be lacking in some other aspects. Firstly, I could not conduct the study on a greater number of students; secondly, this study mainly confines itself to some schools located within a metropolitan area. The picture would have been different had the study included schools from villages. Lastly, because of time and scope constraints, this research may be lacking in data collection and interpretation. However, this researcher believes that the current research would encourage others to step forward in the near future.

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BARRIERS TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN BANGLADESHI SECONDARY CLASSROOMS: A SURVEY-BASED STUDY

Nadiatul Jannat, *Assistant Teacher (English), JCESC*

ABSTRACT

This research aims to identify the significant barriers of learning English in Bangladeshi secondary classrooms. The study employed a mixed method approach where primary data sources have been used and they are- three interviews of three teachers from different schools and questionnaires completed by 120 students from different private and government schools. This study explores the four significant factors which have a high impact on the language learning process. For instance, challenges with the medium of instruction, negative backwash of the assessment process, absence of appropriate material as well as lack of speaking practice in the classroom. The findings highlight the design of syllabus and teacher-student relationship in the classroom.

Keywords: *English Language, Secondary Classrooms, Communicative Language Teaching, Teacher–Student Relationship*

Introduction

From 1974, English has been taught as a mandatory course in all Bangla as well as English medium institutions. However, the majority of the students are not good at using English as a medium of expression.

The first curriculum of English language emerged in 1996. This curriculum is implemented by the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) in the classroom, though it focuses on learning language (Amin, 2017). In 2012, the new curriculum emerged to recover the drawbacks of students and to implement Communicative English. The curriculum document of NCTB clearly puts emphasis on the development of the communicative competence of the learners in English so that they can meet the ultimate development needs of the country (Haider & Chowdhury, 2012). It emphasizes four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. However, all four skills are not included in the examination syllabus, though the NCTB (National Curriculum and Text Book of Bangladesh) book includes all skills except listening.

This paper shows that the majority of the students of Secondary and Higher Secondary levels do not read the textbook of English which is selected by National Curriculum and Text Book of Bangladesh. Rather, they prefer books that help them secure good grades in examinations only. It is also to be noted that the assessment process of English is also arranged in a way that students do not need to acquire the language. They just memorize some ideas and get a higher mark in the examination. The assessment process totally

ignores the two sections of language skills. These are listening and speaking. Although the NCTB book and curriculum contain some parts of speaking items. However, the speaking and listening items are completely absent in the question paper. There is no section for practical and oral tests.

This study also highlights that another major problem of language learning in Bangladeshi classrooms is material development. According to Cambridge Guide to Teaching English 'Materials' include anything which can be used to facilitate the learning of a language. They can be linguistic, visual, auditory or kinesthetic, and they can be presented in print, through live performance or display, or on cassette, CD-ROM, DVD or the internet. They can be instructional in that they inform learners about the language; they can be experiential in that they provide exposure to the language in use, they can be elicited in that they stimulate language use, or they can be exploratory in that they seek discoveries about language use. Language learning classrooms in Bangladesh show a lack of use of appropriate materials.

Literature Review

The focus of this study is to identify the factors which work as a barrier in language learning classrooms in Bangladesh and their impacts on English language learning.

Medium of Instruction

The recent research by Farooqui (2014) shows that English is not used in the classroom as a medium of instruction. Although the curriculum emphasizes in all the training programs, classroom data shows that it is not the language of instruction to teach the textbook in the classroom. She observed the Bangladeshi classrooms in order to get the actual picture of the teaching-learning situation. She also examined the language used by teachers in the classroom. Farooqui collected data from 26 teachers from 12 schools in both rural and urban areas from Bangladesh. As she mentioned, "It focuses on teachers' use of the language instruction and shows there is a gap between policy imperatives and classroom realities.". Some of the barriers identified by this research are: teachers often use written work to check the linguistic accuracy, English is taught mixed with Bangla language, curriculum needs restructuring to start listening and speaking skills assessment. This paper also shows that teachers do not have to assess the listening and speaking skills of students and this barrier is also reported by Haider & Chowdury (2012). Additionally, Medium of Instruction (MOI) denotes a divide between public and private sector higher education in Bangladesh (Hamid & Amin, 2022). It shows that public–private universities are divided by linguistic dualism, English is only used in the private sector and Bangla and English in the public sector. It has been also observed that students of private universities have to face a lot of struggles to pass the prerequisite English courses (Sultana, 2017). As a university teacher, she expresses that the struggle of these students indicates a "dissonance between the pedagogic practices of these universities and the students' linguistic competence." (Sultana, 2017).

Absence of Appropriate Materials

The recent research papers in Bangladesh show that one of the most important barriers of English learning is using Bangla in the classroom. According to Umme Sharmin Kabir (2014) teachers do not use English language while teaching. "Teachers had a tendency of slipping into Bangla after starting a sentence in English" (Haider & Chowdhury, 2012). Podder shows in his mixed method study- among 19 secondary English teachers only 2 teachers are able to speak English. "It is seen that 8% of students affirmed that they 'Always' used English in their English class while 30% students said they 'Never' used English in class. On the other hand, 22% students said that they used English 'Sometimes' while the 25% students stated that they used English 'A little bit' in their class. 15% of students had stated that 'Sometimes' they used English in their classroom." Kabir (2014) in her mixed method research paper mentions that she took interviews of 60 secondary level students and she identifies some challenges which are faced by students in the classroom. "I found in the observation that students were feeling shy to participate in class and even make a response." Moreover, she notices that "Their education institutions do not have enough resources to support the teacher to be updated with the up-to-date English teaching realm. Bangladeshi students also suffer from the same case and they do not have enough learning materials in classes." (Kabir, 2014)

Influence of Assessment Process

Haider & Chowdhury (2012) pointed out that teachers are not trained and competent enough for teaching language. The faulty assessment system, shortage of supplementary and bridging materials are the causes of the exemption of curriculum in secondary level classrooms in Bangladesh. Likewise, Farooqui and Podder added, the implementation of curriculum in Bangladesh secondary level's classroom is inadequate. "It has been more than a decade since CLT was introduced in the secondary EFL classrooms of Bangladesh but the impact of this methodological change has been under-researched." (Haider & Chowdhury, 2012).

The assessment system does not always have a positive impact on classroom behavior (Podder, 2011; Al-Amin, 2017; Ali, 2011; Haider & Chowdhury, 2012). It puts importance on accuracy rather than fluency, and does not measure any auditory comprehension skill or speaking ability of the students (Hoque, 2008). The items of the assessment are not "based on testing candidate's communicative competences". Haider & Chowdhury also mentioned that the test setters are not trained and experienced enough to design test items. Most of the examinations of secondary school follow the multiple-choice question and true or false questions which "are often unrelated to the nature of communicative language in use." Candidates do not answer those questions by comprehension or using language skills rather they use some strategies which are not related to language skill. Moreover, the candidates follow the process of memorization to get a higher score in the exam.

Practicing Speaking in the Classrooms

Though the curriculum of English language emphasizes all four language skills, however both teachers and students do not take listening and speaking practices in the classroom (Ali, 2011, Podder, 2011, Farooqui, 2014, Kabir, 2014, Haider& Chowdhury, 2012). According to Ali (2011), students do not take listening and speaking skills seriously as these are not included in the formal examination. He shows there is a significant gap between the learners' needs and expectations and teachers' teaching methods. Teacher had not been trained to assess listening and speaking skills (Podder, 2011). They still teach following the traditional language teaching method and students are rarely asked to get involved in communicative activities (Farooqui, 2014). According to Çelik (2015), because of boring and traditional activities and lack of technological devices students feel demotivated to further their interest in learning English. Podder (2011) shows that the English curriculum required restructuring to make way for listening and speaking skills assessment in the classroom as well as teachers needing listening and speaking resources to enable them to undertake both listening and speaking practices and assessment in the classroom.

Having discussed the above-mentioned research and findings it is apparent that a number of barriers and obstacles work in English language classrooms in Bangladesh. For instance, the ineffective way of curriculum implementation, shortcoming of assessment process, mixing Bangla in the classroom, inadequately trained teachers in the institutes as well as dis implementation of CLT in the classroom. However, some significant questions may be arising which are not discussed in the contemporary research and survey. Do the students of Bangladesh become inefficient in language learning because of the pitfalls of the assessment process as it does not include the speaking section? How does the mindset of excessive concentration on getting high scores work in the classroom when students go to learn a language? Moreover, what is the role of a teacher in a language learning classroom in the context of Bangladesh? The following study attempts to answer these questions and add value to the knowledge regarding English language learning in Bangladesh.

Objectives

The study aims to:

- **i.** Identify the major barriers to English language learning in Bangladeshi secondary school classrooms.
- **ii.** Examine the impact of the assessment process on English language learning.
- **iii.** Investigate the reasons students prioritize good grades over actual language learning.
- **iv.** Examine the role of teachers in facilitating English language learning in Bangladeshi secondary school classrooms.

Methodology

This research was conducted with a mixed method approach. A mixed method approach is easy to collect data as well as to describe the theories as it brings the qualitative and quantitative system in one platform.

This research was intended to find out four specific factors which work as barriers in the language learning process and the questionnaire was designed in a way that it revealed the three questions such as: How the assessment process influences a student and how it works in the language learning process; how the mindset of getting high scores hampers the students' concentration of language learning. Moreover, it is intended to explore the role of a teacher in a Bangladeshi language classroom. According to the questionnaire, it was organized with four parts (Appendix A). The very first section elicited the data about the personal information of a student to know the current educational background of a student. The second section assembled the data about the uses of English in the Bangladeshi classroom as a medium of instruction. The third section drew attention to the impact of the assessment system in the language learning process. The final or the fourth section gathered the data about the appropriate materials in language classroom in Bangladesh secondary level. The data was collected both online and offline. On the online platform, the questionnaire was provided as a Google form.

This study included the interviews from the teachers to include classroom perspectives and experiences. They were asked about their experiences in teaching English. They were asked to share their observations about the difficulties they faced in the classroom. They also highlighted the impact of assessment process, class duration and curriculum design (Appendix B).

Participants

Secondary level students from different private and government schools were informed about the study and a total of 120 questionnaires were distributed as hard copy and soft copy. Both Bangla and English medium students participated. Among them, 13.6% were from English medium and 86.4% were from Bangla medium. Data was collected from government, non-government and private schools and grade 6-10 students were participated. Of the participated, 40 students were from two government schools, 45 students from a non-government school and 35 participants were from 3 different private schools. The schools were selected based on convenience sampling. The following graph demonstrates the responses of students from grade six to ten.

Interviews have been conducted with 3 teachers of different private and government schools. This research uses their pseudonyms as Mr. X, Mr. Y and Mr. Z.

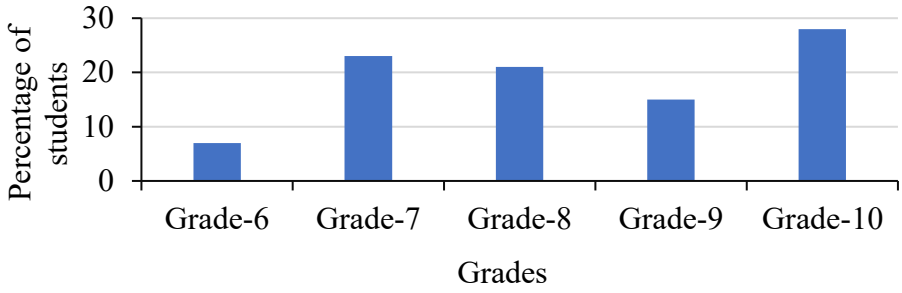

Fig. 1: Percentages of students according to grades.

Data Analysis

This study used the 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Agree, 5= Strongly disagree) to measure the data of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was categorized mainly with two parts. The first part took the personal data from students and the rest of the sections took information according to my research question. The section number "A" took information on how English language is used as a medium of instruction in different private and government institutes in Bangladesh. The section "B" explores the idea of how the assessment process affects language learning. Section 'C' discusses the issues with materials in Bangladeshi language learning classrooms.

Findings

English as a Medium of Instruction

As a medium of instruction English is not used properly in the classroom of Bangladesh. Most of the student responses say that they have no particular class for speaking as well as listening. As a part of their examination syllabus, they have to go through the written section as well as the reading section.

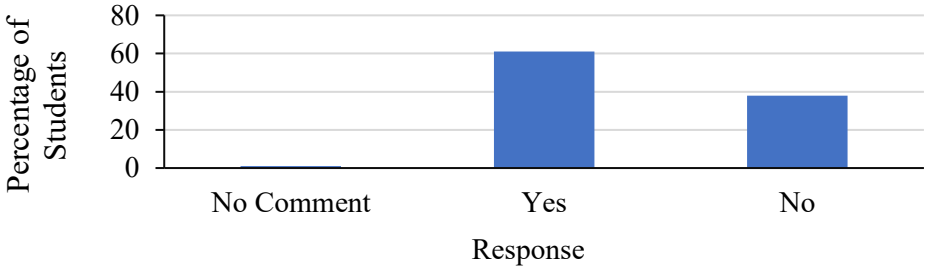

Fig. 2: Percentages of the Speaking Classes.

The above graph demonstrates that only 38% students get speaking classes in their classroom. Where 62% of students respond that they don't have any particular class for speaking. Likewise, most of the schools do not arrange the classes for listening. A few pupils, only 24.5%, respond that they find some particular classes for Listening. On the other hand, a huge number of students, 72.81%, mentioned that they have no listening classes. The graph below shows the percentages of Listening Classes.

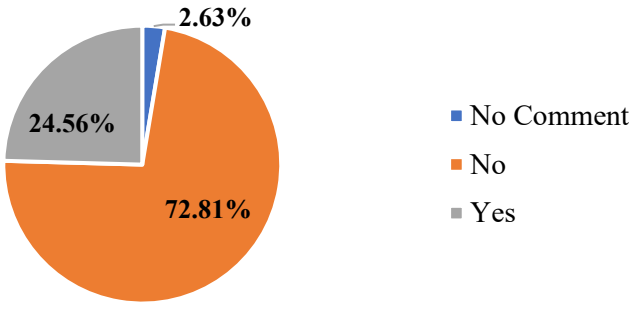

Fig. 3: Percentages of the Listening Classes.

Students do not have to face viva after their written exam. Only 34.21% of students responded that they have to face viva for an oral test. Almost 63.36% said that they have no particular task for the oral exam.

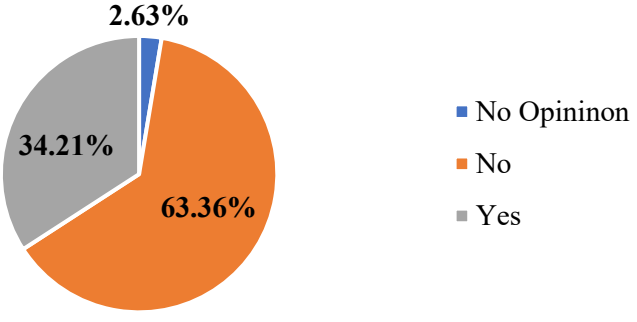

Fig. 4: The positive and negative responses of the viva exam.

In the classroom, English is not used to give instruction or communicate between teacher and students. This study revealed that as a medium of instruction, English is not used in the classroom. This is a major problem in the process of learning language that students are not engaged with their target language. Teachers feel comfortable to use the mother tongue to give instruction as well as students feel easy to convince their teacher in Bangla. The chart below shows the percentages of using English to instruct in the classroom.

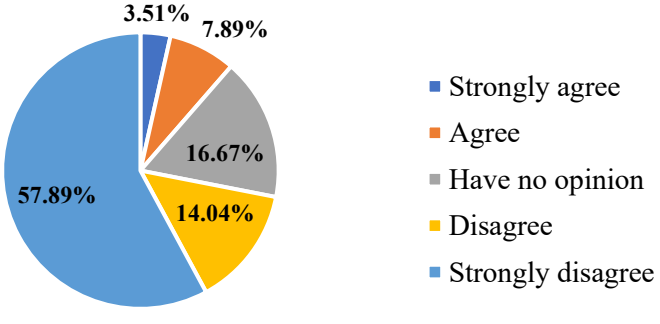

Fig. 5: Percentages of using English to give the instruction in the classroom.

According to the data, only 7.89% of students agreed that their teacher uses English in the classroom to instruct them. A huge number of students, 57.89%, strongly said that English is not used in their classroom to give instruction.

In English classes, most of the teachers use Bangla. The below mentioned graph shows that 40.35% and 43.86% students respectively agreed and strongly agreed that their teacher uses Bangla in the classroom.

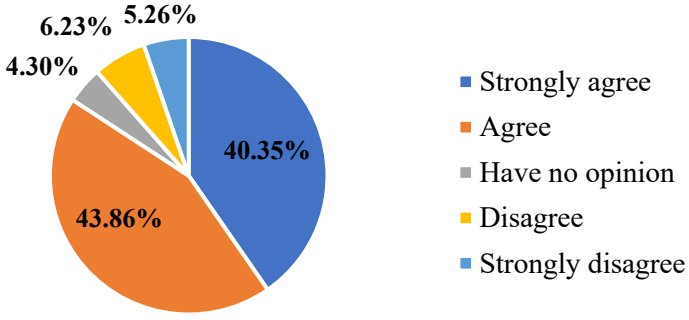

Fig. 6: The percentages of use of Bangla in the classroom.

Influence of Assessment Process

In this part of the questionnaire, students were asked to answer some questions related to their written examination. They had to answer how the teacher gives pressure to complete their syllabus, to memorize the long-written essay or paragraph as well as force them to get a good result in the written exam. The findings demonstrate that most of the students responded that they find pressure for achieving good results in their exam as well as they have to memorize the written task to get a high score.

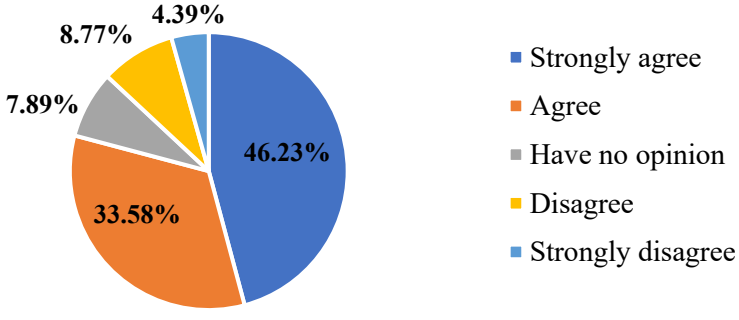

Fig. 7: Percentages of memorization of writing tasks.

33.58% of students gave their opinion that they do memorize the writing task and 46.23% strongly said that they have to memorize the writing task because of their examination.

This study demonstrates that excessive pressure of examination hampers the process of learning language. Students added that teachers influence them to get high scores in the examination. 58.77% of students strongly said that they are influenced by their teacher to get a good result in the examination.

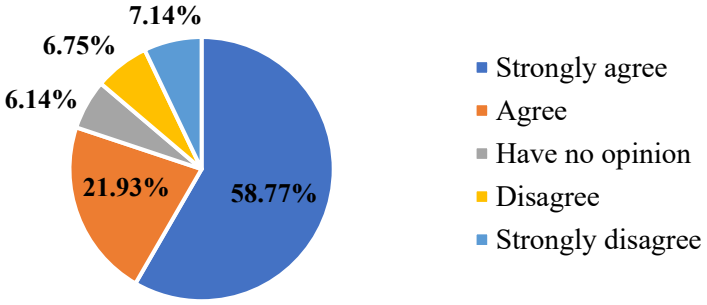

Fig. 8: Percentages of getting inspiration for examination.

Absence of Appropriate Materials:

The scenario of our country is reflecting that the appropriate materials are absent in our classroom. In this part this study wanted to know what kind of materials are used in the classroom. Either the teacher arranges music, debate or any kind of class activities which are helpful for learning language. The data revealed that only 13.16% participants strongly agreed that they find a variety of materials in the classroom. On the other hand, 26.81% participants strongly denied and 17.79% students gave their negative opinion that teachers do not arrange debate, game and music in the classroom.

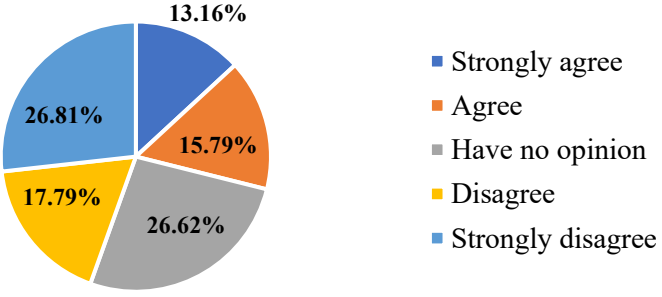

Fig. 9: The percentages of using a variety of materials in the classroom.

The NCTB books reserve a task for students at the end of every chapter. However, most of the teachers do not follow the task. 31.58% of students disagreed and another 39.58% strongly disagreed about the use of 'English Task' from their book, according to the data.

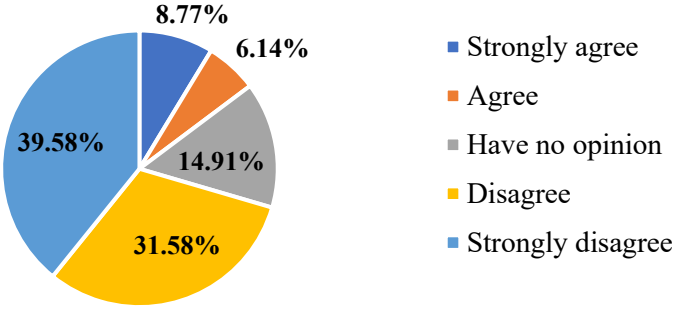

Fig. 10: Percentages of practicing "English Task" from the textbook.

In English classes, the majority of the teachers do not use the NCTB text books in the class. The data shows that teachers do not follow their NCTB text book instead they follow a number of guide books in the classroom.

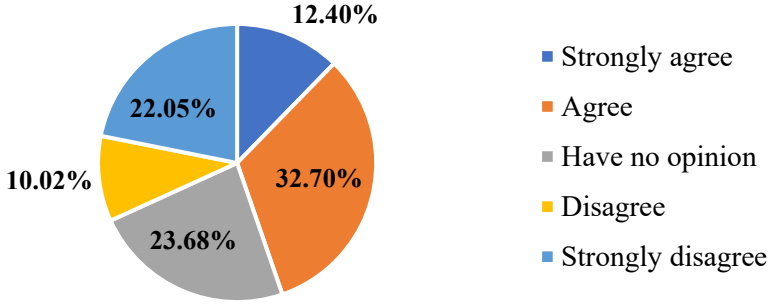

Fig. 11: The percentages of using guide books in the classroom.

Qualitative Data Analysis from the Interview

The interviews were conducted in order to explore the real experience of teachers as they face in the classroom. The three participants from secondary school shared their experiences of what they face in the classroom. In general, they faced the same kind of difficulties for intense lack of support from students as well as from their family. They think that the curriculum for the secondary level students is not competent enough for language learning, there is no assessment process for speaking tests; the authority, gradian as well as the student they always emphasize on getting high scores. The content of the participants' responses has been analyzed in terms of the themes that emerged out of the data; the focus being on getting "High Score", implication of curriculum in learning language, assessment process on speaking.

Focus on Getting 'High Score'

Students are immensely concerned about getting a valuable score in their exam rather than learning the English language. There is a vigorous competition to get a good result in every private, government as well as non-government school. Not only do parents or guardians make this competition vigorous, the school authority also focuses on getting good results. Mr.X, one of the participants mentioned that, "Students are influenced to do a good result in their exam. They become appreciated to get high scores and become first in the classroom. Guardians are always concerned about their results. They only want to complete the whole syllabus. Guardian wants to revise and re-revise the syllabus before their examination so that students can ensure the good marks in their exam." (Mr.X; Interview 2) Learning English is merely a concern in secondary schools in Bangladesh. From the interview, detaching the mind from developing skill is the reason for falling behind in learning language. He thinks that the authority of the private school has this ability to change the mindset. He also added, "English Speaking is necessary for everyone. We, the teachers and guardians, know this thing. They (guardians) are very much concerned about to bring A+ in all subjects. We (the teachers) also know the importance of learning English. But we are rushed to cover the whole syllabus each and

every year. That is why we do not find time to focus on this extra skill (speaking)." (Mr.X; Interview 2) The importance of language is focused here. However, because of concentrating on exams it is difficult to teach the language. The teacher mentioned that speaking is an 'Extra Skill'.

The same situation is observed at a non-government school. They also think that teaching English is not very easy as well as it is not possible only by a teacher. They mentioned a number of problems they have to face in teaching the language. One of the interviewees mentioned that among all of the problems family support is the most important issue. "To me the most important problem is they do not get family support. Most of the family are poor and uneducated. That is why students are not very interested in their education. As a non-government institute our school's rating is very low. That is why good students do not get admitted into our institute. I mean our students are not very good and attentive." (Mr.Y; Interview 1)

Implication of Curriculum in Learning Language

According to interviewees, the curriculum of the secondary level is not adequate enough to learn the language. It does not include speaking and listening. The present curriculum does not give any speaking assessment. Mr.Y from the first interview mentioned that, "No, I think our curriculum is not helpful in any way for learning language. My opinion is "No". Not even 50%. This is only for exams for each and every year. It is not helpful for speaking or listening. Curriculum is only appropriate for exam preparation." (Mr. Y. Interviewe 1)

From the second interview by Mr.X, "Curriculum does not include the important things of language learning. For example, it does not include the speaking section. Also, there are a number of shortcomings. Teacher does not follow the things which are included in the curriculum. Even so, most of the teachers can not apply the things. They always focus on the written section. Basically, we always focus on completing the syllabus."

From the third interview by Mr.Z, "To me, the curriculum is not even perfect for language learning. Actually, we use it for our final assessment, such as the annual exam or first term and second term. The first paper (English 1st paper) of the curriculum includes seen comprehension and unseen comprehension. The second paper includes grammar and some written sections. You know there is no section for speaking." All the interviews suit the same point that they mentioned: "not even perfect", "a number of lacking", "not helpful", "not even 50%".

Assessment on Speaking

Most of them included that curriculum does not take the assessment of speaking as well as they do not take any test for speaking. Some of them said that they are concerned about speaking and they speak in the classroom. However, they do not get the chance to test their students. Mr. X stated that, "We not only give instruction in English. Most of the time we try to speak in English. I can say, we use 80% in our speaking. Sometimes

for better understanding we use Bangla in our speaking. However, unfortunately, students don't respond to anything in English."

Some schools of Bangladesh are not interested in teaching the language. From some interviews it is revealed that the school authority does not give the chance to train their teacher. This teacher did not want to give the interview in front of his college. He (Mr.X) stated that, "We have no assessment process for speaking in our school. The authority does not focus on the English language. When they enroll a new teacher, they do not focus on his/her language skill. Even authority does not allow us to go for training. They do not give us permission for training. Our school does not give the permission for BEAD training. Last year I wanted to go there. But My school did not give the permission." (Mr.X. Interview 2)

Teachers also mentioned that because of their excessive task, they cannot manage to take the speaking task from their students. Mr. Z, from third interview stated that, "There are only two English teachers for English in our school. We have ten English classes daily for both the first and second paper. We have to take at least five classes between 10 am to 5 pm. Sometimes I have to take art and craft. Sometimes I have to take proxy classes for other subjects."

This teacher also stated that because of the excessive pressure of taking classes, they cannot focus on language teaching. This pressure reduces their chances to prepare for every class.

Conclusion

Having discussed the above, it is clarified that English language learning remains challenging for secondary level students in Bangladesh. This research has identified the major obstacles of language learning of students as well as the barriers of teachers which they face in the classroom. Students of secondary school do not find the particular classes for speaking as well as listening, English is not used as a medium of instruction in the classroom. Teachers claim that the major barrier of the teaching language is that students are not supportive enough to acquire the language, rather they only focus on getting high scores. Moreover, they also claim that the curriculum is not a very effective one to teach the language. Addressing these major barriers could improve the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning in secondary classrooms in Bangladesh.

In acquiring a language, the student-teacher relationship in the classroom is a fundamental thing. In the classroom of Bangladesh, teachers are always aware of completing the syllabus and students are always aware of getting high scores. Learning language is always an "extra thing" in the classroom. In secondary level, without learning the language students can easily pass the exam as well as they can get a high

score. It actually raises the question of curriculum and design of syllabus in all the classes of secondary level in Bangladesh.

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THE WARSAW PACT: ORIGINS, STRATEGIC ARCHITECTURE, AND LESSONS FOR CONTEMPORARY ALLIANCE POLICY

Aayan Ahmed, *STD X, JCESC*

ABSTRACT

The Warsaw Pact (1955–1991), formally the Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation, and Mutual Assistance, served for thirty-six years as the Soviet Union's primary vehicle for institutionalizing military dominance over Eastern Europe during the Cold War. This study examines the Pact's ideological foundations, command structure, and strategic doctrine, with particular attention to the asymmetry of power embedded in its design; in order to identify the lessons its history holds for contemporary alliance management. Using a qualitative, document-based historical-comparative approach, the analysis draws on declassified Soviet and Eastern European archival material, published memoirs, and the secondary historiography of the alliance, read against contemporary theories of collective security and alliance cohesion. The findings show that the Pact functioned less as a genuine collective security arrangement and more as a hegemonic control mechanism disguised in multilateral form. This was evident in Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), and Poland (1980–81), and confirmed by its rapid collapse after Soviet coercive support was withdrawn after 1989. The study concludes that durable alliances cannot be manufactured through coercion or formal architecture alone, and recommends that contemporary alliance architects prioritize substantive member equality and genuine perceived national interest over enforced cohesion.

Keywords: *Warsaw Pact; Cold War alliances; Soviet military doctrine; collective security; alliance cohesion; hegemonic multilateralism*

Introduction

On 14 May 1955, eight communist states- the Soviet Union, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania signed the Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation, and Mutual Assistance in Warsaw, establishing what became known as the Warsaw Pact. Framed as a defensive counterweight to NATO's 1949 formation and the Federal Republic of Germany's admission into the Western alliance that same month (Adomeit, 1998), the Pact would govern the military disposition of Eastern Europe for the next thirty-six years.

Its dissolution on 1 July 1991, less than two years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, closed out far more than an organisational chart: it exposed the terminal failure of a structural model, one which was built on enforced solidarity, ideological conformity, and the undisguised primacy of a single hegemon. For students of alliance policy, the Warsaw

Pact remains one of the most instructive case studies in the limits of coercive multilateralism.

Literature Review

The institutional character of the Warsaw Pact is well established in the historiography. Holden (1989) provided one of the first systematic accounts of the Pact's security architecture and bloc politics, characterizing it as an instrument of Soviet military management rather than a genuine multilateral security community. This assessment was substantially confirmed once Eastern European and Soviet archives opened after 1989: Mastny and Byrne's (2005) documentary history, drawing on newly declassified Political Consultative Committee minutes, described the organization as a 'cardboard castle' as it was formally imposing but substantively hollow. Applebaum (2012) situates the Pact's 1955 founding within the broader process of Sovietization that had already subordinated Eastern European militaries, security services, and political institutions to Moscow's control across the preceding decade, suggesting that the Pact formalised rather than created Soviet regional dominance. Adomeit (1998) further contextualises the Pact's founding as a direct response to West German rearmament and NATO accession, framing the alliance as reactive in propaganda terms but expansionist in practical effect.

A distinct strand of the literature examines the Pact's internal stress points individually. Kramer's (1999) reassessment of the 1956 Hungarian and Polish crises, based on newly available Soviet Politburo records, demonstrates that Moscow's decision to intervene militarily in Hungary was taken largely outside Pact consultative mechanisms, reinforcing the view that the organisation's collective decision-making bodies were peripheral to Soviet crisis management. Navrátil's (2006) documentary collection on the 1968 Prague Spring similarly shows the extent to which the Brezhnev Doctrine was constructed after the fact to legitimise an invasion whose planning had already proceeded through predominantly Soviet channels. Together, these accounts support the broader claim, advanced across the literature, that the Pact's multilateral form masked what was substantively unilateral Soviet decision-making at moments of genuine crisis.

On strategic doctrine and the Pact's eventual collapse, Zubok (2007) situates Warsaw Pact military planning within the wider trajectory of Soviet Cold War strategy, arguing that the doctrinal confidence of the 1960s and 1970s gave way to genuine anxiety about conventional inferiority by the 1980s. Garthoff (1994) traces how the broader arc of American-Soviet relations, which went from confrontation through détente and that is what shaped the resourcing and ambition of Warsaw Pact conventional planning across the same period. Odom (1998) provides the most detailed account of the institutional collapse of Soviet military power after 1989, arguing that the same command dependencies that gave the Pact its operational cohesion made it structurally incapable of surviving the withdrawal of Soviet coercive backing.

Finally, a smaller theoretical literature asks what purpose, if any, the Pact actually served once its coercive functions are set aside. Vojtech (2002) argues that the Pact never developed an autonomous institutional purpose independent of Soviet security requirements, a conclusion consistent with its rapid dissolution once those requirements changed. Reiter (2001), writing on NATO enlargement, offers a useful comparative benchmark by questioning the assumption that alliance membership alone generates domestic political liberalisation, a finding that sharpens the contrast between NATO's consent-based cohesion and the Warsaw Pact's coercive equivalent. Taken together, this literature converges on a single claim that the present study seeks to test against the Pact's operational record: that the alliance's formal multilateralism concealed a hegemonic command structure whose durability depended entirely on continued Soviet willingness and capacity to enforce it.

This study first sets out its objectives and methodological approach, then situates the analysis within the existing literature on the Pact's origins and institutional design. It goes on to present findings on the Pact's operational architecture and command asymmetry, and on the key stress points, which were Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), and Poland (1980–81) that exposed its internal contradictions, before closing with a set of recommendations for contemporary alliance design and management.

Objectives

Building on this background, the study is guided by the following objectives:

i. To examine the ideological foundations, treaty provisions, and command structure of the Warsaw Pact, with attention to how its formal design differed from its operational reality.

ii. To assess the asymmetry of power embedded in the Pact's Unified Command and Political Consultative Committee, and its consequences for member states' military sovereignty.

iii. To trace the evolution of Warsaw Pact strategic doctrine across its three broad operational phases, from the nuclear-primacy thinking of the late 1950s to the doctrinal stagnation of the 1980s.

iv. To analyse the Pact's principal internal stress points like Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), and Poland (1980–81) as tests of its true institutional character.

v. To identify the causes and pace of the Pact's 1991 dissolution, and to derive policy lessons applicable to the design and management of contemporary alliances.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, historical-comparative research design appropriate to a subject for which the primary evidentiary base is archival and documentary rather than experimental or survey-based. The analysis is organised chronologically around three

doctrinal phases (1955–1960, 1960–1980, and 1980–1991) and around four critical junctures. The Pact's 1955 founding, the Hungarian crisis of 1956, the Czechoslovak invasion of 1968, and the Polish Solidarity crisis of 1980–81, which was supplemented by an examination of the dissolution process of 1989–1991.

Rather than testing a single hypothesis through quantitative measurement, the study builds an interpretive account of the Pact's institutional character by comparing its formal treaty provisions against its documented operational practice, and by reading the alliance's crisis episodes as diagnostic tests of where authority actually resided within the organization. This comparative-institutional method is supplemented by a selective application of alliance theory, principally the distinction between coercive and consent-based multilateralism, to frame the Pact against NATO as a contrasting case, and to draw out implications for present-day alliance design. The study is limited by reliance on secondary interpretations and the partial classification of Soviet-era military records. These limitations were addressed through triangulation across multiple independent sources.

Data Collection

As a document-based qualitative study, the research draws on three categories of source material rather than researcher-administered data collection instruments. The first is declassified primary material: Political Consultative Committee minutes, Soviet Politburo records, and National Security Archive document collections that have become available since the Pact's 1991 dissolution and the opening of Eastern European state archives. The second is published memoir and testimonial literature by former Warsaw Pact and Soviet officials. The third, and most extensively used, is the secondary historiographical literature identified in the Literature Review, which itself synthesizes and interprets the first two categories. No original archival research or human-subjects data collection was undertaken for this study; all source material is drawn from the public historiographical record.

Data Analysis

Source material was analyzed thematically rather than statistically. Analysis proceeded in two stages. First, the Pact's formal treaty provisions and command structure were compared against documented operational practice to identify points of divergence between nominal and real authority. Second, the four critical junctures identified in the Methodology were examined comparatively to test whether the pattern of Soviet unilateral action observed in one crisis recurred in the others; convergent findings across independent cases were treated as stronger evidence of a structural pattern than any single episode considered alone. Comparative reference to NATO's institutional design was used throughout as a contrasting case to sharpen interpretation of the Pact's distinguishing features.

Findings

The treaty's formal provisions were broadly consistent with conventional collective security principles. Article 3 committed signatories to mutual consultation on major international questions. Article 4 which was the operational heart of the agreement obligated members to render immediate military assistance by all available means in the event of armed attack against any signatory. Article 5 established a Unified Command structure headed by a Supreme Commander.

In practice, however, the treaty's architecture contained asymmetries that rendered this formal equality largely nominal. The Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces was invariably a Soviet Marshal, appointed unilaterally by Moscow; no non-Soviet officer held the position throughout the Pact's existence. The Political Consultative Committee, theoretically the Pact's highest decision-making body, met infrequently and functioned predominantly as a forum through which the Soviet Union communicated decisions already made, rather than one in which authentic consensus was forged.

Member states' national military structures were deeply integrated into Soviet operational planning through the Unified Command, meaning that Warsaw Pact armies were, in practical terms, forward-deployed components of Soviet strategic posture rather than sovereign forces committed to a multilateral institution. Training, doctrine, equipment standardization, and operational planning were all directed from Moscow, eliminating the substantive autonomy that a genuine alliance would have accorded its members.

Warsaw Pact military doctrine evolved through three broad phases. In the initial period (1955–1960), doctrine reflected Khrushchev-era thinking that treated nuclear weapons as the decisive instrument of modern warfare, relegating conventional forces to a supporting role; this view drove significant reductions in the size of conventional armies across the bloc, consistent with Soviet budgetary priorities and Khrushchev's belief in nuclear deterrence as a cost-effective substitute for mass armies.

The second phase (1960–1980) brought a shift toward combined-arms operations capable of fighting across the full spectrum of conflict, from conventional war to nuclear exchange. Marshal Andrei Grechko's tenure as Supreme Commander (1960–1967) and the subsequent Soviet theorizing around the 'initial period of war' emphasized rapid, deep offensive thrusts into NATO-held Western Europe before alliance cohesion and American reinforcement could be brought to bear; war, in this framework, was expected to be short, intense, and decided in days rather than weeks. The operational plan that emerged was broadly, an armored thrust through the Fulda Gap and the North German Plain aimed at reaching the Rhine within seventy-two hours had shaped equipment procurement, force structure, and training across all member states' armies throughout the 1970s, with non-Soviet armies assigned specific axes of advance subordinate to Soviet command at every echelon (Garthoff, 1994).

The third phase (1980–1991) brought increasing doctrinal stagnation as the Soviet economy struggled to sustain the modernization programme needed to match NATO's technological advances, particularly after the introduction of precision-guided munitions and improved anti-armour systems. By the mid-1980s, Soviet planners were privately acknowledging that the Pact's conventional offensive superiority, real or assumed in earlier decades, was eroding (Zubok, 2007; Odom, 1998).

The most revealing tests of the Pact's internal character came not in confrontation with NATO but in member states' periodic attempts to escape or reform the system from within.

The Hungarian Revolution of October–November 1956 predated the Pact's operational maturity but established a crucial precedent. Soviet forces intervened directly to suppress the government of Imre Nagy, which had declared Hungary's neutrality and withdrawal from the Pact; the intervention was conducted under Soviet national military command rather than through Pact mechanisms, underscoring that the organisation was not a collective decision-making body for such contingencies but a Soviet lever that could be bypassed entirely when Moscow chose (Kramer, 1999).

The Prague Spring of 1968 produced the Pact's most doctrinally significant moment: the Brezhnev Doctrine. Following the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia on 20–21 August 1968 which involved Soviet, Polish, East German, Bulgarian, and Hungarian forces. Brezhnev articulated the principle that socialist states held a collective obligation to prevent any member from abandoning socialism (Navrátil, 2006). This retroactively supplied an ideological rationale for treating the Pact as a vehicle of political enforcement rather than merely military coordination. Romania, which had refused to participate in the invasion, was the most explicit internal dissenter, but even compliant members recognised that the Brezhnev Doctrine had fundamentally altered the character of their alliance relationship.

Poland's Solidarity crisis (1980–1981) presented a different but equally instructive challenge. Soviet pressure on Polish authorities to suppress the independent trade union movement which was backed by the implicit threat of Pact intervention was ultimately resolved through General Jaruzelski's declaration of martial law in December 1981. The episode demonstrated both the continued coercive value of the Pact as a threat and its growing political costs: the perception of Soviet-directed repression was radicalising precisely the populations the Pact supposedly defended.

Each episode reinforced the same underlying dynamic: Pact cohesion was maintained not by shared interests or authentic collective will, but by the credible threat of Soviet military action against deviance was a dynamic fundamentally different from NATO, where member states retained meaningful sovereignty and where consensus, however imperfect, remained a genuine institutional requirement.

The Pact's dissolution was, at its core, a political event rather than a military one: it followed directly from the collapse of the Soviet Union's capacity and willingness to enforce compliance. Mikhail Gorbachev's reform programme, and in particular his implicit abandonment of the Brezhnev Doctrine signalled most clearly in his 1989 address to the United Nations removed the coercive underpinning on which the entire system rested (Zubok, 2007).

Once Eastern European populations understood that Soviet tanks would not roll to defend unpopular regimes, the pace of political change was extraordinary. Poland held partially free elections in June 1989; Hungary opened its border with Austria in September; the Berlin Wall fell in November; and by the end of 1989 every Warsaw Pact government in Eastern Europe had either collapsed or been fundamentally reformed. The Pact formally dissolved its military structures on 1 April 1991 and ceased to exist entirely on 1 July 1991 (Odom, 1998).

The speed of this collapse is itself a critical data point for alliance analysts. An organisation that had maintained its form for thirty-six years disintegrated within two years of losing its coercive foundation Showed that the Pact had accumulated no independent institutional loyalty, no shared strategic culture its members valued apart from Soviet enforcement, and no common interests robust enough to survive the removal of the original binding agent.

Conclusion

The Warsaw Pact occupied a unique position in the history of military alliances: simultaneously the most institutionally elaborate and the most substantively hollow major alliance of the twentieth century. Its formal structures like unified command, joint exercises, standardized doctrine, created the appearance of cohesion, while its coercive foundation ensured that this cohesion remained conditional on Soviet enforcement capacity at every stage. Its 1991 collapse was not an accident of history, nor simply a contingent product of Gorbachev's personal choices, though those choices mattered a great deal. It was the predictable outcome of an organization that had failed to generate the one resource no alliance can purchase by force: the authentic belief of its members that belonging served their interests. For contemporary policymakers engaged in alliance management, whether in the context of NATO's eastern expansion debates, emerging Indo-Pacific security architectures, or the evolving posture of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; the Warsaw Pact offers an indispensable cautionary study in what alliances cannot be, and what they must become if they are to endure (Vojtech, 2002; Reiter, 2001).

Recommendations

Drawing on the findings, the study offers five recommendations for contemporary alliance architects and policymakers:

i. Avoid coercive cohesion: Alliances based on pressure rather than consent may achieve short-term coordination but are vulnerable to resentment, resistance, and eventual defection.

ii. Ensure substantive equality: Formal multilateral structures without genuine equality can undermine trust and credibility among member states.

iii. Do not overestimate ideological unity: Shared ideology alone cannot ensure alliance durability when national interests and public support diverge.

iv. Separate military and political functions: Alliances should avoid using military structures as instruments of domestic political control, as this can weaken trust and legitimacy.

v. Prioritize members' interests: Alliance durability ultimately depends on whether members perceive the alliance as serving their national interests, rather than on formal structures or military strength.

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FROM ASSISTANCE TO MISCONDUCT? GENERATIVE AI AND THE FUTURE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN BANGLADESHI HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The emergence of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Copilot among others marks the beginning of an era of transformation of higher education around the globe. These tools provide students with innovative ways to learn, conduct research, get help with writing and solving problems. However, the increasing use of these tools has also raised significant concerns regarding academic integrity, authorship, plagiarism, and the quality of learning. The paper examines, the implications of generative AI technology on the academic integrity of the Bangladeshi higher education institutions. Qualitative literature analysis was applied to examine the available literature on the topic in question. The educational benefits and potential ethical concerns associated with the use of generative AI in academic contexts were examined. The research claims that instead of considering generative AI as only a challenge or a solution, it should be considered a powerful educational technology that needs to be governed wisely and used appropriately. Specifically, this involves implementing institutional policies, AI education programs, and proper evaluation processes, which include critical thinking and authentic learning. The findings highlight the importance of balancing technological innovation with academic integrity to ensure that generative AI contributes positively to teaching, learning, and research in Bangladeshi higher education.

Keywords: *Generative Artificial Intelligence, Academic Integrity, Higher Education, Bangladesh, ChatGPT, Educational Technology.*

Introduction

The current state of affairs within the realm of higher education around the world can be characterized by a major shift in the technological paradigm, catalyzed by the accelerated development and widespread use of various Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools. Following the public release of OpenAI's ChatGPT in late 2022 and the subsequent emergence of other generative AI systems, such as Google's Gemini and Microsoft's Copilot, AI has rapidly evolved from a specialized computational technology into an increasingly accessible tool for academic work. The unique features of these platforms include their ability to write human-like texts, troubleshoot computer code, create comprehensive literature reviews, and deliver personalized tutoring in real-time. Consequently, students in universities across the globe have already adapted GenAI to assist with their studies.

The rapid and uneven adoption of GenAI in higher education presents both opportunities and challenges for teaching, learning, and assessment. While the strengths of customized approaches and efficiency gains are obvious, the unlimited potential of AI to generate consistent and sophisticated papers and other homework assignments presents a tangible challenge to established principles of academic integrity. The problem of academic dishonesty at educational institutions grows to unprecedented levels; unearned authorship, cheating, and an unusual type of plagiarism made possible by AI technology cannot be detected by standard plagiarism checkers. Excessive reliance on GenAI may also affect students' development of critical-thinking, problem-solving, and independent learning skills. It brings up a difficult question that universities need to solve: how to implement the revolutionary potential of artificial intelligence without undermining the ethical foundations of the university degree?

Indeed, this systemic contradiction is particularly evident when we look at the development of higher education systems in general, taking Bangladesh as an exemplary case. Over the past few years, universities in Bangladesh have undertaken structural digital transformation to fit the demands of today's knowledge-based economy. However, the rapid emergence of GenAI has raised questions about the preparedness of existing institutional policies, assessment practices, and academic-integrity frameworks in Bangladesh. Unlike their counterparts in the West, where formal policies and syllabus statements regarding AI usage have been rapidly implemented alongside the establishment of new evaluation procedures, in Bangladesh, there is a wide range of informal practices on how to handle these situations. In other words, professors often find themselves dealing with assignments written with the help of AI systems without any formal structures and technology in place.

This is an area of significant neglect in current academic discourse in the realm of the broader ramifications of GenAI in the local social and technological landscapes of higher education in South Asia, specifically Bangladesh. While existing global literature exhaustively covers the technological and theoretical vulnerabilities of ChatGPT, limited research attempts have been made to analyze how local assessment systems, digital literacy shortcomings among faculty members, and institutional ethical codes combine with the use of AI among students.

Literature Review

Generative AI in Higher Education

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is transforming higher education by providing personalized tutoring, supporting self-directed learning, and assisting academic tasks. Studies suggest that students use GenAI to understand complex concepts and reduce academic writing anxiety (AlAfnan et al., 2023). (Wang & Bonk, 2024). Dependence on GenAI can create cognitive risks, including reduced critical thinking and disengagement from teachers (Dwivedi et al., 2024).

Shifting Realities of Academic Integrity and the Plagiarism Grey-Zone

GenAI has created new challenges for academic integrity, particularly in ambiguous forms of AI-assisted writing and authorship (Johansen et al., 2026). Traditional punitive approaches to detecting AI misuse may be insufficient, highlighting the need for clear institutional policies, ethical education, appropriate assessment, and AI literacy (Lund et al., 2025).

Local Technology Adoption and Infrastructure Bottlenecks in Developing Academia

Digital transformation in higher education is constrained by limited technical preparedness, inadequate access to devices and connectivity, and unstable learning conditions (Sonia et al., 2023). In Bangladesh, these challenges may deepen educational inequalities, particularly for students in disadvantaged and non-urban settings (Ashrafuzzaman et al., 2025).

The growing use of GenAI highlights the need for clear and flexible university policies. While universities in the Global North are increasingly adopting tiered frameworks for permitted and restricted AI use, developing countries often lack unifies policies (Jin et al., 2025). Effective regulation requires clear guidelines developed collaboratively by teachers and students rather than relying solely on personal ethics or punitive measures (Parker et al., 2025).

This study seeks to bridge this gap through a meticulous thematic analysis of empirical articles, policy documents, and guidance frameworks from 2023 to 2026. Through this process, the paper seeks to provide relevant policy suggestions, integrate innovation with ethical values, and establish a sustainable direction for the future.

Objectives

The research aims to:

- **i.** To examine the growing use of generative artificial intelligence in higher education.
- **ii.** To examine the benefits of AI-supported learning in higher education.
- **iii.** To evaluate the influence of generative AI on academic integrity and academic cases.
- **iv.** To assess the prospects of implementing AI in Bangladeshi higher education.
- **v.** To develop guidelines for proper implementation of generative AI in academic environments.

Methodology

The research was conducted by a qualitative literature review of the connection between generative AI and academic integrity in higher education. The sources used in this review includes peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and reports related to the topic of interest. They were published in 2023-2026 and should address AI-assisted learning, plagiarism, assessment, academic ethics, and higher education policy. Through

thematic analysis, the literature review highlights key issues and trends related to generative AI in education. The global discussions and recommendations concerning the topic were explored, and the applicability of the insights provided by such sources to the case of Bangladesh will be considered.

Data Collection

Primary data collection was not conducted because the study used a secondary qualitative literature review design. The analysis was based on selected published literature, policy documents, and relevant reports.

Data Analysis

Methodological Framework for Qualitative Synthesis:
This study employed a qualitative literature review of 11 peer-reviewed articles, institutional policies, and international reports published between 2023 and 2026. For pattern generation and resolution of the study aims as well as for context-building on global trends in relation to Bangladesh's higher education domain, a Thematic Analysis approach was used. The thematic coding process involved a rigorous, structured series of six stages in qualitative coding.

The coding procedure was conducted as outlined below:

Familiarization with Text Corpus: Multiple readings of the assembled corpus for early recognition of intersecting concepts related to the GenAI and barriers to academic integrity.

Initial Generation of Codes: Coding the texts into open codes referring to specific, recurring concepts (technological shock, gray-zone plagiarism, sympathetic authorship, tiered permissions models).

Theme Search: Clustering the open codes from the beginning into broader thematic categories that are distinguishable based on conceptual similarities.

Theme Review: Checking whether the identified themes were reflective of the source material in an unbiased manner.

Theme Definition and Naming: Determining the exact scope of each of the themes identified so that they correspond directly with the purpose of the research.

Report Production: Creating the narrative form of the textual data collected from the literature review in order to analyze the global literature in view of the unique structure of the academe in Bangladesh.

Emerging Structural Themes and Conceptual Matrix
Five interrelated themes emerged from the qualitative coding, reflecting the progression from the uses of GenAI to ethical, infrastructural, and regulatory challenges in Bangladesh. The themes, open codes, and their analytical focus are summarized in the following table.

Table 1: Thematic Coding and Conceptual Matrix

Primary Core Theme	Generated Open Codes (Keywords)	Localized Analytical Focus (Bangladesh Context)
Pedagogical Evolution and Cognitive Shift	Personalized tutoring; administrative automation; self-directed learning (SDL); cognitive overload; memory-based testing obsolete.	Restructuring traditional rote-learning architectures and designing active evaluation metrics.
Ethical Ambiguity and Integrity Fractures	Grey-zone plagiarism; syntax manipulation; unearned authorship; failure of AI detectors; punitive surveillance limits.	Deconstructing "sympathy co-authorship" behaviors and moving away from commercial anti-plagiarism tools.
Infrastructure Gaps and Socio-Economic Bias	Technological shock; baseline unreadiness; device unavailability; data costs; SDG 4 compliance.	Mitigating disparities between metropolitan hubs and rural public university settings regarding data and power infrastructure.
Regulatory Asymmetry and Tiered Governance	Global North dominance; policy vacuum; blanket ban failures; tiered permission levels; human-in-the-loop.	Overcoming arbitrary policing by instructors through a unified University Grants Commission (UGC) strategy.
Co-Designed Institutional Codes of Conduct	Corporate data monopolies; public trust protection; shared responsibility; student-faculty collaboration.	Transitioning from Western punitive penalties to culturally grounded, transparent campus trust structures.

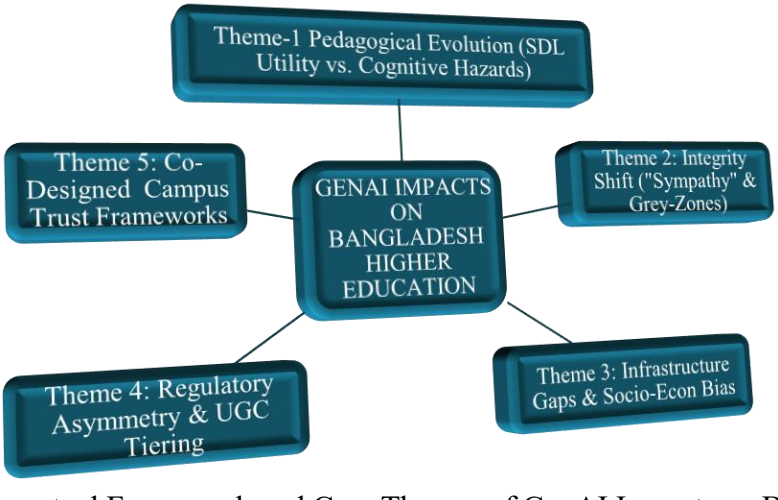

Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework and Core Themes of GenAI Impacts on Bangladeshi Higher Education.

Findings

The results obtained from the qualitative dataset provide evidence of a sharp dichotomy between international educational approaches and local infrastructural capabilities. According to the dataset, it is evident that there is a unanimous belief that any attempts to completely ban GenAI technology via technical barriers or punitive measures, such as monitoring algorithms, are fundamentally futile and detrimental. It is suggested that these technologies must be integrated into educational processes in an open manner, coupled with increased digital competence of teachers and learners alike.

Yet, the thematic coding shows that this approach would be implemented unequally. Specifically, the qualitative analysis suggests that the institutional policy of education assumes flawless data connection, personal quiet places for learning, and stable hardware provision. Comparing the obtained dataset with the South Asian educational environment, the thematic mismatch becomes evident: In Bangladesh, for example, there are no policies at the UGC level, which makes individual teachers regulate the utilization of AI technology in the educational process.

Accordingly, the analysis of the data shows that there needs to be a structural paradigm shift away from the West's approach when addressing the conflict between technological advances and academic integrity in Bangladesh. There is clear evidence that decentralized approaches, which focus on equal access to resources, blending learning, and explicit rules for the use of AI, should be considered.

Introduction to Thematic Outcomes: Qualitative analysis of the selected literature corpus (N=11) leads to an insightful understanding of the clash between global technologies and local institutions. An analysis of the identified open codes in light of research aims helps in exploring issues, ethical dimensions, and needs for incorporating Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) into the Bangladeshi higher education context. Further discussions about the identified themes follow in the next sections.

Theme 1: Pedagogical Evolution and the Collapse of Rote-Learning Frameworks

Indeed, the synthesized data strongly suggests that GenAI is the unprecedented catalyst of pedagogical change, being a personalized tutor operating around the clock, facilitating SDL, automatizing intensive work processes of lecturers, and acting as a translator overcoming linguistic barriers for marginalized or non-native speakers of English. It is clear from mixed-methods data that usage of such applications as ChatGPT greatly enhances the quality of students' prose and structuring skills, helping to relieve anxiety about academic writing.

Nevertheless, it must be noted that this optimization poses a serious threat to students' cognitive functioning. Over-reliance on auto-generation creates a danger of provoking cognitive overload and passivity, resulting in deterioration of analytic abilities of the students. Considering that AI systems have the ability to instantly generate complex

answers to simple questions, classical test forms relying on recollective functions and memorization have become irrelevant. Universities are supposed to switch to evaluation of students through problem-solving exercises and AI-deficit frameworks requiring mandatory supervision of human beings.

Fig. 2: The Paradigm Shift from Global Capabilities to Mandatory Evaluation Reform.

When this paradigm shift is mapped into the landscape of Bangladesh, the underlying systemic weakness becomes evident. The education framework in Bangladesh, especially in its higher education system, has traditionally involved the use of rote learning and exam systems based on recall rather than critical thinking. With classroom sizes being excessively large and teacher-to-student ratios skewed, GenAI can provide a low-cost substitute for a tutor. Nevertheless, since the existing exam framework is built upon recall, the possibility of misuse in the form of simple text generation is much higher here. Hence, top educational institutions in Bangladesh, such as the University of Dhaka and BUET, should adopt new curriculums that avoid written take-home exams and involve oral examinations.

Theme 2: Ethical Ambiguities and the Reality of "Sympathy Co-Authorship"

There exists an extremely sophisticated and layered ethical hierarchy of student understanding regarding acts of AI cheating in the existing literature. Whereas full automatic AI creation of an entire term paper is considered an obvious form of academic dishonesty, most students regard extremely specific micro-tasks such as stylistic polishing of individual sentences, simple brainstorming, and syntax refinement to be fully legitimate. Moreover, empirical findings from Europe show that whereas higher education students are capable of dodging obvious and easily recognizable forms of plagiarism, their proficiency in dealing with the ethical "grey-zones" remains extremely underdeveloped. In particular, grey-zones are largely based on unearned authorship; according to European surveys, up to 45% of Bachelor students admitted granting non-contributing students' co-authorship on joint projects due to the prevalence of social discord.

Importantly, the empirical results show that current policing models of academic ethics and commercial detection software (like Turnitin) are insufficiently addressing unauthorized use of AI. The issue here is that automated detectors are not able to recognize advanced manipulations with text and usage of grey-zones; thus, universities need to move away from punishment-based strategies and establish pro-active ethics that combines personal moral values with technological restrictions.

This ethical divide finds itself manifested in a very unique way within Bangladeshi academia. Because classes are so large in size, local universities depend very much on collaborative projects in order to facilitate grading. This synthesis has found that the combination of the structure of academia in Bangladesh and the culture is such that there exists a cultural norm called "sympathy co-authorship." Under this paradigm, Bangladeshi students put the names of students who have not contributed to the assignment because of their own sense of social duty and group solidarity. Since the anti-plagiarism modules themselves are based on the principles of individualism, they do nothing to tackle this issue. The UGC and the faculties themselves will have to give up the outsourcing policing software and move towards an open code of conduct classroom framework.

Theme 3: Infrastructure Deficits and Socio-Economic Disparities

The findings puncture the false premise of flawless digitalization of the globe, illustrating how effective digitization is clearly limited by material conditions existing locally. Studies conducted on emerging higher education systems highlight that abrupt implementation of superior digital models often results in serious "technological shocks" both for learners and educators. Technological shocks refer to a complete lack of prior technological preparedness, absolute lack of availability of physical devices, and overall poor support structure. The numbers confirm that the effectiveness of digital learning experiences drops sharply if learners are exposed to unreliable home learning settings, costly data connections, remoteness from cities, and long feedback loops. Meeting the SDG 4 requirements entails making extensive systemic changes, including providing subsidies for devices, increasing access to regional internet, and raising digital literacy levels locally.

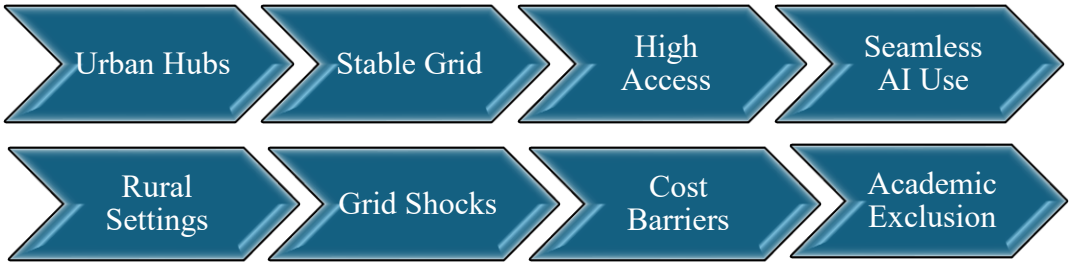

Fig. 3: Socio-Economic and Infrastructural Disparities in Technological Adaptation.

The gap in infrastructure facilities poses a very serious problem towards education in Bangladesh. Socioeconomic segregation defines the educational system in the country; the region of residence of a particular student determines whether he/she can have electricity or not and an undisturbed environment to study on his/her own. Introduction of GenAI software and complicated digital examination systems into the current curriculum of the country without provision of the required technological hardware amounts to outright discrimination of public university students who belong to regions other than urban. Instead of empowering the people through digitalization of the country, the process can increase the gap between the privileged and the less privileged digitally in the country.

Theme 4: Regulatory Asymmetry and the Failure of Blanket Bans

The international policy review shows a clear asymmetry in regulation, proving that there is a pronounced preference for AI policy development and guidelines implementation within wealthy Global North organizations, while the Global South remains in urgent need of proper regulation. It turns out that in accordance with the cross-national comparative analysis of data, progressive global universities have already moved away from total technological bans, realizing the fact that they are generally impossible to enforce as well as useless for educational purposes. The international trend, on the contrary, demonstrates that permission levels have to be set based on certain criteria:

- **Fully Permitted:** Application in automated processes for assignment creation.
- **Permitted with Attribution:** Only used as an aid for development or editing purposes; full attribution required.
- **Totally Prohibited:** In critical situations requiring full human participation in cognitive activity.

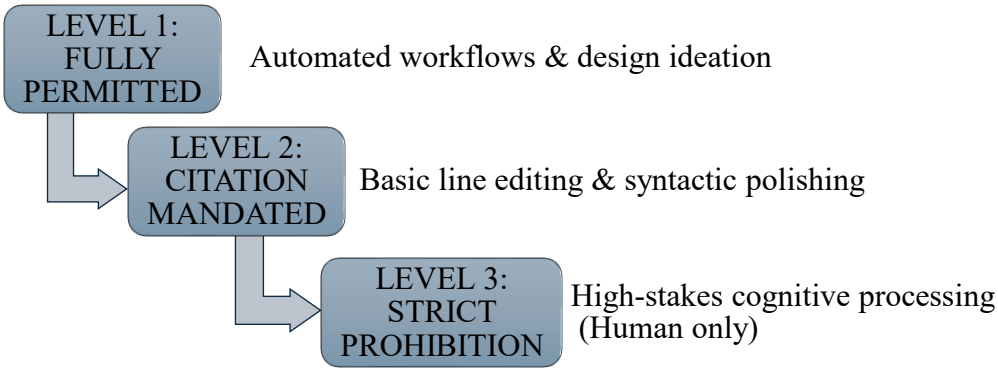

Fig. 4: Institutional Framework for Tiered AI Permission Levels.

Nevertheless, the dataset illustrates the fact that current systems of enforcement across the world are extremely defective because the lack of any form of institution structure

leads to dumping all of the responsibilities for disclosing unethical activities solely on shoulders of individual students and professors without any further guidelines. In other words, this gap is accurately reproduced in Bangladesh due to the complete lack of policy instruments that results in arbitrary monitoring of AI usage by local teachers, creating confusing and even aggressive academic environments.

In order to fix the chaos in question, the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh should consider taking certain structural measures aimed at creating a national policy. Namely, the commission needs to refrain from blindly copying and pasting western systems of punitive monitoring because they have nothing to do with the current reality in the country. Instead, the UGC should adopt its localized version of the tiered permission system through cooperation between local student unions and faculty committees.

Theme 5: Co-Designing Campus Trust Frameworks and Student Honor Codes

Through synthesis, it becomes clear that coercive systems of enforcement which punish academic misconduct are ineffective in situations where technical supervision is not feasible or possible. The need of the hour, therefore, lies in the construction of campus trust frameworks which encourage the active participation of students and faculty members. Instead of implementing commercial anti-plagiarism tools, it is necessary for universities in Bangladesh to promote a sense of shared responsibility within their communities by way of mutually constructed honor codes. These systems take into account the unique socio-cultural context by creating ethical parameters for using technology in such a way that they take into consideration hyper-local phenomena like peer pressure and undeserved authorship.

In addition to that, implementing such frameworks demands a change in the role of educators from being monitoring adversaries to facilitating educators. This is because when students get involved in formulating boundaries for the proper use of AI in their studies, awareness levels about ownership of ideas and agency of thought become highly effective. Open communication lines between teachers and learners guarantee that with time, the boundaries are negotiated as per the changes in AI technology.

Conclusion

The study examined the relationship between Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), academic integrity, and digital transformation in Bangladesh's higher education. The findings suggest that while GenAI offers opportunities for self-directed learning and language support, its unchecked use poses ethical, infrastructural, and academic integrity challenges. Bangladesh's reliance on rote learning, socio-cultural practice such as "sympathy co-authorship", and unequal access to digital resources further complicate GenAI adoption. Rather than imposing a general ban, higher education institutions should develop locally appropriate governance frameworks for responsible GenAI use.

Recommendations

To foster a sustainable, ethical, and equitable digital architecture across Bangladeshi higher education, the following strategic interventions are recommended for policymakers, institutional leaders, and faculty members:

i. Develop a national AI policy: The University Grants Commission (UGC) should establish a unified and context-appropriate framework for the ethical use of AI in higher education.

ii. Reform assessment practices: Universities should reduce reliance on recall-based examinations and adopt problem-based, project-based, and viva assessments to promote authentic learning.

iii. Strengthen digital infrastructure: The Ministry of Education and universities should improve equitable access through affordable internet, device support, and reliable campus digital facilities, particularly for rural students.

iv. Promote responsible AI use: Institutions should emphasize honor codes and faculty–student collaboration rather than overreliance on AI-detection software to encourage academic integrity.

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WALKING AS THOUGH DOWNHILL: A CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF HUMILITY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN HUMAN LIFE

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ABSTRACT

Humility is one of the most admired yet least understood human qualities, often confused in ordinary speech with weakness, shyness, or low self-worth. This study examines humility within the Islamic moral tradition, separates it from self-humiliation and arrogance, and explores its' significance for inner life, for relations with others, and for character. The approach is qualitative and conceptual, resting on a thematic analysis of the Qur'an and the major hadith collections alongside the moral psychology of al-Ghazali and Ibn Qudāma. Relevant passages were gathered around the terms tawāduʿ, kibr, and ʿujb, then grouped into themes. The study finds that humility involves an accurate assessment of oneself before the truth rather than a low opinion of oneself; that pride is assembled in three stages, namely possession of a good quality, the claim to have produced it, and comparison with others; that the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) supplies a practical model; while worshippers and scholars face a particular and hidden risk of pride. The study recommends humility be built deliberately, through remembrance of one's origin, the returning of credit to Allah (swt), and exercising restraint in social comparison, particularly in digital environments.

Keywords*: humility; tawāduʿ; arrogance (kibr); conceit (ʿujb); prophetic example; character*

Introduction

There is a small detail in the descriptions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that is easy to miss. Those who accompanied him said that he moved as though he were going downhill: his pace quick, his gaze lowered, his whole body leaning gently forward, toward the ground and toward the people around him. We are usually taught the opposite: to stand tall, lift the chin, and fill the room. To walk as though you are always going downhill is to lean, again and again, toward other people rather than above them. That one habit is a picture of humility, and a clue to why the virtue is so easy to praise and so hard to understand.

Humility is widely regarded, but very few can say what it is. Nearly every moral and religious tradition ranks it among the highest virtues, yet in ordinary speech we quietly suspect that humility may be confused with weakness. We call someone humble as a compliment, but if we call them meek it sounds like a complaint. This confusion is not an accident. Its' meaning is often misunderstood, because it lives in the narrow space between two failures that both pretend to be strengths: loud self-assertion on one side, the habit of putting yourself down on the other. A saying of the Prophet (peace be upon

him) even warns a believer against humiliating himself (al-Tirmidhī, ca. 884/2007), which tells us something important: a humble person does not think he is worthless. Humility is not about tearing the self-down but about putting it in its right place.

This study therefore makes one central argument: humility is not a low opinion of yourself but an accurate one. It is the self-seen clearly, sitting between self-humiliation and arrogance, and once we understand it in that way we can see why it reaches into almost every part of life. The discussion first clarifies the concept, then examines how pride is assembled inside a person, since the surest way to understand a virtue is to study its opposite. It turns next to the life of the Prophet (peace be upon him), who offers humility not as a theory but as a daily practice, and subtle forms of pride that may affect religious and learned people. Throughout, the Qur'an, the prophetic example, and the classical scholars al-Ghazālī and Ibn Qudāma guide the analysis.

Literature Review

The Islamic tradition has treated humility as a subject of serious moral analysis for centuries, in three layers. The first is scriptural. The Qur'an presents pride as the first sin in creation, since Iblīs refuses to bow and defends the refusal by claiming that he is better than the one he was told to honour (Qur'an 7:12). It also deflates self-importance by returning the human being to his origin, a single drop of fluid, from which he emerges openly contentious (Qur'an 16:4), and by promising that the One who first gave life to bones will give it again (Qur'an 36:78–79). It further praises those who give while their hearts tremble at whether it will be accepted (Qur'an 23:60), setting a standard of self-suspicion rather than self-congratulation.

The second layer is the hadīth literature, supplying both the warnings and the model. Severity is set by the report that no one carrying an atom's weight of pride in his heart will enter Paradise (Muslim, ca. 875/2007, Hadīth 91), while the reward is stated as a rule: whoever lowers himself for the sake of Allah (swt) is raised by Him (Muslim, ca. 875/2007, Hadīth 2588). The same collections preserve the practical model, in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbids excessive praise of himself (al-Bukhārī, ca. 846/1997, Hadīth 3445), warns against the appetite for public deference (al-Tirmidhī, ca. 884/2007), ties faith to mercy toward the young and respect toward the old (al-Tirmidhī, ca. 884/2007, Hadīth 1919), lets a young girl lead him by the hand through Madīnah (Muslim, ca. 875/2007, Hadīth 2326), and calms a trembling man by reminding him that he is only the son of an ordinary woman of his people (Ibn Mājah, ca. 887/2007, Hadīth 3312).

The third layer is classical scholarship, where the analysis becomes psychological. Al-Ghazālī treats pride (kibr) and conceit (ʿujb) as diseases of the heart and humility (tawāduʿ) as their cure, locating the matter inwardly, in perception, before it appears in conduct (al-Ghazālī, ca. 1100/2001). He also preserves the domestic reports of the Prophet (peace be upon him) working with his own hands, reading them as evidence of

settled character (al-Ghazālī, ca. 1100/2001). Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, writing in the seventh Islamic century, sharpens the diagnosis in two directions. He identifies the man who will not lift a finger at home as displaying pride rather than status (Ibn Qudāma, ca. 1200/1997), and warns that those most likely to be struck by pride, and least likely to detect it, are worshippers, scholars, and students of sacred knowledge (Ibn Qudāma, ca. 1200/1997).

Taken together, these layers establish that humility is an inward state with outward signs, that its opposite is a grave spiritual illness, and that the tradition already holds a detailed psychology of pride. What remains less developed, and what this study attempts, is a connected account setting out the stages by which pride forms and reading the prophetic example as an answer to each.

Objectives

This study pursues the following objectives:

- **i.** To clarify the meaning of humility and distinguish it from self-humiliation and arrogance.
- **ii.** To identify the stages by which pride forms, so that its opposite becomes easier to recognize.
- **iii.** To present the life of the Prophet (peace be upon him) as a practical model of humility.
- **iv.** To examine the hidden pride that often settles into worshippers, scholars, and students of knowledge.
- **v.** To establish the significance of humility for the heart, for social relations, and for the moral development of the next generation, and to identify means of cultivating it.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, conceptual design, using textual and thematic analysis rather than empirical measurement. This approach is appropriate for examining the meaning, boundaries, and moral significance of a concept rather than measuring its distribution in a population. The material consists entirely of primary Islamic sources and classical Islamic scholarship, organized into three groups: the Qur'an in the translation of Abdel Haleem (2004); four canonical hadīth collections, namely those of al-Bukhārī (ca. 846/1997), Muslim (ca. 875/2007), al-Tirmidhī (ca. 884/2007), and Ibn Mājah (ca. 887/2007); and two classical works of Islamic moral psychology, the Ihyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn of al-Ghazālī (ca. 1100/2001) and the Mukhtasar Minhāj al-Qāsidīn of Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī (ca. 1200/1997). Sources outside the Islamic tradition were deliberately excluded, so that the concept could be examined on its own Islamic conceptual and normative framework. Two limitations should be stated: the study is

normative rather than empirical, and the texts were consulted in translation, which places fine linguistic nuance beyond its scope.

Data Collection

Material was collected by purposive textual sampling rather than fieldwork. A passage was included where it used the vocabulary of humility, pride, or conceit; where it narrated conduct of the Prophet (peace be upon him) bearing on status or rank; or where a classical scholar analyzed the inward workings of these traits. The process yielded a corpus of around forty passages. Any narration whose attribution is contested is marked as a report rather than presented as established.

Data Analysis

The passages were analyzed thematically. Each was labelled by its dominant concern, producing labels such as origin, status, praise, retaliation, treatment of the weak, domestic conduct, and religious self-satisfaction. These labels were then grouped, and two structures emerged. Passages about pride fell into a sequence of three moves rather than a single act, while passages about the conduct of the Prophet (peace be upon him) clustered into a set of repeated practices. Reading the two against each other showed that the practices answer the moves, and the findings below follow that structure. The reasoning is interpretive, arguing from the texts rather than from measurement.

Findings

The thematic analysis produced six interconnected findings.

The first finding concerns the definition of humility. Humility is best pictured as the middle of a straight line with a problem at each end. At one end stands arrogance, where a person claims more than he is owed and measures his worth by looking down on others. At the other end stands self-humiliation, where a person claims less than the truth and treats his own dignity as worthless. The virtue sits at neither end but at the centre, where a person sees himself accurately, without inflating or erasing himself. What fixes that centre is not a feeling but the truth. A humble person does not necessarily deny personal abilities, achievements, or virtues; rather he is the one who sees correctly, neither exaggerating his good qualities nor denying them, but placing them where they belong, in relation to other people and to the One who gave them. This confirms al-Ghazālī's judgement that the matter begins inwardly, before it shows itself in behaviour (al-Ghazali, ca. 1100/2001).

The second finding is that pride does not arrive at once but is develop progressively, in three stages. The first stage involves possessing a desirable quality or blessing: a person may be wealthy, clever, knowledgeable, capable, or good-looking, and none of that is a sin. These are real gifts, and no pride exists at this point, which reveals something strange about the vice: it is built out of good material.

Trouble begins at the middle stage, where a person stops seeing his gift as a gift and starts treating it as something primarily to personal effort or inherent superiority. The danger is sharpest where the quality is most impressive. It is easy enough to say that I made my own money, but far more tempting, and more harmful, to believe that I produced my own knowledge or my own piety, because those feel so much like me. The remedy is to recall that the gift was given: a talent I did not invent, carried in a body I did not design, inside a life I did not choose, looks more like something on loan than something I own.

Comparison completes the sequence. A man may sit alone and be pleased with himself, but he cannot be arrogant alone, since arrogance needs a second person to look down upon. This is why the opening act of pride in the Qur'an is the refusal of Iblīs to bow, justified by the claim that he is better (Qur'an 7:12). Pride, in the end, is a verdict that I stand above someone else. Our own age has made that verdict harder to avoid. The habit of comparing prices and products has been turned, through social media, onto the lives of other people, so that lifestyles, achievements, possessions, relationships, and physical appearance are placed before us all day long, asking to be measured. Modern life does not merely permit the ranking glance that feeds pride; it manufactures it. Humility, by contrast, breaks the chain at each link: it receives good qualities as gifts rather than achievements, and it declines the comparison that turns difference into hierarchy.

The third finding is that the prophetic biography answers each move with a concrete practice, and six emerged from the analysis. The first concerns ambition. A well-known report, transmitted outside the two Sahīh collections, states that the Prophet (peace be upon him) was offered a choice: to be a king and a prophet, like Dāwūd (AS) and Sulaimān (AS) with their thrones and armies, or a servant and a prophet living among his people as one of them. He chose to be a servant. Offered his preference for servanthood, he stayed close to his people, and the reward came as a rule that still holds: whoever humble himself for the sake of Allah (swt) is raised by Him (Muslim, ca. 875/2007, Hadīth 2588). The logic of the virtue is visible there: going down is, in the end, the way up.

A second practice appears in the small habits of everyday rank. The Prophet (peace be upon him) discouraged his companions from rising when he entered, observing that such ceremonial deference belonged to the rulers of Persia and Rome (al-Tirmidhī, ca. 884/2007). Even wanting people to stand for you is a sign that something has gone wrong inside. He also shared a single dish with a servant of his household and declined a raised seat and a separate plate, saying that he ate as a servant eats and sat as a servant sits (al-Ghazālī, ca. 1100/2001). These examples suggest that humility is expressed not only through major acts of sacrifice but also through ordinary interactions involving social rank, service, and privilege.

A third practice belongs to the home, which the scholars treat as the real examination of character because nobody is watching. Reports describe the Prophet (peace be upon him) mending his own clothes, repairing his sandals, and milking his animals (al-Ghazālī, ca. 1100/2001), while Ibn Qudāma reads the opposite behaviour, the man who will not lift a finger in his own house, as a display of pride and not of standing (Ibn Qudāma, ca. 1200/1997). These accounts challenge the assumption that social or religious status exempts a person from ordinary work. The tradition holds the reverse: willingness to do humble work, especially when one could order somebody else to do it, marks stature rather than costing it.

Praise supplies a fourth practice. In a culture that prized elaborate flattery, the Prophet (peace be upon him) told his companions not to praise him as the Christians had praised the son of Maryam (al-Bukhārī, ca. 846/1997, Hadīth 3445). The warning is sharper than it appears, since unchecked praise tends, across generations, to slide from admiration into something close to worship: a righteous figure is first remembered, then honored, then turned into an object of devotion. By insisting that he be called the servant and messenger of Allah (swt), he was not performing modesty but guarding a boundary, refusing in advance the veneration that excessive praise grows into.

The fifth practice is the most demanding, and it governs the response to injury: the deepest humility is that shown to people who have not earned it. Anyone can be gentle with a child or a friend; the real examination is the person who has wronged you and whom you have the power to humiliate. The clearest instance is the entry into Makkah after roughly twenty years of persecution. The Prophet (peace be upon him) could have entered in triumph; instead, he entered with his head lowered, and the conqueror declined the conqueror's right. To answer a bruised ego with gentleness rather than revenge is the summit of this virtue, precisely because that is where pride pulls hardest.

A sixth practice gathers the others into one rule: the truest sign of humility is the treatment of people who hold less power. The man who refused the deference of the powerful allowed a young girl to take his hand and lead him through the streets until she was finished (Muslim, ca. 875/2007, Hadīth 2326). He embraced orphans, and taught that whoever shows no mercy to the young and no respect to the old is not one of us (al-Tirmidhī, ca. 884/2007, Hadīth 1919). When a nervous man trembled before him, he set him at ease by reminding him that he was only the son of an ordinary woman from his own people (Ibn Mājah, ca. 887/2007, Hadīth 3312). The gesture never changes: he kept stepping down toward the person who might otherwise have been looked down upon.

The fourth finding concerns a hidden danger. If pride were always loud it would be easy to spot; its real menace is that it hides, and it hides best inside religious and learned people. Ibn Qudāma holds that those most likely to be struck by this vice, and least likely to notice it, are the worshippers, the scholars, and the students of sacred knowledge (Ibn Qudāma, ca. 1200/1997). The three-stage model explains why. Worship and knowledge

rank among the most admirable things a person can possess; they feel intensely like personal achievements; and they invite the most flattering comparison of all, between the guided and the lost, the knowing and the ignorant. Spiritual pride is therefore not a rare accident but a structural hazard, built into the very goods that religion and learning ask us to pursue. A person may pray, fast, give, and study, and gradually come to feel that he is somebody because of it. The feeling is quiet and wears the clothing of devotion, which is what makes it dangerous. Worse, the more religious a person becomes, the rawer material he holds for this vice, and the more easily he mistakes it for closeness to Allah (swt). Guarding against it is not a side issue in religious life; it may be the main work of it.

The fifth finding sets out why the virtue matters, and four domains emerged. The first is the inner life, where the tradition puts the stakes as high as they can go: no one carrying even an atom's weight of pride in his heart will enter Paradise (Muslim, ca. 875/2007, Hadīth 91). Pride is not a small flaw that may sit beside a great many good deeds; it has to be removed rather than merely outweighed, which makes humility a condition for the whole moral and spiritual life rather than one good quality among many.

Psychological life forms the second domain. A person whose sense of worth rests on comparison can be wounded at any moment, since there will always be somebody richer, cleverer, or more admired. Pride that needs to be on top is therefore a standing source of anxiety and resentment; the colleague who earns a little more becomes an insult that keeps a man awake at night. Humility removes that pressure, and it makes learning possible, since nobody can learn what he will not admit he does not know.

Social life forms the third domain. Pride divides, since it is made out of ranking the self above others, while humility gathers people, since it leans toward them instead of over them. In leadership the difference decides everything. A leader who must be obeyed, who cannot absorb correction, and who feels threatened when a subordinate succeeds will rot the institution he runs, whereas one who can serve, listen, and share credit will build it up. The ruler who told his people not to stand for him was thus modelling authority without domination.

The fourth domain is the one most often forgotten, namely the passing of character from one generation to the next. There is a kind impulse, strongest in those who endured hardship, to spare their children every difficulty, so that the child need never struggle or go without. The tradition warns that such kindness can backfire. A child raised with everything done for him frequently grows up not grateful but helpless. By removing all struggle, we remove the very conditions under which competence, gratitude, and humility are formed. Hands accustomed to ordinary work are slower to forget what they are.

The sixth finding identifies how the virtue may be built, since each practice attacks pride at one of its three stages. Remembrance of origin comes first. The Qur'an returns the

human being to the humble facts of his beginning and his end, reminding him that he was made from a single drop of fluid and yet turns to argue and boast (Qur'an 16:4), and that the One who first gave life to decayed bones can do so again (Qur'an 36:78–79). The argument deflates pride at the root: a creature who did not bring himself into existence, who was once nothing and will return to dust, holds no ground on which to stand tall. To recall your origin dismantles the middle stage, the illusion of self-manufacture.

The returning of credit follows: the deliberate habit of handing your gifts back to the One who gave them, not to be confused with false modesty. False modesty is pride in costume, the public self-deprecation that is really fishing for somebody to disagree and praise. Real humility does not perform; it keeps returning the credit and asks nothing back.

A third practice addresses religious pride. Whoever is tempted to feel proud of his worship is told to remember the time before he worshipped at all: that change was not something he produced on his own, and it could be reversed. The guidance that lifted him is no trophy to be waved about; it is a gift he should fear losing.

A fourth practice is to hold a low estimate of your own good deeds. The Qur'an describes believers as people who give while their hearts tremble at whether it will be accepted (Qur'an 23:60), the opposite of self-congratulation. ʿUmar is reported to have said that he would be content if even a tenth of his prayer were accepted. The proud man counts his deeds like money in the bank; the humble man wonders whether they will survive close inspection. Holding your own righteousness lightly is the last and most delicate defence against the pride that hides inside good actions.

Beneath all of these lies the oldest method of forming character, imitation. Good intentions rarely change a person by themselves, but a real and beloved example can. To observe how a humble man sits, speaks, receives praise, treats the weak, and works with his own hands, and then to attempt the same in small ways, is to train the virtue rather than merely admire it. For the Muslim that example is the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Conclusion

Humility, then, is not about making yourself small. It is about getting yourself the right size. It is an honest estimate of your own gifts, held as things given rather than seized, and held without measuring yourself against everyone else. Understood in that way, the virtue is not a decoration on top of good character; it is the ground that character grows in, since gratitude, generosity, justice, and mercy all require a person who has stopped insisting on being first. This study has shown that pride is built in three stages, that the prophetic example supplies a practice answering each, that worshippers and scholars carry a hidden exposure to the vice, and that the stakes run from the state of the heart to the raising of children. The man who walked as though he were going downhill was not

sinking below his own worth. He was leaning, on purpose and without stopping, toward the people around him. Learning to walk in that manner, tilted toward others instead of above them, may be one of the hardest and most necessary things a human being can do.

Recommendations

The following recommendations follow:

i. **For Individuals:** Reflect on the sources of one's abilities and successes and practise humility through ordinary, selfless tasks.

ii. **For Education and Parenting:** Allow children to experience genuine struggle and responsibility, rather than removing every obstacle from their path.

iii. **For Leaders and Institutions:** Value service, humility, listening, and shared credit, while treating excessive demands for deference as a warning sign.

iv. **For Religious and Learning Communities:** Promote awareness of spiritual and intellectual pride by encouraging humility, openness to correction, and recognition of one's limitations.

v. **For Online Life:** Limit unhealthy comparison and cultivate mindful engagement with digital platforms.

vi. **For Further Research:** Examine the three-stage account of pride through wider classical Islamic scholarship and contemporary social media practices among young Muslims.

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