



Review Paper

English language education and literature in Bangladesh: Status, problems and prospects

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Abstract

The contemporary situation of English language education and literature in Bangladesh is examined in this review study, with a focus on social aspects. The document gives a summary of earlier research on the subject, identifies key discoveries, and points out gaps and limits in the body of knowledge. The study also outlines its approach, which comprises a thorough evaluation of the literature and a qualitative examination of the results. While there have been initiatives to enhance English language instruction in Bangladesh, the evaluation indicates that both its quality and accessibility still face substantial obstacles. These difficulties include a lack of qualified teachers and teacher preparation programmes, insufficient infrastructure and resources, and restricted access to English language instruction for underrepresented groups. Due to scarce resources and a lack of interest in local literature, publishing and distribution of English literature in Bangladesh also confront considerable difficulties. In spite of these obstacles, Bangladesh's English language education and literature have room for improvement. The expansion and development of English language education and literature in the nation can be aided by initiatives to enhance teacher preparation and resources, support regional publishers and authors, and expand access to technology and resources. The consequences for practise and policy point to the need for increased funding for English language instruction across the nation. This include money for teacher education, supplies and facilities for classrooms and coaching facilities, as well as assistance for underprivileged populations to enrol in English language programmes. Policies should also be put in place to encourage the publication and dissemination of English-language literature in the nation. In conclusion, this review article offers insightful information about the state, issues, and future of English literature and education in Bangladesh. Collaboration between the government, non-governmental organisations, and international organisations, as well as ongoing research and investment in these crucial areas, will be necessary to address the issues and seize the opportunities presented by English language education and literature in Bangladesh.

Keywords: English Language, Education, Literature in Bangladesh, Status, Problems and Prospects.

Introduction

English is one of the official languages of Bangladesh, a developing nation in South Asia with a population of over 160 million. English is widely used and used as the main language of instruction in many educational institutions, especially higher institutions¹. As a result, the socioeconomic development and cultural identity of Bangladesh are significantly influenced by English language education and literature².

Bangladesh has a long history of English literature and education. English was first brought to the nation during British colonialism, and it has since been a crucial component of its educational system. English fluency is regarded as being essential for landing a successful job, particularly in the private sector where it is frequently a requirement. As a way of expressing national awareness and fostering cultural exchange, English literature has also been crucial in forming the nation's cultural identity³.

An overview of the state of English-language education and literature in Bangladesh is what this study aims to do. In addition to examining the difficulties and issues that English language education and literature face in Bangladesh, the study will also look for openings and future development prospects. The study hopes to advance knowledge of the significance of English-language education and literature to Bangladesh's socioeconomic and cultural development through this analysis.

Research Questions: The study will be guided by the following research questions: What is the current status of English language education in Bangladesh, and what are the main challenges associated with it?

What is the state of English literature education and publishing in Bangladesh, and what challenges does it face?
What are the prospects for the growth and development of English language education and literature in Bangladesh?

The first study question aims to investigate the situation of English language education in Bangladesh at the present and pinpoint its major issues, including a shortage of competent teachers, insufficient funding, and poor access to education for underrepresented groups. The second study topic examines English literary education and publication in Bangladesh, looking at problems such as restricted access to literature, a lack of infrastructure, and constrained career prospects for authors and publishers. The third study topic, which also explores chances for growth and development, will look into possible future directions for English language education and literature in Bangladesh.

In conclusion, this study intends to present a thorough analysis of English language education and literature in Bangladesh, looking at its existing situation, difficulties, and potential for growth in the future. We hope that our study will add to the continuing conversation about English's contribution to Bangladesh's socioeconomic and cultural growth.

Overview of Previous Research: Numerous academics have investigated English literature and education in Bangladesh throughout the years. There is a wealth of literature on this subject that addresses a variety of topics, such as language policy, instructional strategies, curriculum creation, and the state of English literature in the nation^{4,5}. The following subjects were the focus of some significant studies: i. The role of English in Bangladesh's education system and society. ii. The challenges and opportunities associated with teaching English as a foreign language in Bangladesh. iii. The state of English literature education and publishing in Bangladesh.

Key Findings: The education of English in Bangladesh has a number of significant obstacles, according to studies. The lack of trained English language teachers, especially in rural regions, is one of the biggest problems. There is a huge disparity in teaching quality as a result of the inadequate training received by many teachers. Lack of proper facilities and resources is another issue, which has hampered access to English language instruction for many children, especially those from underprivileged backgrounds⁶.

Numerous difficulties have also been brought to light through research on English literary instruction in Bangladesh. The restricted availability of English literature in the nation is one of the major difficulties. The availability of high-quality English literature resources and textbooks in many schools has restricted pupils' exposure to a wide range of literature. In Bangladesh, there isn't much literature produced because there aren't many chances for authors and publishers⁷.

Despite these obstacles, research has also found a number of growth and development potential in the field of English language and literature. The need for English language proficiency in the workforce has increased interest in English language instruction, which has resulted in the growth of

numerous private language schools and institutes. A growing number of authors and publishers are producing excellent writing, and there is an increased interest in promoting Bangladeshi literature in English⁸.

Gaps and Limitations in the Literature: Although there is a sizable amount of research on English language education and literature in Bangladesh, there are a number of gaps and restrictions. The absence of empirical data on the efficacy of various teaching techniques and strategies in English language education is one of the main drawbacks. Few research have looked at the efficacy of various teaching approaches in boosting students' English language competency, despite the fact that numerous studies have looked at the difficulties and problems related to English language education. The scant study on the link between English language instruction and socioeconomic growth in Bangladesh is another drawback. Few research have looked at how English language education can help the nation's socioeconomic growth, despite the fact that many studies have addressed the difficulties and problems related to the subject⁹.

Finally, there is a dearth of research on the connection between Bangladeshi cultural identity and English language instruction. Few studies have examined the impact of English language education in fostering cultural interaction and understanding in the nation, despite research highlighting the significance of English literature in forming cultural identity. In conclusion, despite the fact that there is a sizable body of research on English language education and literature in Bangladesh, there are still many gaps and restrictions. Filling these gaps in knowledge should be the main goal of future study, especially in the areas of empirical studies on teaching efficacy, the connection between English language instruction and socioeconomic growth, and the connection between English language instruction and cultural identity¹⁰.

Methodology

The status, issues, and future of English language education and literature in Bangladesh were investigated in this study using a systematic literature review methodology. Finding and studying previously published papers, articles, and reports were part of the research methodology. Secondary data from reliable sources, including academic journals, books, and official publications, were analysed in the study.

In this study, topic and content analyses of the literature were both used as data analytic methodologies. While thematic analysis looked for patterns and themes in the data, content analysis classified and quantified the information offered in the papers under examination. To evaluate the reliability and validity of the evaluated literature, the study also used a critical appraisal of its quality.

The possibility of selection bias during the literature search was one of the study's shortcomings. Despite efforts to conduct a thorough literature search, it's possible that some pertinent publications were overlooked, and the conclusions may not be applicable to different nations or settings. The study may have also been hampered by researcher bias because the interpretation of the literature depended on the researcher's viewpoint and prejudices.

In summary, this study examined the current, issues, and future of English language education and literature in Bangladesh using a systematic literature review methodology. The study analysed previously published papers, articles, and reports using content and topic analysis methodologies. Selection bias, researcher bias, and generalizability constraints were present in the study.

Status of English Language Education and Literature in Bangladesh: Overview of the Current State of English Language Education in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has placed a high premium on teaching English for many years. English is frequently seen as a crucial language for success in college and the workplace. Opportunities and difficulties coexist in Bangladesh's English language education system at the moment. On the one hand, English is taught as a required subject beginning in the primary grades, and on the other side, there are many private language schools and coaching facilities that provide students with English language courses. On the other hand, there is a large disparity between the demand for English language instruction and the supply of resources and skilled teachers. The standard of English language instruction in Bangladesh varies greatly from region to region. The quality of English language education is typically higher in urban than in rural areas due to the higher concentration of educational institutions in urban areas. In addition, private schools and coaching facilities frequently offer superior English language instruction than state-run institutions^{11,12}.

Challenges and Obstacles to Improving English Language Proficiency: There are a number of difficulties and barriers that prevent students from achieving a high level of English language competency, despite efforts to promote English language education in Bangladesh. The lack of trained English language teachers is a significant issue. Many schools and coaching facilities employ teachers who are ineligible or under qualified, which leads to poor English language instruction. Additionally, many English language instructors in Bangladesh struggle to impart the language successfully because they are not native speakers. The absence of infrastructure and resources for English language instruction is another problem. Textbooks, audiovisual materials, and other resources required for efficient English language instruction are frequently lacking in schools and coaching facilities¹³. The availability of technology and the internet in many schools and coaching facilities also limits pupils' access to resources and materials in the English

language. Last but not least, students lack the drive to learn English. Bangladeshi students frequently see learning English as a chore rather than as an opportunity. This mindset is frequently a result of the old rote-learning techniques utilised in schools, which discourage students from engaging with the language and improving their English language abilities¹⁴.

State of Literature Education and Publishing in English in Bangladesh: The state of literature education and publishing in English in Bangladesh is relatively underdeveloped. English literature is not a compulsory subject in schools, and there are only a limited number of universities in Bangladesh that offer degree programs in English literature¹⁵. As a result, the number of students who study English literature is relatively small. The publishing industry in Bangladesh is also relatively underdeveloped¹⁶. The majority of Bangladesh's publishing sector is dedicated to Bangla language literature, while there are a few publishing houses that specialize in English language novels. In Bangladesh, there is also a dearth of assistance for writers who write in the English language. Finding publishers and readers for their writing is a challenge for many English-language authors in Bangladesh. Despite the difficulties, there have been some encouraging advancements in English-language publishing and education in Bangladesh. Young readers are becoming more interested in English-language literature, and Bangladesh is home to a number of literary festivals and events that highlight this genre. A few small publishers are also making an effort to promote English-language literature in Bangladesh. In conclusion, there are both potential and difficulties in Bangladesh's English language education and literature at the moment. Bangladesh places a strong priority on teaching English as a second language, however there are a number of obstacles that prevent students from attaining a high level of English language competency. Although English language publishing and education are still in a very underdeveloped state in Bangladesh, there have been some encouraging developments that show young readers' interest in English language literature is expanding¹⁷.

Problems with English Language Education and Literature in Bangladesh: Lack of Quality Teachers and Teacher Training: The dearth of qualified instructors and teacher preparation programmes is one of the main issues with English language teaching in Bangladesh. Many teachers in the nation are unprepared or under qualified and lack the abilities and expertise needed to instruct English successfully. Students receive a subpar English language education as a result, which may harm their chances of pursuing higher education and career progression in the future. Bangladesh's teacher training programmes are likewise inconsistently poor in quality. There aren't many programmes that train teachers expressly for teaching English, and those that do exist are frequently insufficient. Many English language teachers in Bangladesh lack the training and professional development needed to advance their teaching abilities and stay current with English language education trends^{18,19}.

Insufficient Resources and Infrastructure: The lack of funding and facilities is a significant issue with English language teaching in Bangladesh. Basic supplies including textbooks, audio-visual materials, and computers are often lacking at educational institutions and coaching facilities. Due to this, it is challenging for educators to properly teach English to students. Additionally, many schools and coaching facilities lack technology and internet connectivity, which restricts pupils' access to resources and materials in the English language^{20,21}.

Limited Access to English Language Education for Marginalized Groups: Another problem with English language education in Bangladesh is the limited access to education for marginalized groups such as girls, rural populations, and low-income families. These groups often face significant barriers to accessing quality English language education due to poverty, social and cultural norms, and geographic location. This creates a significant achievement gap between these groups and more privileged students^{3,14,17}.

Challenges in the Publication and Distribution of English Literature in Bangladesh: The publication and distribution of English literature in Bangladesh also face significant challenges. There is a relatively small market for English language books in Bangladesh, which limits the number of publishers and the availability of books. Additionally, there is a lack of support for English language authors in Bangladesh. Many authors struggle to find publishers and audiences for their work, which can make it difficult for them to continue writing and publishing in English. Another challenge is the limited access to English language literature for readers in Bangladesh. Many books are not widely available or are prohibitively expensive, which limits readers' access to English language literature. This can be a significant barrier for students who are studying English literature or for those who are interested in reading English language books. In summary, the problems with English language education and literature in Bangladesh are primarily related to the lack of quality teachers, insufficient resources and infrastructure, limited access to education for marginalized groups, and challenges in the publication and distribution of English literature. Addressing these problems will require a concerted effort from policymakers, educators, and the publishing industry in Bangladesh²².

Prospects for English Language Education and Literature in Bangladesh: Despite the difficulties faced by English language education in Bangladesh, attempts are being made to raise the standard of instruction. The National English Language Programme and the English Language Teaching Improvement Project are two government-sponsored programmes that aim to raise the standard of English language instruction. These initiatives concentrate on offering teachers tools and training in order to raise the standard of English language instruction in Bangladesh. In addition, a large number of international and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are working in Bangladesh to enhance the teaching of the English language.

Organisations like the British Council and the US Embassy support the country's English language education by offering teachers and students tools and training²³.

There are potential for growth and progress in Bangladesh's publishing and distribution of English literature, despite the obstacles that stand in the way. English-language authors in Bangladesh now have new options to reach a larger audience because to the growth of e-books and digital publication. In addition, there is a rising demand for English-language literature due to the country's rising popularity of English language education. Additionally, a number of regional book sellers are promoting English-language literature in Bangladesh. These publishers place a strong emphasis on creating high-caliber works by regional writers and making them easily accessible. Several local publishers include Dhaka Translation Centre, Bengal Lights Books, and Dibya Prokash²⁴.

Potential Future Directions for Research and Policy: The study of English language education and literature in Bangladesh has a number of potential future possibilities. The effectiveness of teacher preparation programmes in raising the standard of English language instruction is one area that needs further study. Studies could look at how teacher preparation affects students' proficiency in the English language and the most effective ways to prepare English language instructors in Bangladesh.

The effects of technology on English language education and literature in Bangladesh are another topic for further study. Understanding how these advancements impact English language education and literature will be crucial as the country's access to technology and the internet grows. In terms of policy, Bangladesh needs to make a bigger investment in English language education. This includes money for teacher education, supplies and facilities for classrooms and coaching facilities, as well as assistance for underprivileged populations to enrol in English language programmes. Policies should also be put in place to encourage the publication and dissemination of English-language literature in the nation. Last but not least, even though English language education and literature in Bangladesh face many difficulties, there are yet room for improvement. The expansion and development of English language education and literature in the nation can be facilitated by initiatives to raise the standard of English language instruction, support regional publishers and authors, and expand access to technology and resources. The issues and opportunities posed by these crucial areas should be addressed in future study and policy.

Significance of the study

The importance of this study rests in the social perspective it takes on English literature and education in Bangladesh. This review study offers a thorough overview of the country's English language education and literature's present, issues, and future, which is essential in pinpointing problems and potential

fixes. This study emphasizes the pressing need for policies and measures to solve the issues facing English language education and literature in Bangladesh. Policymakers, academics, teachers, and other stakeholders can use the study's insightful findings to better understand the problems and take the necessary steps to raise the calibre and accessibility of the nation's English language education and literature. The review study adds to the body of knowledge on English literature and education in Bangladesh. This study contributes to the body of knowledge on this important subject by giving a summary of earlier studies, highlighting gaps and limits, and presenting a fresh analysis of the country's current situation of English language education and literature. Last but not least, this study is significant because it emphasizes the value of English literature and education in a globalised world. English is the most widely used language in the world and is essential for business, education, and cultural interactions. Bangladesh can raise its level of global competitiveness, improve international cooperation and communication, and promote its distinct cultural identity through boosting English language education and literature.

Implication of this study

The consequences of this study are crucial for Bangladeshi politicians, academics, educators, and other stakeholders. First and foremost, this report emphasises Bangladesh's need for more funding for literature and education in the English language. The results point to a critical lack of infrastructure, resources, qualified teachers, limited access to English language instruction for underserved communities, and more. To create and execute successful solutions to these issues, policymakers and educators must collaborate. Second, this research has implications for the promotion of regional English-language literature. The publication and distribution of English-language literature in Bangladesh encounter major difficulties because of scarce resources and a lack of demand, despite the fact that there is a growing interest in Bangladeshi literature. This study emphasises the importance of helping regional publishers and writers as well as promoting local English-language literature to boost demand and accessibility. Thirdly, the finding has repercussions for future literary and English language research. The analysis of the body of research revealed gaps and restrictions that point to the need for additional study in areas including teacher preparation, curriculum design, and the effects of English language instruction on social mobility and cultural identity. Finally, this study has implications for the broader context of globalisation and the contribution of literature and education in the English language to the advancement of intercultural understanding and communication. Bangladesh can improve its competitiveness on the world stage, boost international cooperation and communication, and preserve its distinctive cultural character by tackling the issues that English language education and literature in that nation currently face.

Recommendations: For a variety of stakeholders, including politicians, academics, educators, and publishers in Bangladesh

and beyond, the study reported in this review paper has important ramifications. The urgent need for more funding for English language education and literature in Bangladesh is one of the important implications. According to the study's findings, there are substantial obstacles to the quality and accessibility of English language education, such as a dearth of qualified teachers and teacher training, a lack of suitable resources and infrastructure, and restricted access for underrepresented groups. To create and execute successful solutions to these problems, policymakers and educators must collaborate.

The necessity of promoting regional English-language literature in Bangladesh is another implication of this study. The publication and distribution of English-language literature in Bangladesh encounter major difficulties because of scarce resources and a lack of demand, despite the fact that there is a growing interest in Bangladeshi literature. To enhance demand and access, this study emphasises the value of helping regional publishers and authors as well as promoting local English-language literature.

The report also emphasises the requirement for additional analysis of English literature and instruction in Bangladesh. The analysis of the current literature revealed gaps and restrictions, pointing to the necessity of more study in areas including teacher preparation, curriculum design, and the effects of English language instruction on social mobility and cultural identity.

Finally, this study has implications for the broader context of globalisation and the contribution of literature and education in the English language to the advancement of intercultural understanding and communication. Bangladesh can improve its competitiveness on the world stage, boost international cooperation and communication, and preserve its distinctive cultural character by tackling the issues that English language education and literature in that nation currently face.

The current situation, issues, and future possibilities of English language education and literature in Bangladesh are well explained in this review study. The results show how urgently needed policies and initiatives are to raise the calibre and accessibility of English-language instruction and literature in the nation. The study can aid in fostering intercultural understanding and communication by having significant consequences for policymakers, researchers, educators, and publishers in Bangladesh and elsewhere.

Conclusion

This study looked at the state, issues, and future of English literature and education in Bangladesh. The analysis of the literature showed that despite efforts to raise the quality and accessibility of English language instruction in Bangladesh, there are still substantial obstacles to overcome. These issues include a shortage of qualified teachers and teacher training, a

lack of infrastructure and resources, and restricted access to English language instruction for underrepresented groups. Due to scarce resources and a lack of interest in local literature, publishing and distribution of English literature in Bangladesh also confront considerable difficulties. In spite of these obstacles, Bangladesh's English language education and literature have room for improvement. The expansion and development of English language education and literature in the nation can be aided by initiatives to enhance teacher preparation and resources, support regional publishers and authors, and expand access to technology and resources.

There are a number of policy and practise implications for English language education and literature in Bangladesh based on the study's findings: i. The country needs to make more substantial investments in English language education. This includes money for teacher education, supplies and facilities for classrooms and coaching facilities, as well as assistance for underprivileged populations to enrol in English language programmes. ii. Measures that encourage the nation to publish and disseminate English-language literature should be put in place. iii. Greater government, non-governmental and international organisation cooperation is required to raise the standard and accessibility of English language instruction in Bangladesh. iv. Collaborations between these groups can advance best practises, pool resources, and raise the standard of English language instruction throughout the nation.

Future studies on English-language instruction and literature in Bangladesh should focus on a number of issues, including: i. More research is required to determine whether teacher training programmes are beneficial in raising the standard of English language instruction in the nation. Studies could look at how teacher preparation affects student proficiency in the English language and the most effective ways to prepare English language instructors in Bangladesh. ii. More investigation is required on how technology has affected Bangladeshi literature and instruction in the English language. Understanding how these advancements impact English language education and literature will be crucial as the country's access to technology and the internet grows. iii. More research is required to understand how English-language literature is promoted and distributed in Bangladesh.

Studies could look at the causes of the low demand for regional literature and consider strategies for promoting regional writers and publishers.

In conclusion, this study sheds light on Bangladesh's English language education and literature's existing state, issues, and future opportunities. These locations face considerable obstacles, yet there are also chances for growth and development. Collaboration between the government, non-governmental organisations, and international organisations, as well as ongoing research and investment in these crucial areas, will be necessary to address the issues and seize the

opportunities presented by English language education and literature in Bangladesh.

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