



Major Current Problems Faced by Students in Dhaka: Causes, Implications, and Citizen Solutions

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Abstract

This abstract explores the significant challenges faced by students in Dhaka, Bangladesh, focusing on their causes, implications, and potential citizen-driven solutions. The primary problems identified include inadequate educational infrastructure, characterized by overcrowded classrooms and insufficient resources, exacerbated by rapid urbanization and population growth. Moreover, the quality of education remains a critical concern due to outdated curricula, a lack of qualified teachers, and a pervasive reliance on rote learning methods. These challenges have profound implications for students, leading to lower academic achievement, limited socio-economic mobility, and perpetuating cycles of poverty and inequality. Addressing these issues requires collaborative efforts involving citizens, communities, and policymakers. Citizen solutions may include grassroots initiatives to improve school facilities, advocacy for educational reforms, and programs to provide financial assistance and educational resources to disadvantaged students. By addressing these issues comprehensively, focusing on systemic reforms and community-driven interventions, Dhaka can foster an environment where all students have equitable access to quality education, enhancing their prospects for personal development and contributing to broader socio-economic development goals.

Keywords: Causes, Implications, and Citizen Solutions

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Introduction

The educational landscape in Dhaka, Bangladesh, presents significant challenges that

profoundly impact students' educational experiences and future opportunities (Shohel et al., 2022); (Md. R. Amin et al., 2024). This introduction explores the primary problems faced by students, identifies their root causes, discusses their implications, and proposes citizen-driven solutions to mitigate these challenges. One of the foremost issues is the inadequate educational infrastructure across many schools and colleges in Dhaka. This includes overcrowded classrooms, lack of proper facilities such as libraries and laboratories, and insufficient resources, which hinder effective teaching and learning. Rapid urbanization and population growth have strained infrastructure development, exacerbating these shortcomings. Furthermore, the quality of education remains a critical concern (Kuddus et al., 2020).

Outdated curricula, inadequate teacher training, and a predominant focus on memorization rather than critical thinking skills hinder students' holistic development and preparedness for future challenges (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). These challenges have far-reaching implications, impacting students' academic performance, and socio-economic mobility, and contributing to a cycle of inequality. Addressing these issues requires collaborative efforts involving citizens, communities, educational institutions, and policymakers. Citizen solutions may include grassroots initiatives to improve infrastructure, advocacy for educational reforms, and programs to support marginalized students. By examining these challenges comprehensively and proposing actionable solutions, this study aims to contribute to the discourse on improving educational equity and quality in Dhaka, fostering a conducive environment for all students to thrive and contribute meaningfully to society (Alam & Mohanty, 2023).

The research objectives regarding the major current problems faced by students in Dhaka would aim to thoroughly investigate the causes, implications, and potential citizen-driven solutions. Firstly, the research would seek to identify and analyze the primary challenges such as inadequate educational infrastructure, poor quality of education, and socioeconomic disparities affecting students in Dhaka. This involves gathering data through surveys, interviews, and existing literature to understand the root causes and their interconnectedness. Secondly, the research would focus on elucidating the implications of these problems. This includes examining their impact on academic performance, career prospects, and overall socio-economic development of the region. Understanding these implications is crucial for highlighting the urgency of addressing these issues. Lastly, the research would aim to propose citizen-driven solutions (Dwivedi et al., 2021); (Mintchev et al., 2022); (Anthony, 2024).

This involves exploring community-based initiatives, advocacy strategies, and policy recommendations that can effectively address the identified problems. Citizen solutions may include grassroots efforts to improve educational facilities, campaigns for educational reforms, and initiatives to support disadvantaged students through scholarships or mentorship programs (Daniel et al., 2019); (Walter, 2024). By achieving these objectives, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by students in Dhaka and offer actionable insights to stakeholders, policymakers, and community leaders for fostering positive change in the educational landscape.

Methodology

Online Research

Online research involves using the internet to gather information and data for your research project. It includes collecting data from websites, databases, online publications, and various digital sources. I used search engines, academic databases, and various online tools. I reviewed existing online sources, academic articles, and relevant websites to gather background information.

Steps:

- Identify research objectives and questions.
- Use search engines and databases to find relevant sources.
- Evaluate the credibility and reliability of online sources.
- Extract and compile data from websites, articles, or digital resources.
- Analyze and synthesize the gathered information for your research.

Surveys

Surveys are a structured data collection method where researchers design questionnaires or interviews to gather information from a sample of respondents. Surveys can be conducted through various mediums, including paper, online forms, or in-person interviews.

Steps:

- Define research objectives and formulate clear research questions.
- Design a survey instrument, including questions and response options.
- Determine the survey sample and method of distribution (e.g., online, phone, in-person).
- Administer the survey to respondents.
- Collect and analyze the data to draw conclusions and insights.

Designing the Survey

I designed a structured set of questions that are administered to a group of respondents via Google Forms. The question was open-ended, closed-ended, and a mix of both.

Sampling: I selected a representative sample of the target population. This was done through random sampling.

Data Collection: The data of this survey was collected from the respondents based on the survey design via Google Forms and Phonic Conversation.

Data Analysis: The collected data was analyzed using statistical methods to draw conclusions and insights.

Ethical Considerations: I obtained the information and data through informed consent, ensured confidentiality, and handled data in compliance with relevant ethical and legal standards.

Phonic Conversation

Phonic conversations, or phone conversations, are verbal interactions with participants conducted over the phone. This method is often used in qualitative research to collect in-depth information through interviews or discussions.

Steps:

- Establish research objectives and design a conversation guide or interview script.
- Identify and select participants (interviewees) who fit the research criteria.
- Schedule and conduct phone interviews, following the guide.
- Record the conversations (with consent) or take detailed notes.
- Transcribe and analyze the data for patterns and insights.

Participant Selection: I identified individuals and groups to engage in phone conversations. These participants were chosen based on specific criteria and as a random sample.

Script or Protocol: I prepared a script or a set of questions to guide the conversation. This can include both open-ended and closed-ended questions.

Conducting the Conversation: I was engaged in phone conversations with participants, asking questions and recording responses.

Data Analysis: The recorded conversations were transcribed, and the data was analyzed to identify patterns, themes, and insights.

Ethical Considerations: I obtained the information and data through informed consent, ensured privacy and confidentiality, and followed ethical guidelines during the conversations.

Literature Review

A literature review is a comprehensive summary and analysis of the existing research on a particular topic. It identifies key themes, debates, and gaps in the literature, and provides a context for new research. Its main purposes are to provide an overview of what is already known, to identify patterns and trends, to highlight areas where knowledge is lacking, and to establish a theoretical foundation for further research. The process of conducting a literature review involves several steps:

1. **Identifying Research Questions and Objectives:** I began by clearly defining the purpose of the literature review. Ask what specific questions are trying to answer or what objectives are aimed to achieve. This helps to stay focused and guides the search for relevant literature. It defines the research questions and objectives.
2. **Searching for Relevant Literature:** I used a variety of sources to gather relevant literature, including academic databases (e.g., PubMed, JSTOR, Google Scholar), library catalogs, and reference lists from relevant articles. Employ search strategies like keyword searches, Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT), and filtering by date or type of publication to narrow down the search results. Make sure to include seminal works and recent studies to get a comprehensive view of the topic. Searched through databases and other sources for relevant literature using keywords and filters.
3. **Screening and Selecting Sources:** Once having a list of potential sources, I evaluated each one for its relevance and quality. Look at the abstract, introduction, and conclusion to determine if the source is pertinent to the research question. Assess the credibility of the authors and the publication, and ensure the methodology and findings are sound. Exclude sources that are outdated, irrelevant, or of low quality. Evaluate and select high-quality, relevant sources from your search results.
4. **Organizing the Literature:** I Organized selected sources into categories based on themes, theories, methodologies, or chronological order. This can help to identify patterns, trends, and gaps in the research. Use reference management tools like EndNote, Zotero, or Mendeley to keep track of the sources and format citations properly. Create an outline to structure the review logically. Categorize the sources and use reference management tools to organize them.
5. **Analyzing and Synthesizing the Literature:** I critically analyze the content of the selected sources. Compare and contrast the findings, methodologies, and theoretical frameworks. Identify key themes, debates, and gaps in the literature. Synthesize the information by integrating the insights from different studies, highlighting how they contribute to the understanding of the research question. Look for consensus and disagreements among researchers. Critically evaluate and integrate findings from the sources.
6. **Writing the Literature Review:** I structured the literature review into three main sections: introduction, body, and conclusion. In the introduction, provide an overview of the topic and state the purpose of the review. In the body, discuss the literature in organized themes or categories, presenting a critical analysis and synthesis of the findings. Use subheadings for clarity. In the conclusion, I summarized the key findings, highlight gaps in the research, and suggest areas for future study. Ensure that writing is clear, concise, and free of jargon. Write the literature review with a structured introduction, body, and conclusion.
7. **Revising and Editing:** After completing the draft of the literature review, I took time to revise and edit it. Checked for clarity, coherence, and logical flow. Ensured that the arguments are well-supported by the literature. Looked for grammatical errors, typos, and proper citation of sources. Considered getting feedback from peers or advisors to improve the quality of the review. Make sure it adheres to the required formatting and style guidelines. Revise and edit the literature review for clarity, coherence, and correctness.

A literature review is a critical appraisal of existing research that helps to build a foundation for new research projects. It demonstrates the researcher's knowledge of the field, identifies where further research is needed, and situates new research within the context of existing knowledge.

Results

Major Current Problems Faced by Students in Dhaka: Causes, Implications, and Citizen Solutions:

1. Traffic Congestion and Transportation Issues

Causes:

Dhaka is infamous for its severe traffic congestion, caused by a high number of vehicles, poorly planned road infrastructure, and inadequate public transportation systems. Dhaka is notorious for its severe traffic congestion, caused by rapid urbanization, an increasing number of vehicles, poorly planned road infrastructure, and inadequate public transportation systems.

Implications:

Traffic congestion leads to wasted time, increased stress, and fatigue or tardiness for students commuting to educational institutions. It affects attendance and punctuality, which can hurt academic performance. Additionally, exposure to air pollution during long commutes poses health risks. It also contributes to air pollution and road accidents, posing risks to students' health and safety.

Citizen Solutions:

As a good citizen, people can help alleviate traffic congestion by using public transportation or carpooling with fellow students. Advocate for improved public transportation systems and the development of cycling and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. Support urban planning initiatives that prioritize sustainable transportation options. Participate in initiatives that promote road safety and awareness.

2. Overcrowded Classrooms and Limited Access to Quality Education

Causes:

The high demand for education in Dhaka has resulted in overcrowded classrooms in many educational institutions. Limited infrastructure and resources pose challenges for accommodating the growing student population.

Implications:

Overcrowded classrooms reduce individual attention from teachers, making it difficult for students to fully engage and grasp the subject matter. It may lead to low academic performance and hinder students' intellectual development.

Citizen Solutions:

As a good citizen, people can advocate for increased investment in education and the expansion of educational infrastructure to accommodate more students comfortably. Volunteer as a teaching assistant or tutor to provide additional support to teachers and students in crowded classrooms.

3. High Competition and Academic Pressure

Causes:

The education system in Dhaka is highly competitive, with a focus on examination results and academic achievements. Students face immense pressure from parents, teachers, and peers to excel academically.

Implications:

High competition and academic pressure can lead to stress, anxiety, and mental health issues among students. It may also discourage students from pursuing their interests and passions, limiting their personal and creative growth.

Citizen Solutions:

As a good citizen, people can support a more holistic approach to education that values students'

overall well-being and personal development. Encourage a balanced study routine that includes extracurricular activities and hobbies. Advocate for reforms in the education system that promote project-based learning, critical thinking, and creativity.

4. Limited Access to Quality Education

Causes:

While Dhaka offers a plethora of educational institutions, access to quality education remains unequal, especially for students from low-income families and marginalized communities.

Implications:

Limited access to quality education perpetuates socio-economic disparities and hinders social mobility. It may prevent talented students from reaching their full potential and contributing significantly to society.

Citizen Solutions:

As a good citizen, people can support initiatives that provide scholarships and financial assistance to students from underprivileged backgrounds. Volunteer with organizations that offer free tutoring or mentorship to disadvantaged students. Advocate for educational reforms that address inequities in access to quality education.

5. Inadequate Facilities and Resources and Inadequate Educational Infrastructure

Causes:

Some educational institutions in Dhaka struggle with inadequate facilities, such as libraries, laboratories, and sports facilities. Limited access to educational resources, including books and technology, also poses challenges for students.

Implications:

The lack of adequate facilities and resources hinders students' ability to conduct research, explore practical learning opportunities, and pursue extracurricular interests. It may result in a limited learning experience and affect students' overall academic and personal growth.

Citizen Solutions:

As a good citizen, people can support fundraising efforts or donation drives to improve educational facilities and resources in schools and colleges. Advocate for increased government investment in education to ensure that all students have access to the necessary tools for learning.

6. Housing and Accommodation Issues

Causes:

Many students in Dhaka come from other parts of the country or rural areas to pursue higher education. Finding affordable and safe accommodation can be challenging due to the city's high cost of living and limited housing options near educational institutions.

Implications:

Housing and accommodation issues can create financial burdens and stress for students. Long commutes from distant areas to educational institutions can impact attendance and academic performance.

Citizen Solutions:

As a good citizen, people can support initiatives that provide affordable housing or hostel facilities for students from out of town. Advocate for policies that promote affordable housing options near educational institutions. Offer support and guidance to fellow students who face housing challenges.

7. High Cost of Living and Accommodation

Causes:

Dhaka's high cost of living, including expensive accommodation options, poses a significant challenge for students, especially those from low-income backgrounds.

Implications:

The high cost of living makes it difficult for students to afford necessities, academic materials, and

quality accommodation. It can lead to financial stress and impact students' overall well-being.

Good Citizen Solutions:

As a responsible citizen, people can support initiatives that provide affordable housing options for students. Advocate for student-friendly rental policies and scholarship programs that assist financially disadvantaged students. Support and donate to NGOs or organizations that provide financial aid to students in need.

8. Lack of Career Guidance and Job Opportunities and Lack of Student Support Services

Causes:

Many students in Dhaka struggle with the lack of proper career guidance and job opportunities. Limited exposure to various career paths and industries can lead to uncertainty and anxiety about prospects.

Implications:

The lack of career guidance can result in students choosing career paths that do not align with their interests or strengths. It may lead to underemployment or unemployment after graduation.

Citizen Solutions:

As a good citizen, people can mentor or offer career guidance to students, sharing their experiences and insights about different industries and professions. Advocate for the integration of career counseling services in educational institutions to help students make informed decisions about their future.

9. Safety and Security Concerns

Causes:

Safety and security concerns, such as eve-teasing, mugging, and harassment, are prevalent in Dhaka, especially for female students.

Implications:

Safety concerns can create a fear of traveling alone, limiting students' mobility and access to educational opportunities. It may also lead to psychological stress and affect students' well-being.

Citizen Solutions:

As a good citizen, people can be vigilant and advocate for improved safety measures in public spaces, especially around educational institutions. Support initiatives that provide self-defense training and safety awareness programs for students, particularly females.

10. Internet Connectivity and Digital Divide

Causes:

The digital divide in Dhaka can pose a challenge for students who lack access to reliable internet connectivity and necessary technological devices.

Implications:

The lack of internet connectivity can hinder students' access to online educational resources and distance learning opportunities. It may also create disparities in educational access and outcomes.

Citizen Solutions:

As a responsible citizen, people can support initiatives that provide digital literacy training and technological devices to underprivileged students. Advocate for policies that bridge the digital divide and promote equal access to educational resources for all students.

11. Lack of Extracurricular Opportunities

Causes:

Limited access to extracurricular opportunities in Dhaka can prevent students from exploring their interests and developing other skills outside of academics.

Implications:

The lack of extracurricular opportunities can limit students' personal growth and hinder the development of their talents and passions.

Citizen Solutions:

As a responsible citizen, people can support the promotion of extracurricular activities and sports programs in educational institutions. Advocate for the inclusion of arts and sports in the curriculum to provide students with a well-rounded educational experience.

Discussion

In Dhaka, students face several significant challenges that impact their educational experience and overall well-being (Bareq Raad Raheem & Ghafar, 2023); (Smith & McLellan, 2023). One of the primary issues is the inadequate infrastructure of educational institutions. Many schools and colleges lack sufficient facilities such as classrooms, libraries, and laboratories, which hampers effective learning (Yangambi, 2023). This inadequacy often results from rapid urbanization and population growth outpacing infrastructure development (Blekking et al., 2023). Another critical problem is the quality of education. Despite efforts to improve, there are concerns about outdated curricula, lack of qualified teachers, and reliance on rote learning rather than critical thinking and practical skills development (H. Amin & Cochrane, 2023); (Pakpahan et al., 2023); (Nasser, 2020). This issue not only affects academic outcomes but also hinders students' ability to compete globally. Additionally, socioeconomic factors play a significant role. Many students in Dhaka come from low-income families, facing financial constraints that prevent them from accessing quality education and necessary resources like textbooks and tutoring. These challenges have profound implications (Hossain, 2023). They perpetuate inequality, limiting opportunities for socioeconomically disadvantaged students and contributing to a cycle of poverty. Moreover, a poorly educated workforce can hinder national development and economic growth. Addressing these issues requires concerted efforts from various stakeholders. Citizen solutions could involve community-led initiatives to improve school infrastructure, advocacy for educational reforms, and initiatives to provide scholarships or financial aid to needy students (Jonbekova et al., 2023). Government intervention is crucial in ensuring equitable access to quality education and investing in teacher training and curriculum development aligned with global standards (Kamalov et al., 2023); (K. M. A. Ahamed Zubair, 2024); (Adegbola & Fadara, 2022). By addressing these problems holistically, Dhaka can nurture a more educated and empowered generation capable of overcoming future challenges.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Bangladesh faces several critical environmental challenges, ranging from water and air pollution to climate change vulnerability and loss of biodiversity. These issues have far-reaching implications for public health, livelihoods, and sustainable development. As good citizens, people have a crucial role in addressing these problems by adopting eco-friendly practices, promoting environmental awareness, and advocating for sustainable policies and initiatives. By working together, we can safeguard the environment for future generations and contribute to a healthier and more resilient Bangladesh. Students in Dhaka, Bangladesh, face a range of challenges that can impact their academic performance, personal development, and overall well-being. As good citizens, people can play a crucial role in addressing these issues by advocating for educational reforms, supporting initiatives that provide access to quality education and resources, and promoting a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. By working together, people can create a conducive and nurturing educational ecosystem that enables students to reach their full potential and contribute positively to society.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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