



CJEN BANGLADESH FIFTH NETWORKING CONFERENCE 2022

BANGLADESH'S CHANGING MEDIASCAPE
ROLES, CHALLENGES AND COMMITMENTS OF JOURNALISM SCHOOLS

Concept Note

Rationale:

Sectoral self-reflection will be at the center of the fifth CJEN Bangladesh Networking Conference. It is about time for media studies and journalism educators to self-reflect as a group – reflect on the current situation, reflect on their vision and mission, reflect on their common practices. Self-reflection encourages self-awareness and consciousness about what we do, how we do and why we do things. In so doing, educators are able to identify areas for improvement. They learn what are their strengths and what are their weaknesses. They get to identify what works and what does not work.

In a 2019 study written by Genilo, Haque and Mahmud for DW Akademie, the authors analyzed the main discourses of media and journalism departments in the country – regarding their vision and mission statements. These statements represented the collective aspirations – what kind of graduates they want to produce. First, the departments aspire to produce skilled and ethical manpower for the media industry. Second, the departments hope to prepare their students for the world out there – making them responsible citizens, instilling in them liberal ideals such as the freedom of expression, tasking them to create solutions to problems within their contexts in Bangladesh.

In many ways, self-reflection requires all to answer major questions. Have far or how close are educators at achieving our stated objectives? How do they measure these achievements, milestones or setbacks? How are they doing with their teaching, learning and assessment? How are they doing with our co-curricular, internship and portfolio activities? How are their graduates doing when it comes to being accepted in relevant jobs and into advanced studies? How are their graduates faring at their jobs – do they quit and give up on their dreams, do they persevere and surmount the odds? Do media organizations appreciate their contributions and impacts to the profession and society as a whole?

It goes without saying then that self-reflection is a very painful process because of three major reasons:

Self-reflection makes us feel vulnerable. Some people lack humility and you need humility in order to accept your faults and change for the better.

Self-reflection makes us doubt ourselves and think that that we might be wrong. If we have been doing something for a long time, it is very difficult to entertain the thought that we may be wrong.

Self-reflection is a fight with ourselves. There is a saying: “If we win from others, we are a hero, but if we win from ourselves, we are a sage.”

In order for CJEN Bangladesh to move forward, it needs to undergo this painful process. The only way media studies and journalism education can improve is through self-reflection. And, this is not only talking about individual or departmental self-reflection. It is about the assessment of the entire media studies and journalism education in the country. For the most time, educators have looked only at themselves and their departments but rarely assessed the entire community or the whole sector.

Hence, in the next CJEN Bangladesh networking conference, educators will go into self-reflection mode with the theme: Bangladesh's Changing Mediascape: Roles, Challenges and Commitments of Journalism Schools.