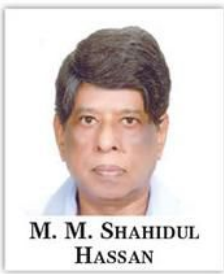


# Online Teaching: Challenges and Opportunities



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**C**ovid-19 pandemic does not only affect a country's economy, but also poses a challenge to the country's education sector. Higher education institutions have started teaching online out of fear that the students will become uninterested in studies if they stay away from studies for a long time and a part of students may not return to university when the situation becomes normal. Before the outbreak of coronavirus, university teachers in Bangladesh did not have the experience to teach online. Undoubtedly, learning online teaching and assessment platforms in a short period of time is really a difficult task for teachers. They will face how to check cheating in exams in the state of poor internet connection of students moving from city to village. We know that with a few exceptions, universities are not equipped to operate online platforms. So, what about the rest?

Teachers in Bangladesh are using a few selected video-communication services in online teaching for various reasons – free, the ability to record lectures and save them in the cloud. In response to the increased demand for online teaching platforms around the world, those communication service providers have increased engineering support for tests, quizzes, assignments, midterms and final exams. For example, teachers can use different extensions or tools to take tests, assignments, and midterm and final exams. Now students can create and share quizzes instantly as they turn them in. After adding extensions, these platforms provide tools so that course-teachers have to spend less time grading and can give instant feedback to students. The services have developed such that teachers can now see how many students completed assignments at a glance on the Classwork page, and a more detailed status by the student is provided when viewing the individual assignment. Students can also see the assignments turned in or graded as well as pending assignments. Online tools make communication with students and parents super fast. Teachers and students can send emails, send private comments on assignments, and also provide feedback on work. To make online teaching more attractive and enjoyable and monitoring students' activities teachers can use tools: (i) to see all students, (ii) split browser window into two, (iii) al-

low students to react, (iv) take attendance, (v) write text, draw pictures and circuits and mathematical operation.

At present, universities are only emphasising on learning free online teaching tools. This will have a major impact on quality education. We must not for-

quality in this purely online teaching and learning. A sudden shift from classroom teaching to online learning poses challenges for both teachers and students in adjusting the mindset. Universities should organise multiple training workshops for their teachers

and performance evaluation of students. In this system, teachers monitor academic progress of students individually. It has a lot in common with a physician diagnosing patients. A physician always examines patients individually and makes separate recommendations for different patients. In OBE a course teacher sets some course learning outcomes. Course teacher must employ innovative teaching and learning activities that will stimulate the minds of the students and help them create and integrate knowledge about the course content and intended learning outcomes. Online OBE teaching and learning will pose more challenges to the teachers in Bangladesh. They are not familiar with this OBE and assessment system. There are many examples that many countries failed to implement this system without prior knowledge about it.

One day in near future universities will reopen and teachers will teach in the classroom. Gathering experience in online teaching tools, the teachers' community in Bangladesh will realise that it is hard to ignore the present manifestations of online teaching and learning platforms that are contributing to human intelligence more than ever. Education Software is required for the assessment and evaluation of performance of students in OBE. This experience in using software will help them in successfully implementing OBE. Learning Management System (LMS) or Content Management System (CMS) software is needed for Mapping different activities and performance of students such as Program Educational Objectives (POEs) with Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Measuring performance of the students against Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) threshold for each course, and finding out the strengths and shortfalls of the learning taking place. University authorities and UGC cannot ignore an important issue at this early stage of OBE implementation in higher education. Most teachers are not aware of OBE and its assessment methods. UGC and universities can take advantage of virtual meetings during this time of worldwide enclosure. They can invite OBE experts to train teachers using virtual platforms.



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get that learning online platforms with tools is not only the requirement. In addition to that teachers must acquire the skills to translate classroom teaching materials in ways so that students can understand in the online environment because they cannot rely on eye contact or other facial cues to determine whether students are understanding and showing interest in a lesson. Remember, propagating knowledge correctly is not enough to ensure learning

and students so that they understand that the classroom environment can be created and the desired learning outcomes can also be achieved through online teaching, learning and assessment.

Recently, UGC has asked universities to introduce a new education system called Outcome Based Education (OBE). Not only developed countries but also many developing countries have adopted this system. It is different from our existing system in terms of teaching

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