Postgraduate Seminar Series

Venue: Graduate Seminar Room
Date & Time: May 25, 2024 at 2:30 PM

Speaker Information

Md. Rayhan Rashed (Std No. 0421042025) is a part time M.Sc. student in the department of CSE, BUET. He completed his undergraduate studies from CSE, BUET in 2021. His research interest lies in the field(s) of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) and ICT for Development (ICTD). He is currently doing his postgraduate thesis under the supervision of Dr. A.B.M. Alim Al Islam. He will be speaking about his ongoing research in this talk.

A QUANTITATIVE STUDY ON THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN BANGLADESH

The imperative to harness digital technology for societal benefits has, perhaps, never been more critical than now. The push for universal and affordable Internet access, as highlighted by Sustainable Development Goal 9C, underscores the urgency to address the digital divide, which is believed to be exacerbated in various parts of the world. Despite efforts, progress in bridging this divide is lagging. In this regard, the ITU reports that one-third of the global population lacks Internet access. Besides, extensive research across technology ownership, motivation, skills, and usage benefits has identified four levels of digital divide - access, usage, skills, and outcomes. Initially being focused on access and skills required for digital technology operation, the discourse has attempted to evolve through scrutinizing the outcomes of technology and Internet usage. However, recent studies reveal that disparities in access have shifted from purely physical to material while signaling a persistent first-level divide. This effectively confirms that all the four levels of digital divide remain important in different dimensions. To this context, it is worth mentioning that digital divide is an important aspect in third-world countries, and Bangladesh is no exception here. As Bangladesh is experiencing a rising trend in Internet and technology usage, analyzing the digital divide here is of utmost importance. Despite the wealth of research on digital divide in other regions of the world, a comprehensive analysis that encompasses the context of Bangladesh remains absent in the literature to the best of our knowledge. In the process of conducting such an analysis, nuanced factors such as Internet opportunities, user preferences, affordances, expectations, etc., should be considered with due diligence. Current literature falls short of adequately focusing on these factors. Nonetheless, developing a unified metric to quantify the digital divide could significantly enhance relevant policy discussions and strategic development, which is yet to be studied in the literature. This talk will attempt to cover these unexplored territories in the literature.