Challenging Factors for Effective Governance of Higher Education towards Sustainable Development

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Abstract

Sustainable development requires a holistic approach involving social, economic, and environmental factors. The interaction between education and government is crucial, providing necessary knowledge and structures for sustainable practices and informed decision-making. This paper explored the relationship and challenges between governance and education, highlighting the importance of inclusive governance in prioritizing environmental literacy, social equity, and economic resilience in Bangladesh. This study focused on the mixed method approach. Primary and secondary data were collected for the study. Qualitative method was conducted In-depth interview and Key Informants Interview. Also quantitative method was utilized by survey method using kobo toolbox. Selected public universities are used as sample using purposive sampling. The study highlighted the academic and institutional challenges, political and environmental factors that hinders the proper application of governance in higher education. Besides, accountability and transparency mechanisms and practices were identified in the study. The analysis emphasized the significance of international cooperation, interdisciplinary curricula, and participatory governance in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The recommendations can be used by concerned authorities for improving the circumstances.

Keywords: Quality education, Higher Education, Effective Governance, Sustainable Development, Bangladesh.

Introduction

Without a strong education, a country cannot flourish. Naheed & Mohsin (2018) related education to a nation's backbone, although strong tertiary education is the backbone of education (Uddin, 2015). Bangladesh falls behind South Asian nations in higher education quality. The problems of guaranteeing excellent higher

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education are global ones. The government prioritizes high-quality, universal education (Sarkar et al., 2016). Acceptable education creates an informed, competent, adept, and efficient workforce to advance a nation's social, political, cultural, economic, and historical growth (Alawattegam, 2020). Graduates, administrators, and the community worry more about higher education quality. Bhuiyan et al. (2004); Amin & Sheikh (2021) said that degree-granting Bangladeshi universities; usually, universities know higher education. Modern society requires research- based higher education. Higher education quality improves a nation's economy, society, and education (Hossain, 2017). The quality of postsecondary education is complex (Harvey and Green, 1993, cited in Hasan & Hosen, 2022). Higher education is more competitive. According to Islam et al. (2017), and UNESCO (2005), pointed out that a country's higher education program's integrity, evaluation, and monitoring impact its international position and socio-economic stability. Society holds institutions accountable for graduates (Rabbani & Chowdhury, 2014). The government ensures top-notch education. Every segment of society realised the need for a skilled workforce to promote self-sustaining growth and reduce poverty, according to (Monem & Baniamin, 2010). Also, competent and knowledgeable personnel may increase the economy (Bhuiyan et al., 2009). Bangladesh is underutilizing its huge people resource owing to a lack of education and skills. Importantly, Khan et al. (2014) found that Bangladesh's educational system lacks confidence in establishing a national body of knowledge, which boosts human capital and development. Besides, intellectual property stresses competent, experienced, educated, and skilled individuals.

Moreover, qualified professionals who can integrate human, livelihood, and community improvement with local and global organisation demands (Bhuiyan et al., 2009). According to Hasan & Hosen (2022); Marzo & Navarro et al. (2005), investigated that several stakeholders are worried about the servile model in higher education. However, quality education involves planning and strategy (Hassan, 2020). Verifying higher education quality permits current curriculum implementation and black-and-white Bangladeshi education (Mukul et al., 2013). To promote informal knowledge, higher education institutions give financial aid, coaching, monitoring, and logistics supports, according to Schendel & Mccowan (2016). Political involvement and education quality concerns are best increased by nursing leadership in higher education (Naheed & Mohsin, 2018). Bangladesh's educational concerns include religion and moral values (Roy et al., 2020). Regretly, Rabbani & Chowdhury (2014) found that high-achieving students typically lack communication skills, curricular knowledge, cross-disciplinary understanding, and learning area leadership.

Rashid and Rahman (2017), cited in Ullah (2020), claimed that additional universities, professors, and students would not enhance education rather than higher education has infrastructure issues, unplanned construction processes, library restrictions, outdated laboratories, limited research facilities, funding restraints, and misaligned academic calendars. Including to, current skills shortage is due to obsolete educational system, where academic institutions, administration, and research institutions did not examine market demands to discover capabilities (Khan, 2019). In Hasan & Hosen (2022), Carvalho & Mota (2010) and DeShields, Kara, & Kaynak (2005) found that colleges compete to teach students. Quality control has improved education, research, and community service in underdeveloped countries (Lim, 1999, referenced in Hasan & Hosen, 2022). Successful quality control will benefit developing nations. In the digital era, teachers, guides, and researchers can impact education, but not quality ensured (Wani & Kumar, 2019). They are creating a safe environment to boost education, generate and deploy effective educational practices to meet quality requirements and produce responsible education quality supervision (BSS, 2017). A trained workforce may help a country grow (Hosen & Shamim, 2019). Higher education in Bangladesh is struggling due to economic issues and the world doesn't respect Bangladesh's higher education properly (Hossain, 2017).

Khan et al. (2014) cited in Olssen & Peters (2005), who concluded that high-quality education for everybody enhances intellectual resources, innovation, and the knowledge- based economy. Globalising and institutionalising education is necessary to provide economic-boosting human resources (Omede, 2015). Global elite educational institutions should collaborate on analytics to improve education (Crossman, 2021). Financial challenges, university quality management, and public institution product testing issues (Monem, 2007 referenced in Rabbani & Chowdhury, 2014). For HEIs to achieve sustainability, effective governance, stakeholder cooperation, and communication were shown to be essential (Hinduja et al., 2023).

The foregoing barriers to education worried academics, practitioners, and researchers worldwide about tertiary education's future. Public Universities have done minimal study on higher education problems and their effects in Bangladesh, despite their importance. Unplanned infrastructure, inadequate learning, insufficient library facilities, budgetary restrictions, and unfavourable research settings are impediments (Schendel & Mccowan, 2016). Additionally, various studies have examined higher education concerns, issues, and practises, but their various flaws mean they have not fully described the reality. However, this research examines all

aspects of promoting excellent education and its problems in the specified location, specifically Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Jahangirnagar, Jagannath, Barishal, and Comilla University's evaluation. This research covers academic, political, administrative, governance, and environmental challenges from the mentioned University's standpoint. It is crucial to analyze if all pubic universities' higher education providers are providing adequate education to disclose the true picture.

The specific objectives of the research are to 1) to identify the academic and institutional challenges of higher level education; 2) to investigate the impacts of political and administrative decision on higher education; 3) to find out the environmental effects on the governance of higher education; and 4) to examine the mechanism of accountability and transparency of higher education. The findings provide academics, practitioners, and field researchers many ways to better comprehend the national process.

Literature Review

These are the top studies on this topic. A study indicated that faculty teaching skills affect student knowledge-sharing dissatisfaction (Islam, 2019). Quality faculty recruitment is essential (Rabbani&Chowdhury,2014). Sarbabidya & Rashid(2018)found public university courses lacking in national and international norms. Higher education institutions prioritise profit over education (Naheed, 2018). Islam (2019) reported that fourth-course lecturers are late and unable to complete coursework. Another research found that lack of lab access, journals, papers, books, electronics, and logistics help hinder outstanding teaching (Bhuiyan et al., 2009). Dissatisfaction with the examination system and government education policy, curriculum content assessment compared to world-wide norms, and departmental student excellent education (Naheed, 2018). Higher education research is at an all-time low (Baig, 2020). The study indicated that most pupils originate from disadvantaged homes, which are environmental challenges (Islam, 2019).

The lowest GDP share in South Asia is 2% in education (Ehsan,2021). Haqueetal (2011) identified no institutional logistics, internet, or smart classrooms. Research found that lack of residential seats, traditional knowledge exchange techniques, technical and applied-based curriculum, political students and instructors, low classroom capacity, and delayed test processes produce session congestion and economic restrictions (Islam, 2019). Karman et al. (2010), reported in Sarbabidya & Rashid (2018), showed that some tests may assist instructors in enhancing their interpersonal skills, honesty, adaptation to student behaviour, continual contact with participants, and name-calling.

According to Varghese (2004), Rabbani & Chowdhury (2014), university employees are primarily active in politics, commerce, and business. Zar et al. (2013) identified library shortages of key books, magazines, periodicals, and journals. Classroom environment, teacher- student interaction, and seating configuration might hamper learning (Islam, 2019). Complex administration, limited teacher preparation, and lack of instructional technology affect disabled students (Omede, 2015). To strengthen education, Sri Lanka needs more international expert discussions (Event, 2021). Faculty may learn new teaching topics and methods via research (Bhuiyanetal., 2009). Most students cannot express their thoughts in class (Islam, 2019). Insufficient student feedback, teachers unwilling and unable to use technology, poor training design and learning materials, unclear lectures, inadequate vision, mission, and objectives, and institutional and technical encouragement for critical thinking, management skills, research, new facts, and accountability (Islam, 2019).

South Africa has low government funding, research possibilities, equal access, institutional and infrastructure development, and better academic standards (Moloi & Motaung, 2014). He also observed that demand analysis and frequent syllabu srevisions based on recommendations need a contemporary instructional and administrative facility with adequate capacity, a dining hall, and auditorium with digital equipment, capstone rooms, and a cafeteria (Islam et al., 2017). Islam et al. (2017) found that there is no institutional framework to implement leadership, national plans, policies, and framework are opposite the university vision and mission, there is no purposive linkage with university objectives of department programme objectives, and teacher promotion measurement is unsatisfactory. Hossain (2017) found the internal strategic plan weak. Faculty, administrative, and other staff recruitment and evaluation are difficult (Islam et al., 2017). Staff training needed due to resource shortages, inexperienced workers, and defective intra and inter-management procedures (Manyaga, 2008). Ekwueme (2003) observed that Nigerian higher education is difficult due to bad administration, insufficient technology resources, poor library facilities, and a government that doesn't promote excellent education.

Lack of knowledge, co-curricular activities, creative, practical, technical, and technology- based learning methods, insufficient physical settings, obsolete teaching methodologies, packed classrooms, and regional, gender, and socio-economic (Baig, 2020). Aleixo et al. (2018) found that implementing sustainable practices is thought to be significantly hampered by declining student enrollment and declining financing for higher education. He also added the development of

sustainability efforts is hampered by this financial limitation, which causes a dependency on spending resources. Ehsan (2021) identified a gap between market needs and graduate capabilities, no critical thinking, case analysis, problem solution, or theoretical understanding of application. He also identified politically biased, dishonest recruiting and little previous training or experience for new fellows. Hasan & Hosen (2022) rank administration, technical help, bookstore and laboratory equipment, globalisation, and dormitory facilities below baseline. The lack of a national regulatory structure demotivates education (Alawattegam, 2020). Most Rajshahi University departments lack internet and computer laboratories (Rabbani & Chowdhury, 2014).

According to Evans (2000), cited in Eleweke & Rodda (2002), pupils globally face educational issues. External politics affect public tertiary institutions (Hossain, 2014). According to Rahman et al. (2019), inclusive learning research and development needs greater financing. Teachers, students, authorities, politicians, and decision-makers may impact higher education (Teichler, 1999). Alam et al. (2023) highlighted how crucial it is to close the digital gap in order to promote inclusive, digitalized higher education, which is necessary to create people who are proficient with technology and guarantee a sustainable society in the future. Pakistani educational institutions have launched a number of projects, such as seminars, speeches, and debates centered on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This suggests that higher education is becoming more conscious of and dedicated to sustainability (Hinduja et al., 2023). Many Nepalese higher education institutions' leaders, instructors, and students are unaware of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); this lack of knowledge makes it more difficult for these institutions to adequately prepare for Higher Education for Sustainable Development (HESD) and to solve social, economic, and environmental issues (Adhikari & Shrestha, 2023). The findings highlight how crucial it is to involve important parties, such as governmental and corporate entities, in order to promote a cooperative strategy for enhancing HEI infrastructure (Ebekozien et al., 2023). Islam (2025) resulted that the accomplishment of the SDGs is significantly aided by both social and economic considerations.

Kalbuana & Indra Cahyadi (2024) highlighted the difficulties in putting changes into practice in the field of higher education. Significant obstacles include things like budgetary limitations, bureaucratic complexity, and opposition to change. In addition to highlighting the necessity of incorporating technology into sustainability practices in higher education, the study underscores how technology may improve Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) (Shishakly et al.,

2024). By encouraging a variety of viewpoints and improving project results, the study highlights the value of multidisciplinary project teams that comprise university employees, students, and industry professionals in advancing sustainable development (Podgórska & Zdonek, 2024). The study revealed important issues that kids face, namely a lack of knowledge about sustainability among their families. Their capacity to participate in sustainability activities successfully may be hampered by this ignorance (Mader et al., 2013). Hassan Sain et al. (2024) revealed progress towards the SDGs is hampered in many nations by socioeconomic and political issues, highlighting the necessity of efficient governance, communication, and cooperation within institutions to support sustainable practices. Mahmud (2017) found that a compartmentalized educational system, bureaucratic conflicts, a perceived lack of sustainability awareness among lecturers, differing degrees of sustainability acceptance influenced by academic disciplines, a lack of teaching skills among ESD educators, and limited financial support from the university.

Many experts and researchers have researched higher education difficulties in Bangladesh, Africa, and South Asia. Due to poor knowledge-sharing methods relevant to the physical setting ,institutional support and capacity, scarcity of resources, skills and knowledge gaps, poor research, and other internal and external environmental factors as a subcontinent, Bangladeshi researchers focus on higher education research.

Theoretical Framework

Good Governance Framework by UNDP an all-encompassing strategy for effective governance that takes into account social, political, economic, and environmental factors. In order to guarantee that a government functions justly and meets the needs of its constituents with the least amount of corruption and abuse of power, good governance theories and principles typically include concepts like accountability, transparency, participation, responsiveness, rule of law, equity, efficiency, effectiveness, and the protection of human rights.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable
Effective Governance of Higher Education	Accountability and Transparency
	Effectiveness
	Political and Environmental Factors

Fig.1. List of Variables

Challenging Factors

Main theme	Sub-themes
Effective Governance of Higher Education towards Sustainable Development	Academic Challenges
	Institutional Challenges
	Political Influence
	Administrative Governance and Efficiency
	Economic Constraints and Financial Governance
	Environmental Factors
Ways out	Role of Government, Institution, Faculty Members and Students

Fig.2. List of themes and sub-themes.

Methodology

This qualitative and quantitative exploratory research examined the problems of effective governance of higher education and its quality for ensuring sustainable development. The inductive research design included a survey questionnaire for quantitative study that was used as open-ended and close-ended questionnaire using Kobo toolbox and also in-depth interview and key informants interview were conducted for qualitative data. Fieldwork is the most popular approach for gathering primary data in empirical investigations, to evaluate and suggest particular evidence and facts (Adhikari, 2011 referenced in Al-Amin, 2022). The structured questionnaire with 46 items, 33 of which evaluated students' perceptions of higher education's quality education challenges on a five-point Likert scale (1= very poor, 5= very good) administered online via Messenger and WhatsApp. Based on respondent choices, interviews lasted 45-60 minutes. Interview transcripts were verbatim translated into English. The secondary data from journals, articles, books, newspapers, and research reports. Operating research relies on primary data (Haque et al., 2011). The critical secondary data literature research establishes a conceptual framework (Rahman et al., 2022). The research examined how respondents explained situations through interpretation. The study area is specifically Dhaka, Chittagong, Jahangirnagar, Jagannath, Rajshahi, Barishal, and Comill Universities affiliated with the University Grant Commission (UGC). The researcher must design the sample to reflect the population (Haque et al., 2011). This research used purposive sampling to identify themes, categorise, and apply grounded theory. Where surveys (N=380) respondents and interviews (N=40) respondents were

collected. To understand the questions, replies, and main issues, researchers recorded and examined each transcript recording many times to investigate, classify, sort, modify, customise, and show. Inductive thematic analysis started with codes and then developed groupings and sub-themes. After collecting data from respondents, SPSS Statistics (26.0) was used for frequency analysis, and MS Excel for graphical summary with in-text analysis.

Result

This section of the paper presents some primary information about the different Public university students of Bangladesh. Table 1 illustrates the outputs of the questions related to gender, department, major discipline (faculty), stage of education, and year of education. All the data presented here is based on primary data.

Table 1. Demographic profile of the selected respondents

		Gender	Faculty	Department	Stage of Education	Year of Education
N	Valid	380	380	380	380	380
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		1.4556	4.1667	9.9444	1.1444	2.0333
Median		1.0000	4.5000	11.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Mode		1.00	3.00	11.00	1.00	1.00
Std. Deviation		.50081	1.32606	4.84910	.35351	1.19409

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	190	50
	Female	190	50
Faculty	Law	50	13.16
	Arts & Humanities	50	13.16
	Social Science	50	13.16
	Engineering	50	13.16
	Business Studies	50	13.16
	Science	50	13.1
	Other	80	21.05

Challenging Factors

Table 1 presents the personal and demographic information profiles of the respondents, classified by gender, major discipline (faculty), and stage of education. The mentioned Table stated that the sample respondents of males and females were (50%). This scenario demonstrated that the ratio of male and female students participating in the survey was equal. On the other hand, the respondents belonging to the faculty "Law" are 50 respondents, which is 13.16% of the total respondents, 13.16% belong to "Arts and Humanities", and 50 respondents represent "Social Science". Similarly, 'Engineering, Business Studies, and Science' each accounts for 13.16% of the total respondents, with 50 participants sharing their opinions. Finally, among 380 respondents, the highest mark is obtained by those belonging to 'others' faculties (21.5%).

Table 2-5, reveals that under the question of institutional settings, 86.7% of students said 'Yes' and 13.3% said 'No' in terms of the multi-media classroom they have. Table 2 shows that in terms of 'seminar room and auditorium availability' 67.8% and 40.5% of respondents said 'Yes' and 'No' (32.2%), (59.5%) respectively. Also, 30.9%, 60.2%, 60%, 50% belonging to gymnasium, medical facilities, exam hall facilities, common/prayer room said 'Yes' and on the other hand students said 'No' remaining of the percent of the data. The quality of common/prayer room is very poor (30%), poor (20%), average (40%), and good (10%). In the case of 'cafeteria facilities, residential setting, recreational facilities, reading room quality, wi-fi facilities' respondents said good (15%, 5%, 10%), average belonging to 25%, 20%, 38%, and 27%, poor (25%, 26%, 22%, 28%, 30%), very poor belonging to 35%, 49%, 38%, 24%, and 34% said by students. Under the question of academic challenges, respondents opinioned on teaching method, outcome based. curriculum, library facilities, exam hall facilities, lab facilities which were 25%, 50%, 10%, and 20% indicates (very poor), 35%, 30%, 13%, 20% indicates (poor), 30%, 10%, 37%, 45% belongs to (average), and 10%, 30%, and 15% belongs to (good) of the services. The highest positive response was the international standard method, followed by universities 71.2% said 'Yes', session jam, which is the second highest, followed by the conducting class regularly by faculties, and the lowest score for hygiene and sanitation was 13% but in the case of the research scope, students responded negatively, 'No' (50%). The situation of environmental factors with the highest response is 'average', followed by 'poor', 'very poor', and minimal facilities are provided by institutions, considering the internal and external environment, which is 'good' in terms of security, quality of food, competition, part-time job, skills development, and student counseling. Most of the respondents believed that teachers' and students' affiliation with politics hampers an academically sound

environment, as displayed in Table 2. Under the political factors, on one hand, the number of drug-addicted (53%) students is increasing, whereas the ragging system (33%) is declining day by day on campus. The final theme, financial support, most of the respondents said 93% (No), belonging to the research fund for students' innovation, which is less than the merit scholarship given to students, who said 'Yes' (47%) of the total respondents.

Table 2: Academic Challenges

Sub-Theme	Qualitative Insight	Numeric Support
Curriculum Rigidities & Assessment Issues	Outdated, inflexible curriculum; exams not measuring competence	Exam Hall Facilities: 60 (60%) Yes, 40 (40%) No
Teaching Strategies	Traditional lectures; limited critical thinking	Teaching Method: 25 (Very Poor), 35 (Poor), 30 (Average), 10 (Good)
Research Opportunities	Limited funding and institutional support	Research Scope: 50 (50%) Yes, 50 (50%) No
Language Barriers	Difficulty understanding content in non-native language	No numeric item available

Academic Challenges

Curriculum Rigidities and Assessment Issues: Participants emphasized that students' ability to improve their skills is limited by out-of-date and inflexible curriculum that do not satisfy the expectations of the modern workforce. Many students believed that the exam and grading procedures did not adequately evaluate their overall knowledge and proficiency.

Teaching Strategies and Research Opportunities: Traditional lecture-based teaching strategies that do not promote critical thinking or the application of information in real-world situations have drawn criticism from both faculty and students. Limited innovation and knowledge development resulted from faculty and student reports of inadequate financing and support for academic research.

'Short-term training does not improve teaching abilities; that requires long-term course and department-based training.'

Language Barriers: Students found it challenging to understand course content and successfully communicate their thoughts in institutions when courses are taught in a non- native language.

Challenging Factors

Table 3: Institutional Challenges

Sub-Theme	Qualitative Insight	Numeric Support
Infrastructure Deficiencies	Poor labs, libraries, classrooms; weak digital resources	Multimedia Classroom: **330 (86.7%) Yes**, **50 (13.3%) No** Seminar Room: **257 (67.8%) Yes**, **123 (32.2%) No** Auditorium: **154 (40.5%) Yes**, **226 (59.5%) No** Wi-Fi: **34 (Very Poor)**, **30 (Poor)**, **27 (Average)**, **10 (Good)**
Administrative Inefficiencies	Slow decisions; strict rules; excessive paperwork	*No numeric item available*
Financial Constraints	High student costs; low faculty pay; limited research support	Merit Scholarship/Stipend: **47 (47%) Yes**, **53 (53%) No**
Student–Teacher Ratio	Overcrowded classes; teacher shortages	*No numeric item available*

Institutional Challenges

Infrastructural and Administration Deficiencies: Participants highlighted how the absence of contemporary labs, libraries, and classrooms hinders research and learning. Access to online study and research is hampered by the fact that many universities lack sufficient digital resources, despite technological developments. Academics and students identified inefficiencies in the administration of the institution, such as protracted decision-making processes, strict regulations, and excessive paperwork. While academic members get insufficient pay and support for research, many students struggle with tuition and other costs. The main issues influencing the effectiveness and growth of institutions were found to be inadequate policy implementation and a lack of autonomy for universities.

One respondent noted '*The current multi-media rooms are not education-friendly; they* lack *key equipment, and many sections of the system are broken, hindering dynamic class sessions.*'

Student-Teacher Ratio: Two of the biggest barriers to good instruction and individualized learning were identified as overcrowded classrooms and a shortage of teachers.

Table 4: Political & Administrative Challenges

Sub-Theme	Qualitative Insight	Numeric Support
Policy Instability	Frequent policy changes affecting curriculum, hiring, funding	*No numeric item available*
Political Influence	Favoritism in hiring; interference in student government	Teacher Politics: **7 (Good)**, **23 (Average)**, **20 (Poor)**, **50 (Very Poor)** Student Politics: **18 (Good)**, **21 (Average)**, **31 (Poor)**, **30 (Very Poor)**

Governance Inefficiencies	Lack of transparency; bureaucratic delays	*No numeric item available*
Academic Freedom & Autonomy	Political interference limiting institutional independence	*No numeric item available*
Socio-Cultural Dynamics	Social norms shaping curriculum and governance	*No numeric item available*
Digital Governance	Digitalization improving transparency but requiring investment	*No numeric item available*

Political and Administrative Challenges

Policy Development and Execution: Participants emphasized that administrative and political choices have a big influence on higher education policy. Respondents noted that changes in government often lead to modifications in educational policy, which in turn affect research funding, faculty hiring, and curriculum development. Several respondents expressed concerns about policy inconsistencies resulting from political changes, which threaten institutional stability and long-term academic planning.

Political Influence on Higher Education: The broad impact of politics on educational establishments was a recurrent issue. Numerous participants stated that when making decisions, political factors frequently take precedence over academic ones. Favoritism in teacher hiring, meddling in student government, and political nominations to important administration roles were noted as major obstacles. According to several respondents, excessive political meddling restricts academic independence and hinders promotion based on merit.

Administrative Governance and Efficiency: Although administrative inefficiencies were frequently mentioned as problems, effective governance is crucial for institutions of higher learning. Participants talked about lack of openness in decision-making, delays in implementing policies, and bureaucratic obstacles in allocating funds. Several academics and students emphasized that administrative decisions are often made without sufficient stakeholder involvement, leading to institutional inefficiencies and discontent.

Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy: Respondents emphasized the importance of academic institutions functioning independently of political influences, making institutional autonomy a major concern. Numerous respondents pointed out that political meddling restricts institutions' autonomy in determining their own agendas, which has an impact on academic independence and research

interests. Another significant barrier to institutional growth and innovation was identified as the absence of autonomy in financial management.

Socio-Cultural Dynamics and Institutional Autonomy: Social norms and cultural influences influence higher education governance, especially when it comes to institutional policies and curriculum creation. Decision-making is influenced by societal, academic, and student expectations. One participant revealed: "*Societal norms and cultural values often determine what can be taught and how universities function.*"

Developments in Technology and Digital Governance: Technology now plays a bigger part in the governance of higher education. Decision-making has changed as a result of the incorporation of digital technologies into research management, online education, and administrative procedures. One administrator said: "Digitalization has improved transparency, but it also requires significant investment and skilled personnel."

Table 5: Accountability & Transparency Challenges

Sub-Theme	Qualitative Insight	Numeric Support
Accountability Systems	Gap between policy and practice; weak enforcement	Drug Addiction: **53 (53%) Yes**, 47 **(47%) No** Ragging: **33 (33%) Yes, 67 (67%) No**
Transparency in Decision-Making	Limited access to financial and administrative information	Conducting Class Regularly: **61.1 (61.1%) Yes, 39.9 (39.9%) No** International Standard: **71.2 (71.2%) Yes, 28.8 (28.8%) No**

Accountability and Transparency Challenges:

Views of Stakeholders on Accountability: Participants, who included academics, administrators, students, and legislators, shared a range of opinions about accountability systems. The presence of official regulations and policies that specify institutional accountability was a recurrent subject. Many responders, however, pointed out a discrepancy between policy and reality, highlighting the difficulties in putting it into practice because of ineffective bureaucracy and lax enforcement.

Openness in the Processes of Making Decisions: The majority of institutions have transparency rules, but how they are implemented differs, according to the report. Participants emphasized how crucial it is to communicate clearly when it comes to curriculum design, faculty hiring, and funding allocation. There is a need for more public openness, since several respondents expressed discontent with the restricted access of financial records and administrative decisions.

Discussion

After analyzing the facts, it is regrettable that after fifty years of independence, education quality is not improving despite the government's laws, policies, programmes, and activities. Due to a lack of resources, most students are unable to expand their education border, develop their analytical and critical thinking abilities, and become competent human resources for society and state. According to the findings, substantial policy reforms are necessary to address the complex academic and institutional issues that higher education institutions face. To overcome these obstacles, we must move toward adaptable curriculum, creative teaching strategies, more financing for research, and effective governance frameworks. Enhancements to infrastructure and the accessibility of digital resources are also essential for creating an atmosphere that supports higher education. Competition requires creativity, innovation, and problem-solving.

Academicians, guides, and stakeholders face constraints of resources, institutional supports, materials, environmental factors and knowledge, practises, poor research scope and lack of unplanned infrastructure, unskilled manpower for decision making, ineffective teacher training, and lack of quality education for ensuring international standard method in public university's learning system. The apparently greater education in this study arena doesn't show this. The qualitative analysis revealed that while policies on accountability and transparency exist, their effectiveness depends on enforcement, institutional culture, and stakeholder involvement. Top education requires administrative support, auxiliary services, lab and library resources, globalisation, and accommodation (Hasan & Hosen, 2022). Libraries organise materials and databases, and the Internet is a major source of information (Rabbani & Chowdhury, 2014). Analysis finds inadequate books, journals, and other resources, including difficult access to e-books. Students have unreliable internet and programme assessment follows the vision. The curriculum is unsuitable for work. Higher education may boost the economy. Currently, a curriculum is a priority (Topader, 2019 referenced in Ehsan, 2021).

Internal and external issues with poor housing hinder further education. Adaptable infrastructure motivates students, but it must be designable and appropriate for a canteen (Ullah, 2020). The lack of modern instruction, lobbying in recruiting, and bureaucratic behaviour are hurdles. Medical care is essential, but medical facilities are substandard. Unsupervised sanitation and the absence of a common space make women feel unsafe. Includes teaching and knowledge-sharing-friendly classrooms with enough internet and multimedia room (Musa, 2020).

Challenging Factors

However, misguiding, abuse of politics, misallocation of resources, lack of transparency and institutional control mechanisms, poor quality control, limited scope, and reluctance to research are challenges for higher education.

Conclusion and Recommendations

After discussing the following findings, instructional techniques and learning environments are unadoptable, hurting education status. Students' comfort in infrastructure and housing needs improvement. In addition, research restrictions impede the investigation. The external environment also affects student learning. Institutional administrators, educators, and legislators must work together to address these issues. Future studies might examine viable fixes and industry best practices for raising the caliber of universities. However, institutional and financial assistance are adequate to make students comfortable. Other difficulties that library and medical services cannot address. To enhance education and meet all quality education needs, the government must provide enough funds. Higher education also needs strong communication, leadership, teaching methods, and other assistance. The overall development of plans, policies, arrangements, research and infrastructure improvement, and integrated framework ensures excellent higher education in Bangladesh. Bangladesh aims to achieve SDGs by 2030. Since excellent education is one of the SDGs, the government takes drastic efforts to change education patterns and improve its quality. Due to political instability, lack of quality education, corruption, and high illiteracy, the country has not made significant progress in education and research despite its middle-income status (Hossain et al., 2019). Bangladesh's education system is poor due to infrastructure issues, inadequate studies, fair atmosphere accessibility, unrestricted political activism, lack of professional practise, insufficient rational training, mismanagement of course outlines, shortage of lab and library facilities, and inadequate books and materials for references, as well as weak institutional mechanisms (Mukul et al., 2013). However, there is no adequate structure, norms, or review method against policy execution. Due to a lack of job market abilities, pupils do not acquire desired placement (The Financial Express, 2019, referenced in Ehsan, 2021). Finally, higher education should be quantifiable, reasonable, attainable, and sustainable, not a phrase. The study presents following recommendations:

- To improve lecturing abilities, build the University Teacher Training Centre (UTTC) as a sister institution of IQAC to offer the Foundation Training Course (FTC) for new and experienced academics.

- Remove political misuse and unlawful tendencies, while improving political culture among senior and younger students.

- Enhance campus extracurricular activities and part-time work opportunities to enhance soft skills and Subsidize the cafeteria and dining hall to promote healthful and high-quality cuisine.

- Ensure 24/7 medical services, equipped with contemporary technology, and give logistic support for improved treatments. And The universities should establish internal accountability, collaboration, and an active external authority (UGC) that reports yearly using actual data.

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