**Abstract**

**Climate Journalism Education in Bangladesh: Challenges and Pedagogical Approaches for Teaching**

Climate change poses significant challenges worldwide, and Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to both disasters and climate-related risks. Ranked as the seventh most extreme disaster risk-prone country according to the Global Climate Risk Index 2021, Bangladesh faces significant vulnerabilities due to its unique geographical location with low elevation (Climate Vulnerability Index (Draft), 2023). In this context, there is a pressing need to equip journalists with the necessary skills to effectively report on climate change issues while providing accurate information, and advocating for climate resilience measures to mitigate the devastating impacts of climate change in the region.

This paper presents an assessment of climate journalism education in Bangladesh, addressing the challenges including lack of suitable journalism genre, multidisciplinary teaching approach and collaboration with industry and media professionals. It reflects on the existing pedagogical approaches pursued at tertiary level education and training in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh currently has 22 journalism and media-related programs offered by various public and private universities (Genilo, Haq & Mahmud, 2019). However, data on the availability of climate journalism courses and the curriculum they follow is lacking. To address this gap, we conducted a comparative curriculum analysis of climate journalism programs offered by a sample of institutions, including three public universities, three private universities and one training academy. This analysis aimed to identify the strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement in climate journalism education.

Concurrently with the curriculum analysis, we conducted in-depth interviews with four climate journalism teachers, four students, and four senior journalists. These interviews provided valuable insights into classroom teaching trends, deficiencies, challenges faced by practitioners, recent demands in climate journalism and the necessary skills and knowledge required in the field.

To understand the current trends in climate journalism in Bangladesh, we analyzed climate journalism reporting in ten newspapers over a two-month period. This data collection was conducted with the assistance of climate journalism Masters’ students (batch 2022) from the University of Dhaka. By examining the strengths and weaknesses of current climate journalism reporting, we aimed to identify opportunities for improvement.

Based on the findings from the curriculum analysis, assessment of climate journalism courses, in-depth interviews and current media trend analysis, we propose a comprehensive framework to enhance climate journalism education in Bangladesh. The framework emphasizes experiential learning, collaboration with experts, science education, data-driven reporting, and the effective utilization of digital tools and visualizations to engage diverse audiences.

The potential implications of this study for journalism education and climate reporting in Bangladesh are significant. By equipping journalism students with the necessary competencies and addressing the identified challenges, the proposed framework can lead to the development of a skilled generation of climate journalists. This, in turn, can foster informed public discourse, drive positive action towards climate resilience, and contribute to building a knowledgeable society. Ultimately, this study aims to enhance climate journalism education, strengthen climate reporting, and promote sustainable development in Bangladesh.

Author: Dr Md. Mofizur Rhaman

Professor, Dept. of Mass Communication and Journalism

University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

and

Tamara Islam

Fact- Check Professional at Digitally Right

Dhaka, Bangladesh