



## ICT and E-Governance in Bangladesh: Impact on the Life of University Students

**Sadik Hasan Shuvo**

Department of Local Government and Urban Development, Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University, Trishal, Mymensingh, Bangladesh

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#### \*Corresponding Author

Shuvo HS

✉ sadik.jkknui@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

The study dealt with the impact of e-governance and ICT on the life of university students not only on their academic arena but also on their social life. Students especially of the universities are the largest user of ICT and e-governance in Bangladesh. They are highly dependent on IT. A large portion of their time is being spent on internet or using ICT. Some of them use the technology to get something better and some just waste their time. As the most important community of the country is using technology it is important to know how technology is making impact on them. As Bangladesh is getting developed the technology is also being developed. It is becoming the medium of achieving knowledge, recreation and sometimes corruption also. The study found many beneficial impacts of ICT and e-governance among the university students. But there are some negative impacts also. So, for beneficial use of technology all of these improper contents and uses should be controlled effectively.

### INTRODUCTION

No doubt technology is making the life of people easier, comfortable and enjoyable. People are now able to communicate very easily, find something within a moment and have recreation sitting inside their room. Youth and the students of universities are using technologies mostly. By using technology they are getting services from government and non-government organizations. They can save their time and cost by collecting information and reading materials from internet. On the other hand excess use of internet and technology is hampering their study and social life. Many students are becoming abnormal in behavior. They are getting detached from family and normal life by being grabbed by technology. Moreover some students are using internet to do corruption. Though there are some negative points technology is having great impact on the life of students both in academically and socially. The e-governance in Bangladesh is getting developed along with the development of information and communication technology (ICT). Both are making the life of people more comfortable. As

the major users, impact of e-governance and ICT on university students is important to measure. This will be helpful for the policy makers to make effective policy so that negative impact can be reduced. For this reason, this research has been coined to know the present status of ICT and e-governance in Bangladesh and their impact on the life of university students.

### METHODOLOGY

#### Theoretical framework

“ICT is an another/extensional term for information technology (IT) which stresses the role of unified communications and the integration of telecommunications (telephone lines and wireless signals), computers as well as necessary enterprise software, middleware, storage, and audio-visual systems, which enable users to access, store, transmit, and manipulate information” (Wikipedia, 2018). Theories relating to e-governance and ICT are limited. But Broadcasting and Critical Flow models can be considered relevant. According to broadcasting

model “the use of ICT opens up an alternative channel for people to access information as well as validate existing information from different sources”. The Government of Bangladesh is broadcasting its relevant information for the citizen by using various websites and mobile applications. Citizens are now enjoying of getting information and services through a new, easy and flexible channel. Advancement in using electronic devices, websites, and high speed network are opening this alternative channel. On the other hand, Critical Flow model says about the reduction of time and distance as information is available in a single network and it is open to all citizen (Halachmi, n.d). The service of Bangladesh National Portal can be explained through this model. This portal is a combination of several government websites and a store house of government information important to citizen. Access to this portal, all services are free and open to all. This is reducing cost and harassment of people as time and distance have been reduced. Moving physically has been replaced by clicking on websites.

### Data analysis

It is a mixed method research using both qualitative and quantitative data collected from both primary and secondary sources. For primary data 60 undergraduate public university students including both male and female were selected following purposive sampling technique. Ethical issues of research have been followed strictly. Direct interview and case studies were conducted for collecting necessary primary data. Secondary sources include related web sites, books, newspaper, documentary, etc. Tabular method was followed to analyze the collected data and presentation of the results.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Present Status of ICT and E-governance in Bangladesh

Bangladesh ranked 124 (among 193 countries) having score 0.3800 (0-1) in 2016 E-governance Development Index (Data Center, 2016). In another Global Innovation Index (GII), the country has been ranked 95 (among 127 countries) having

score 39 (0-100) in ICT section (GII, 2017). GII has provided a short but important picture about e-governance of Bangladesh as shown in Table 1.

Table 1  
ICT ranking of Bangladesh.

Category	Rank	Score
ICTs (overall)	95	39
ICT access	109	10.6
ICT use	113	10.6
Government's online service	60	62.3
Online e-participation	82	52.5

### Progress in E-governance

Though Bangladesh has achieved progress in some cases internationally compared with other, the progress is not so satisfactory. E-governance development index (EGDI) and GII provided data about the progress in e-governance. In both rank and score the progress of the country is neither up to the mark nor satisfactory.

### Progress in GII

GII is continuing the ICT ranking from 2013. Table 2 shows that Bangladesh has progressed 14 unit ranks (from 109 to 95) from 2013 to 2017 and the score has been increased by 14.4 units (from 22.6 to 37).

Table 2  
GII progress in Bangladesh.

Year	GII score	GII rank
2013	22.6	109
2014	26.7	110
2015	27.3	109
2016	30.7	105
2017	37	95

### Progress in EGDI

EGDI shows that score, rank and participation rank are increasing. EGDI score has been increased 0.2038 unit (from 0.1762 to 0.38.); EGDI rank progressed by 38 unit (from 162 to 124) and e-participation score increased by 67 unit (from 151 to 84). The progress is shown in Table 3.

Table 3  
E-governance progress in Bangladesh.

Year	EGDI score	EGDI rank	E-participation rank
2005	0.1762	162	151
2008	0.2936	142	78
2010	0.3028	134	102
2012	0.2991	150	109
2014	0.2757	148	84
2016	0.3800	124	84

### Impact of E-governance and ICT

E-governance and ICT have brought a revolutionary change in the society. In Bangladesh private tuition is very popular. This sort of tuition creates a great economic pressure on parents. But now-a-days the place of private tutor is being replaced by online learning. There are a number of Youtube channels and learning websites through which students can learn and thus they can save time and cost. It is a blessing of e-governance of course. One source shows that “8.5 million students are learning from multimedia content developed by 100000 teachers. 105 Digital Talking textbooks for visually disabled students” are available (Khan, 2017). Different government projects based on ICT has reduced 85% time, 63% cost and number of visitors by 40% by providing citizen services (a2i, 2018). There are a lot of services now in Bangladesh which are saving time, cost of citizen and provide them with relax and peace. Horizon Scan Report (2007) shows that time saving for citizen is highly improved (Table 4).

Table 4  
Status of e-governance in Bangladesh.

Goal	Status
Saving government time	General improvement
Saving expenditure of the government	No improvement
Saving citizens' time	Highly improved
Saving citizens' money	Not much improvement
Saving citizens' hassle	Slight improvement
Increasing transparency	Highly improved
Time management	Highly improved
Increasing accountability	General improvement

### Impact specific to students

Demographic information: The demographic information shows that all students have internet connection and on an average they spend 5.08 hours on internet. Most of the time (56.9%) they spend on social networking and recreational sites while for 40.75% time is being used on educational or government sites. For internet, more than half (52%) of the students use mobile phone (Table 5).

Table 5  
Demographic information of internet use.

Topic	Findings
Sex	Male (40) female (20)
Do you have internet connection?	Yes (60) No (0)
How much time do you spend on Internet each day (average)	5.08 hours
Time spent (average)	Social networking/recreational site 56.90 %
	Educational/government other 40.75%
	2.35%
Devices	Mobile 52.00%
	Computer 20.00%
	Both 28.00%

### ICT and e-governance has eased life

E-governance has made life easier than that of before. It is now saving time and reducing pain. It reduced time from 30 to 16 days, cost from USD 3.3 to about 1 and the number of visits required to the government office from 5 to zero (a2i, 2018). Students can easily get necessary 1500 government forms and 7.65 million contact details of officials and other government facilities from the national web portal. The search engines such as Google, Yahoo, etc. social networking sites and e-commerce sites are making the life easy. Result of the study shows 73% think that ICT and e-governance has brought notable changes in their life (Table 6).

### Method of study is being changed

Technology has changed the method of study. A large number of students are now depend on

online reading materials rather than printed book. The place of printed newspaper is being replaced by online portal. 53% said they haven't studied any printed book after getting admitted in the university. 62% said that they collect 80% of their reading materials from internet. Most of the time teachers provide study materials. Most of the students think teachers also collect most of the reading materials from internet. Only 20% students read printed newspaper while rest 80% read news from news portals or social networking sites (Table 6). In class teachers are now using multimedia projector to teach in a modern way (Kila, 2018).

Table 6  
Impact of ICT and e-governance among students.

Heads of impact	Extent of impact (% of respondents)
Notable change in life	73.00
Collecting reading materials from internet	80.00
Reading in website/internet	80.00
Chatting	54.00
Recreation (male)	58.00
Recreation (female)	60.00
Time saving	94.00
Hampering study	63.00
Brings abnormality	72.00
Responsible for corruption	56.00
Make student lazy	68.00
Blessing for varsity admission	88.00

### Students mainly use internet in social networking

From the study it has been found that students mainly use internet to communicate with friends, classmates, teachers and relatives. Result shows that students spend 54% time in chatting and being informed about others in social networking sites (Table 6). Because of it 60% think networking is important now-a-days.

### Internet is a source of recreation

Among students internet is now the largest source of recreation. Passing time on Youtube and Facebook provides them recreation. 60% female respondents said that internet is the largest source

of recreation to them while 58% male respondents think internet is the second largest source of recreation (Table 6). A female respondent said, "As a girl I have limited scope to go out and play or gossiping. I like to pass my time on social networking sites. It fulfilled my demand of recreation."

### Saving time and cost is the largest impact

Because of e-governance time and cost are being saved notably. 94% respondents think it is the largest impact on them (Table 6). They are now able to save their time by using technology.

### Excess availability and options are hampering study

Technology is both blessing and curse. It depends on the users. 63% think that study is being hampered because of excess availability of internet items (Table 6). In Bangladesh no website is blocked and anyone can browse any site. There are a lot of options to use. So students pass a long time on internet. On average they spend 5.3 hours on social networking sites each day (Shuvo, 2018). This is really hampering their study.

### Internet is making students abnormal

Though internet is providing a lot of opportunities and facilities it is making students abnormal in some cases. 72% said that sometimes they behave like abnormal people (Table 6).

### Technology is helping in corruption

Right now question paper leak before examination and following unethical way during admission test has become a common word in Bangladesh. These are occurring using technology. Most of the university students are accused for this. During admission test some students use mobile phone or microchip to communicate with persons staying outside. Criminals use internet to leak questions also. Data show that 56% think technology is highly responsible for corruption (Table 6). "Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) does not have adequate measures to control the social media sites, which has led to the failure to identify the leakers and block their accounts" (Tribune Desk, 2018).

### Technology is making people lazy

As information is available on internet students don't want to read more. During the manual era students invested a lot of time to study in library. They had to study a lot to get information. Thus their knowledge was increased. But now students just search and find the information so that they don't need to study more and more which makes them lazy and poor in knowledge. 68% respondents think that because of internet they don't like to study much (Table 6).

### Online based admission process is a blessing

The changed of system of university admission test is a text book example of the development of e-governance in Bangladesh. Compared to the previous system 88% respondents said that it is a blessing of e-governance while rest 12% found it difficult for them (Table 6). Ten years ago a university candidate had to suffer and spend a lot to attend in entry exam test. The procedure was so harassing. But now it is easy because of IT. The difference between two periods is shown in Table 7 which depicts a clear picture about the progress.

Table 7  
Impact of e-governance on university admission.

Before Technology	Present (after Technology)
●Going to the university	●Applying through mobile phone/internet
●Drafting in bank	●Downloading admit card
●Waiting in a long queue	●Going to the university
●Taking admission test form	●Sitting in the exam hall
●Returning to home	●Returning home
●Going to the university	●Downloading the result
●Standing in a long queue	
●Collecting admit card	
●Returning to home	
●Going to university	
●Sitting in exam hall	
●Returning home	
●Going to the university	
●Collecting result	

For an average distance from a university the whole process could take around 50 hours and 4000 Bangladeshi Taka (around 50 USD). But at present the pre admission process is fully technology based so that a candidate can reduce time from 50 hours to 15 hours and cost 4000 BDT (50 USD) to around 1000 BDT (12 USD). They can now complete their pre admission process through mobile phone or internet. They only need to sit for exam physically. This technological advancement not only reduced time and cost but also reduced mental pressure and harassment. Like the university entry exam system there a lot of changes which are making the life easier.

### CONCLUSION

As students are the largest user of e-governance and technology, analyzing impact on them shows a good picture of the impact of ICT and e-governance on the citizen of Bangladesh. Through the study it has been found that ICT and e-governance are blessing no doubt but they need to be controlled. Unleashed use of ICT and e-governance is hampering the normal life and study of students. To make e-governance and ICT effective and beneficial to the students, more studies are essential to be undertaken.

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