

A Case Study of an IELTS Course at a Private University in Bangladesh: Students' and Instructors' Perspectives

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Abstract

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is essential for Bangladeshi students aiming to pursue higher education abroad or advance their careers. This study aims to explore the benefits, challenges, and potential improvements of an IELTS course offered at the Green University of Bangladesh (GUB), from both students' and instructors' perspectives. To achieve this, a mixed-method research design was employed, involving quantitative surveys with 20 student participants and qualitative interviews with 3 experienced instructors. The survey focused on students' satisfaction, engagement, and logistical issues, while the interviews provided insights into instructional practices and infrastructural challenges. Results indicate that while the course benefits from qualified instructors, affordable course fee, and relevant materials, issues such as irregular class scheduling, inadequate classroom logistics, and limited speaking practice persist. The study offers recommendations for addressing these concerns to enhance the effectiveness and accessibility of university-based IELTS programs in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Higher studies, Band score, Student visa, Logistic support

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is a widely recognized assessment that evaluates English language proficiency through four key skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. It is offered in two modules: Academic module, intended for those pursuing higher education, and the General Training module, aimed at individuals seeking immigration or employment opportunities (British Council, 2023). With a maximum band score of 9, IELTS has become an essential requirement for individuals aiming to advance their academic, professional, or personal goals on an international scale (Khan & Rahman, 2020).

In Bangladesh, the popularity of IELTS has grown significantly in recent years, with approximately 100,000 candidates taking the exam annually (Rahman et al., 2022). This surge is driven by the test's role in enabling access to global education, migration pathways, and competitive job markets. A strong IELTS score not only enhances individual prospects but also strengthens global employability

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(Haque, 2021). As the demand for English proficiency increases, employers in Bangladesh increasingly prefer candidates with strong communication skills to improve workplace productivity and expand their reach in international markets (Jahan & Azad, 2019).

To meet this rising demand, numerous IELTS coaching centers have emerged throughout the country, offering preparatory courses in both online and offline formats. These courses aim to help students improve their language skills and achieve higher band scores. However, despite high enrollment rates, many students face persistent challenges, including ineffective teaching methods, limited access to quality practice materials, and logistical barriers such as inconsistent class schedules, traffic congestion, and inadequate classroom facilities (Rahman et al., 2023). Addressing these issues is essential to improve the effectiveness and accessibility of IELTS preparation programs.

In response to this growing need, the Green University of Bangladesh (GUB) has launched its own IELTS course, aiming to support students both within and outside the university. While the initiative is commendable, there is limited research assessing the actual impact and quality of such university-led programs in the Bangladeshi context.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to explore the perceived benefits, challenges, and potential areas for improvement in the IELTS course offered at GUB, from the perspectives of both students and instructors. By examining their experiences, this study seeks to generate practical insights that can contribute to the ongoing development of the course and inform similar academic initiatives across the country.

2. Literature Review

The effectiveness of language learning programs, such as IELTS preparation courses, has been widely studied. The literature emphasizes various benefits, challenges, and areas for improvement, particularly in academic environments like Green University. This section synthesizes existing research to establish a theoretical framework for understanding these elements.

2.1 Benefits

Language learning provides considerable cognitive, social, and emotional benefits. Horwitz et al. (1986) and Bandura (1986) highlight that learning a new language can greatly enhance learners' self-confidence and reduce anxiety, both

crucial for success in academic and professional contexts. Effective communication is another significant advantage that improves overall communication skills. From an academic standpoint, language proficiency enhances class participation and comprehension of complex materials. Bailey (2006) and Richards and Schmidt (2013) found that language learners have better access to international academic resources and can engage more actively in discussions, fostering critical thinking and collaboration. Furthermore, the cognitive advantages of language learning are well-documented. Bialystok (2001) points out that being bilingual improves problem-solving skills, memory retention, and metalinguistic awareness, all vital for mastering a second language. Similarly, Cummins (1984) argues that these cognitive benefits contribute to better academic performance and adaptability in multilingual environments. On a social level, learning a language promotes cross-cultural communication. Crystal (2003) and Kirkpatrick (2010) assert that proficiency in English, as a global lingua franca, facilitates social integration and helps learners navigate diverse cultural contexts. This benefit is especially important in multicultural academic and professional settings.

2.2 Challenges

Challenges in language learning can significantly hinder student progress, despite the advantages it provides. One persistent issue is limited vocabulary knowledge, which affects comprehension and the ability to articulate ideas clearly (Jahan & Jahan, 2011). This challenge is especially noticeable in academic writing, where precise terminology is crucial. Furthermore, difficulties with pronunciation and understanding various accents pose significant obstacles. According to Kaisar and Khanam (2008) and Zarin (2013), learners often struggle to comprehend even the accents of local English speakers. These challenges can lead to misunderstandings and a decline in confidence during spoken interactions. Another barrier is the need for higher-order comprehension skills, such as recognizing cohesive devices and interpreting implied meanings. Brown (2011) notes that many learners find it difficult to "read between the lines," a skill that is vital for academic reading and writing tasks. Anxiety also contributes to exacerbating these challenges, as it can negatively impact performance in language assessments (Hartono, 2019; Huang & Hung, 2013).

2.3 Research Gaps

Although several studies have examined the effectiveness of IELTS preparation courses in various contexts, much of the existing research focuses on large-scale commercial coaching centers or international test-taker populations. These studies often highlight common issues such as limited vocabulary knowledge, test anxiety, pronunciation challenges, and mismatches between instructional methods and assessment requirements (Azizi & Majdeddin, 2014;

Huang & Hung, 2013; Kabir & Cunningham, 2023). However, there is limited research exploring how these challenges manifest within university-based IELTS courses in Bangladesh, particularly those offered as institutional initiatives rather than private coaching services.

Moreover, while previous research has investigated student difficulties and pedagogical concerns, few studies incorporate both students' and instructors' perspectives in a single case study framework. This dual-perspective approach is crucial for understanding not only the learners' experiences but also the instructional and logistical constraints faced by educators.

This study seeks to address this gap by conducting a case study on the IELTS course offered at the Green University of Bangladesh (GUB). By combining student survey data with in-depth instructor interviews, the research provides a comprehensive view of the course's strengths, limitations, and areas for improvement. This contribution is particularly valuable given the growing importance of English language proficiency in Bangladesh's higher education and employment sectors, and the increasing institutional interest in offering in-house IELTS support programs.

2.4 Improvement Scopes

To address these challenges, researchers have proposed various improvements for language courses, particularly those focused on IELTS preparation. Azizi and Majdeddin (2014) suggest placing a greater emphasis on language accuracy rather than fluency and complexity in teaching methods. This approach allows learners to develop a solid understanding of grammar and syntax, which is essential for success in both academic and professional settings. In terms of IELTS-specific tasks, Kar (2013) underscores the importance of aligning writing assignments with the academic challenges faced by Bangladeshi students. Many learners tend to rely on formulaic responses that do not effectively demonstrate their analytical and critical thinking skills. By incorporating tasks that encourage originality and deeper thinking, it is possible to effectively close this gap. There is a growing recognition of the importance of reflecting the global use of English in language assessments. Riazi and Knox (2010) suggest that incorporating non-native English varieties in testing can better prepare students for real-world communication across different contexts. This approach also helps learners appreciate the global nature of English, which can reduce the bias towards native-speaker norms. The reviewed literature highlights the benefits of language learning in improving cognitive and social skills, while also acknowledging significant challenges such as limited vocabulary, difficulties with understanding various accents, and performance anxiety. It suggests practical enhancements to

increase the effectiveness of language courses. However, there is a lack of research on how these factors specifically affect Bangladeshi students in the context of IELTS preparation. This study aims to address this gap by exploring the perspectives of students and instructors at Green University, focusing on perceived benefits, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in the IELTS course.

3. Research Questions

The following research questions served as the basis for the current study which will be answered in the subsequent section in light of the research's findings:

- What are the perceived benefits, challenges, and potential improvements of the IELTS course at Green University from the perspective of students?
- What are the perceived benefits, challenges, and potential improvements of the IELTS course at Green University from the perspective of instructors?

4. Methodology

This section outlines the methodology employed in this study to examine the perspectives of students and instructors regarding the IELTS course at Green University of Bangladesh. A mixed-methods research design was adopted to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the research objectives.

4.1 Research Design

This chapter will provide an overview of the methodology used in this current study. Particular attention will be on the participants, data collection, and data analysis procedure. Mixed methods approach seemed to be the best suited for this study as the mixed methods approach is considered the most appropriate research approach. This approach is known as integrative research or combined method research. Complex research problems, research questions that prioritize methodological decisions, the combination of a qualitative and quantitative approach, and researchers' actual knowledge are the features of the mixed methods approach. In the current study quantitative and qualitative data were gathered through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews respectively. The study has both quantitative and qualitative data for detailed discussion. To collect quantitative data, the researcher conducted an online survey through a well-structured questionnaire sent to the participants who had been taking the IELTS course at this institution. On the other hand, to collect qualitative data, the researcher developed interview questions for the participants, who are the current teachers of the institution and experience to take IELTS courses.

4.2 Participants

To carry out the investigation, two distinct participant groups were chosen. Current students enrolled in GUB's IELTS course were among the individuals who received a questionnaire. Experienced IELTS course instructors and current faculty members from the Department of English and Center for Language and Cultural Studies made up the remaining group that was interviewed in person. Thus, a total of 23 participants responded to the study. Among the respondents, 20 students were taking IELTS courses from this reputed private university. They were from different backgrounds, including students from GUB and outside as well as job holders some of them were female and the rest were male. However, the three other responses were the institution's teachers, among them, 2 were male and the rest 1 was female. The teachers were selected for the interview depending on experience and the 4 modules (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) of IELTS courses. One of the teachers was taking an IELTS course for around 11 months (both online & onsite). One has 02 years of experience in this sector. Another teacher had about 06 years of experience. These 3 instructors conducted the different modules of the IELTS courses. As these 3 respondents were our teachers, they were eager to attend the one-on-one face-to-face interview. All interviews were recorded with the participants' prior consent so they could be transcribed and analyzed at a later time. Participants were scheduled for appointments in advance to provide a time that worked for the interviewees

To ensure a convenient time for the interviewees, prior appointments were set with the participants. Finally, concerning ethical issues, the respondents were well-informed about the research and they enthusiastically agreed to have their interactions recorded so that they could be used later for the study. The identities of all three teachers, the participants of the study, remained unrevealed for ethical considerations of the institution.

4.3 Data Collection Procedure

Some steps are followed in the process of data. The questions of the questionnaire are set in the Google Form and are administered to the students via Messenger, email, or WhatsApp. The form has three sections. The first section was background information, the second was students' overall information, such as previous experience, target band score, when they joined this course, etc. Both open and close-ended questions are included in the questionnaire. Close-ended questions are made in the five-point Likert Scale. The last three open-ended questions are set for getting feedback from the students about benefits, challenges, and suggestions. The semi-structured interviews with the teachers will take 15-20 minutes individually. The interview was recorded for transcription and further use.

4.4 Data Collection Instruments

Selecting the appropriate research instrument is a challenging task. For this reason, the researcher of this study adopted both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The researcher designed a questionnaire for numerous advantages. This is because questionnaires allow the researcher to obtain responses in a standardized way. Questionnaires yield numerical data which helps the researcher make comparisons. Finally, interviews help the researcher to get detailed information.

4.5 Survey Questionnaire for Students

In this research, the researcher collected quantitative data from the student participants by using questionnaires. The questions in the questionnaire are categorized into two types: open-ended and closed-ended. In closed-ended questions, respondents typically select an answer from a set of options that best represents their opinions. Common techniques for organizing answers to closed-ended questions include Likert scales and forced choices like agree/disagree. The survey had three sections. The first section consists of details regarding "A Case Study of an IELTS Course at a Private University in Bangladesh: Students' and Instructors' Perspectives". The second section consists of overall information about the students. The last section consists of the main questions to the study.

4.6 Interview for Teachers

Interviews gather detailed information from the teacher participants. Interviews are conducted to obtain data from the teachers to investigate their current knowledge and practices regarding A Case Study of an IELTS Course at a Private University in Bangladesh: Students' and Instructors' Perspectives. The interview questions are made by studying different research works and with the help of the supervisor. Throughout the teacher interview, there are ten primary open-ended questions. The questions are divided into two parts. The first part consists of the background of the teachers. The participants in the interviews are chosen based on their background. This section aims to determine the number of years that teachers have been teaching IELTS courses, which module they are most proficient in, and where they are teaching IELTS courses other than GUB. The second part consists of 7 open-ended questions which align with the research questions. These parts can be categorized into three elements. The first section focuses on incorporating the input they provided during simulated tests and classes. The course's difficulties, especially concerning logistics, are the subject of the second section. The final section concentrated on the course's necessary development for the organization.

4.7 Data Analysis Procedure

The methods for gathering data for this study were questionnaires and interviews. The right techniques and resources will be applied to the analysis of the gathered data. The researcher adopts Microsoft Excel for quantitative data analysis. To determine the frequency, percentage, and mean value of the responses and thematic analysis was applied to analyze the qualitative data. Bar and pie charts were used to illustrate the percentage of responses. The process of finding, examining, and summarizing themes in data is known as thematic analysis. The fundamental benefit of thematic analysis is its flexibility, which allows for a thorough categorization and description of the data. To examine the instructor interviews, the researcher transcribed each audio clip. After that, the researcher used the previously mentioned methodology to analyze the interviews. Following each interview question's classification of the raw data, the researcher looked at each response to find any recurring patterns or areas of overlap.

5. Findings

To answer the research questions, the researcher conducted an online survey and interviewed 3 teachers from the Department of English and CLCS, who take IELTS classes, from GUB as mentioned in the previous chapter. This chapter presents and explores the findings from analyzing data collected from both students and teachers. The discussion begins by presenting and discussing the quantitative findings from the questionnaire surveys. Qualitative results will then be provided.

5.1 Data Analysis of Survey Questionnaire

The researcher sent the link to the Google form by WhatsApp, email, or Messenger to the students enrolled in the Center for Languages and Cultural Studies' IELTS course at GUB. The students were instructed to complete the form based on their preferences. Ten structured questions were added to the questionnaire in order to get opinions on the advantages, difficulties, and general development required for this course.

1. Learners joined the GUB IELTS course at a specific time.

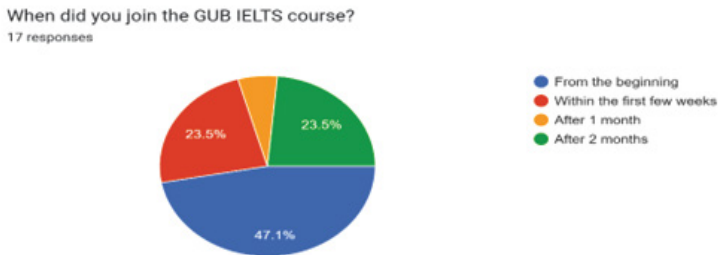


Fig. 1: Reason for joining the GUB IELTS course

The pie chart illustrates the responses of 17 participants regarding when they joined the GUB IELTS course. The data is divided into four categories: joining from the beginning, within the first few weeks, after 1 month, and after 2 months.

According to the chart, the largest proportion of participants, 47.1%, joined the course from the beginning, making it the most common response. This is followed by 23.5% of respondents who joined within the first few weeks, showing that nearly a quarter of participants enrolled shortly after the course commenced. Similarly, another 23.5% reported joining after 2 months, indicating a significant proportion of late joiners. In contrast, only 5.9% of participants joined the course after 1 month, which was the least common response.

2. The students' target IELTS band score is ____.

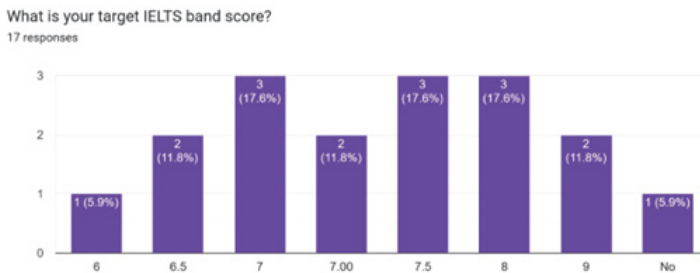


Fig. 2: Target IELTS band score

The bar chart illustrates the target IELTS band scores of 17 participants in the GUB IELTS course. The scores are categorized into seven groups, ranging from 6 to 9, as well as a "No" response.

According to the chart, the highest proportion of respondents, 17.6%, targeted band scores of 7.0, 7.5, and 8.0, with 3 participants in each category. This indicates that achieving a score between 7.0 and 8.0 was the most common goal among the participants. Following this, 11.8% of respondents aimed for band scores of 6.5, 7.0, and 9.0, with 2 participants in each group. Notably, a smaller proportion, 5.9%, set a target band score of 6.0, while an equal percentage of participants provided no specific score.

3. Students' satisfaction with the overall course structure.

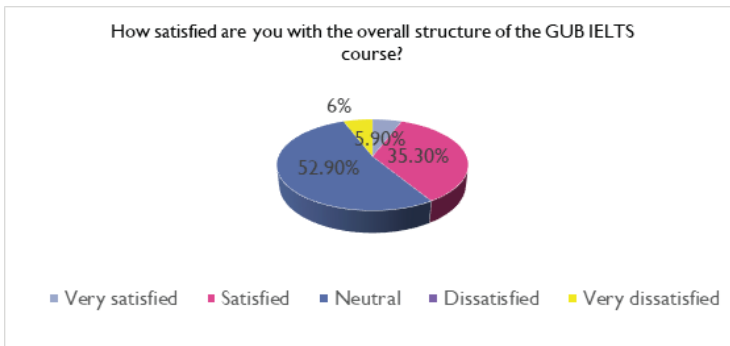


Fig. 3: Satisfaction level regarding the overall structure of the GUB's IELTS course

The pie chart illustrates the levels of satisfaction among 20 students, but 17 students responded regarding the overall structure of the GUB IELTS course. The responses are divided into five categories: Very satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, and Very dissatisfied.

The largest proportion of respondents, 52.9%, indicated that they were neutral about the course structure. This was followed by 35.3% of participants who reported being satisfied, making it the second most common response. In contrast, only a small percentage of respondents, 5.9%, expressed that they were very satisfied with the course. Similarly, 5.9% of participants reported being very dissatisfied, while no responses were recorded for the Dissatisfied category.

4. The course content is relevant to the actual IELTS exam.

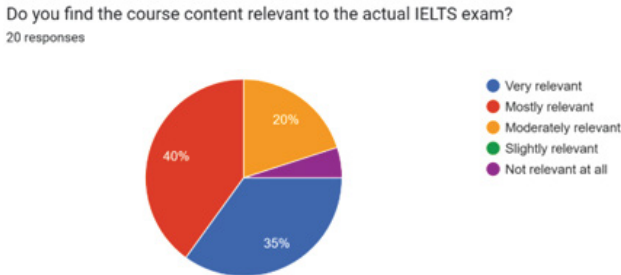


Fig. 4: Relevancy of the contents of the GUB IELTS course

The pie chart illustrates the responses of 20 participants regarding the relevance of the course content to the actual IELTS exam.

Overall, the majority of respondents considered the course content relevant to some extent, while a smaller portion found it not relevant.

The largest segment, representing 40%, indicated that the course content was mostly relevant. This was followed by 35% of participants who found it very relevant. Meanwhile, 20% of respondents considered the content moderately relevant. A much smaller percentage, represented by the purple section, found the content not relevant at all, although this figure is notably low. No participants reported that the content was slightly relevant.

5. Satisfaction with practice materials and exercises is high.

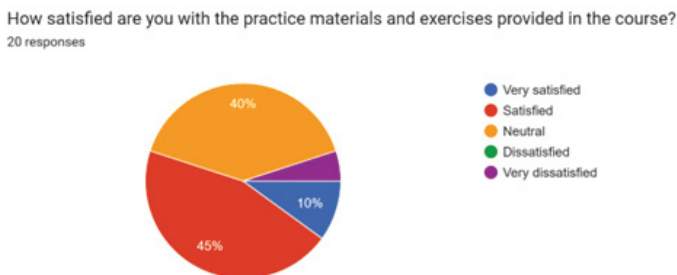


Fig. 5: Satisfaction level regarding materials and exercises

The pie chart illustrates the levels of satisfaction among 20 participants regarding the practice materials and exercises provided in the course.

Overall, the majority of respondents reported positively, while a smaller proportion expressed neutral or negative opinions.

The largest segment, accounting for 45%, indicated that they were satisfied with the materials and exercises. This was followed by 40% of participants who were neutral about their satisfaction. A smaller portion, 10%, reported being very satisfied. However, a minimal percentage, represented by the purple segment, expressed that they were very dissatisfied, while no respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied.

6. Students feel comfortable asking questions and participating in discussions.

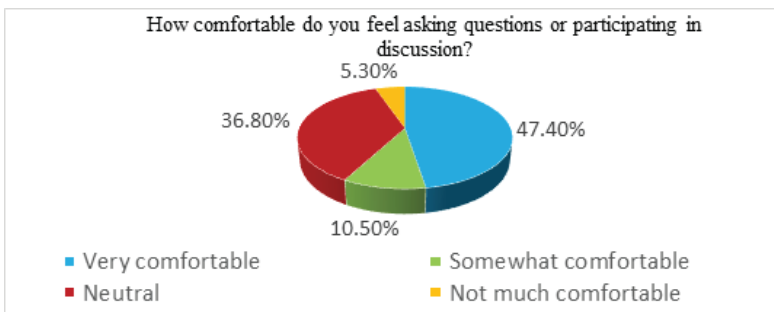


Fig. 6: Percentage of comfort level in class participation

The pie chart shows how at ease 20 participants are asking questions and taking part in conversations. In general, most respondents stated positive levels of comfort, although a smaller percentage experienced discomfort.

The largest segment, representing 50%, stated that they feel very comfortable asking questions or participating in discussions. This is followed by 35% of participants who reported feeling neutral. A smaller portion, 10%, indicated they are somewhat comfortable. Additionally, a minor percentage, represented by the green segment, reported feeling uncomfortable. Notably, no respondents stated that they were not comfortable at all.

7. The class schedules are convenient.



Fig. 7: Convenient class schedules

The pie chart illustrates the level of convenience regarding class schedules for 20 respondents. The responses are divided into five categories: Very convenient, Somewhat convenient, Neutral, Somewhat inconvenient, and Not convenient.

According to the chart, the largest proportion of respondents, 35% each, indicated that the class schedules were either neutral or somewhat convenient. This accounts for a combined total of 70%, suggesting that most participants found the schedules manageable or moderately convenient. In contrast, 15% of respondents described the schedules as very convenient, while 10% reported them as somewhat inconvenient. A small proportion, 5%, found the class schedules not convenient at all.

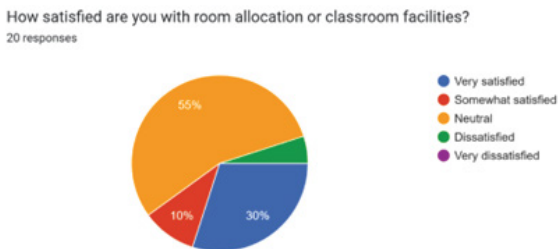


Fig. 8: Satisfaction level regarding classroom facilities

The pie chart provides data on the level of satisfaction among 20 respondents regarding room allocation and classroom facilities. The satisfaction levels are categorized as Very satisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, and Very dissatisfied.

The largest proportion, 55%, expressed a neutral opinion about the facilities. This is followed by 30% of respondents who indicated they were very

satisfied. Meanwhile, 10% reported being somewhat satisfied, suggesting that these participants viewed the facilities positively but with some reservations. On the other hand, 5% of the respondents were dissatisfied, while no participants reported being very dissatisfied.

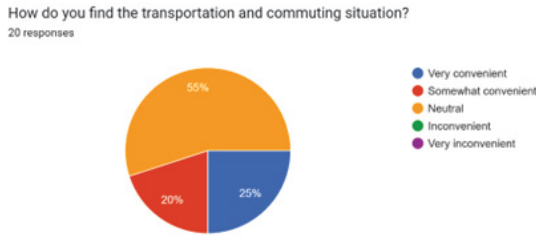


Fig. 9: Satisfaction level regarding transport facilities

The pie chart illustrates the responses of 20 participants regarding the transportation and commuting situation. The feedback is categorized into five levels: Very convenient, Somewhat convenient, Neutral, Inconvenient, and Very inconvenient.

The largest portion, 55%, indicated a neutral stance towards transportation and commuting, neither finding it particularly convenient nor inconvenient. This is followed by 25% of respondents who found the situation very convenient. Additionally, 20% reported it as somewhat convenient, showing moderate satisfaction. None of the respondents labeled the commuting situation as either inconvenient or very inconvenient.

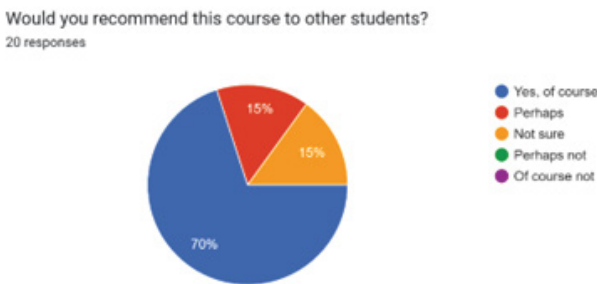


Fig. 10: Recommending the course to others

The pie chart shows the responses of 20 participants about recommending a course to others. Overall, most participants had a positive view of the course.

The majority, 70%, responded "Yes, of course," indicating strong approval.

Both "Perhaps" and "Not sure" received 15% each. No respondents selected "Perhaps not" or "Of course not."

5.2 Qualitative Interviews with IELTS Instructors

1. The decision to conduct classes was made based on a specific time and reason.

Teacher A: He was requested by one of the IELTS coordinators and one of his colleagues to conduct the classes, considering his prior experience in this. Though he initially expressed some doubt, the matter was brought to the attention of the Director Madam. Subsequently, he was officially assigned to handle the Reading and Written modules, as his IELTS score was deemed satisfactory for the role

Teacher B: The teacher mentioned that although she had been conducting IELTS classes for a long time, they started offering the course at the current university from the previous month, following a consultation with the university authority, who requested her to take IELTS speaking classes.

Teacher C: In response to the question, the teacher explained that the planning for the course had begun in March, with the intention to implement it by May. However, he personally started conducting classes in September, as his assigned module—Listening—was scheduled to begin at that time.

2. The person teaches IELTS outside the organization and is able to provide more details about it.

Teacher A: Teacher mentioned that he had been teaching IELTS courses for a year, including conducting online classes and providing writing feedback. He also stated that he charged a fee for the writing feedback and had international students.

Teacher B: Teacher stated that she had been working as an IELTS instructor for a long time. She added that she had been teaching IELTS since 2018 and had been conducting classes on platforms outside the university as well.

Teacher C: Teacher stated that he had been working as an IELTS instructor at Wings Learning Education in Dhanmondi for the last two years. He also mentioned that he taught various individuals throughout the entire course.

3. The teacher has conducted multiple IELTS classes in the course and has covered particular modules.

Teacher A: Teacher stated that he had conducted a total of 12 classes for this course, with 6 classes allocated for each module—specifically, 6 for reading and 6 for writing.

Teacher B: Teacher mentioned that, as far as she could remember, she had conducted approximately 6 classes. She explained that the classes were divided

into four segments, each comprising 6 sessions per skill. Since she was responsible for the speaking module, she took 6 classes. She also added that she had planned to conduct a mock test as part of the course.

Teacher C: Teacher told us that he had conducted approximately six classes, specifically in the listening module.

4. The speaker has identified multiple positive aspects of the course.

Teacher A: The teacher told us that, since the course was paid, the students were naturally more motivated, determined, and focused on their goals, such as improving their IELTS scores. He also mentioned that many of them already had clear objectives in mind, which helped keep them on track. He further added that, as most of the students were in-house, the teachers were familiar with their exam schedules and could plan lessons accordingly, making the learning experience more effective and personalized.

Teacher B: The teacher mentioned that there were several advantages to the course. She stated that, first of all the course was relatively affordable, which made it accessible to a wide range of students. She further explained that by offering this course, the university was providing a valuable service to society and the community, as it was not part of the university's formal curriculum but rather an initiative to support students' educational needs.

Teacher C: The teacher explained that the course not only prepared students for the IELTS exam but also helped them communicate more confidently in everyday conversations. He further mentioned that the course provided consultancy for studying abroad, offering student valuable guidance for their future plans.

5. The teacher experienced various challenges related to students while teaching the course.

Teacher A: The teacher stated that this course was the first time he had taught IELTS face-to-face, as he usually ran his own business and conducted classes online. When he finally had the opportunity to teach offline students, he encountered both benefits and challenges. For instance, he observed that many students did not attend regularly due to issues such as traffic and other factors. He remarked that the overall standard of the students was not very high compared to foreign students, such as those from India or Africa. He believed that one reason for this was that English served as a second language for many African students, whereas in Bangladesh, it was considered a foreign language. He pointed out that rural students who had come to live in Dhaka generally had lower proficiency levels. However, he acknowledged that there were some promising students who, in his opinion, could achieve high scores if they committed to studying. He also noted that many students felt overwhelmed by the course and were therefore considering improvements not only in terms of academic

performance but also in discipline.

Teacher B: She mentioned that she had faced several challenges while teaching the course. One of the main issues was that the students came from different departments, which made it difficult to bring them together. She noted that some students preferred online classes, whereas others expected offline sessions. Additionally, there were significant variations in their proficiency levels—some were high achievers while others were low achievers. She expressed that some students struggled to understand her instructions, which is why she occasionally had to rephrase her explanations and use the first language (L1) to help them comprehend. This was the approach she adopted to maintain balance in the classroom.

Teacher C: He stated that the batch consisted of a heterogeneous group of students from different backgrounds, including professionals and students at various academic levels, which created a mixture of differences in their levels of understanding. As a result, he faced several challenges. He explained that some students were not familiar with the listening module and had just begun working on basic listening skills, while others were advanced enough to cope with higher-level content. This variation in their listening abilities posed a significant challenge for him. He also observed that many students struggled to understand different accents and pronunciations, particularly the British accent, with specific difficulty in recognizing silent sounds such as the letter "R." Additionally, he pointed out that maintaining concentration while holding headphones for 30 minutes was another major challenge faced by the students.

6. The teacher experienced difficulties related to logistical factors while teaching the course.

Teacher A: In response to the question about logistical challenges, he stated that commuting was a major issue due to frequent traffic congestion, even for those living nearby. He also mentioned that room allocation was often unclear, as there was no fixed classroom for the IELTS course. As a result, students and teachers faced confusion, and sometimes classes had to be moved or stopped even after starting. And he had to reschedule it, which is quite annoying

Teacher B: She mentioned that there were indeed some issues. For instance, she stated that although a room had been booked for two hours, they were informed after one hour that it was already pre-occupied, which forced them to vacate the room. In other instances, she said that they could hardly find any available classroom and had to conduct classes in one of the director's rooms due to the lack of proper space. She expressed the view that a bit more attention and concern regarding this matter could help resolve such problems.

Teacher C: In response to the question regarding logistical challenges faced while teaching the course, the teacher told us that there were certain issues,

particularly concerning the availability of the sound system, which was not accessible every day. He also mentioned that he had to manage it on his own, and found it quite challenging. He further added that the most difficult aspect of conducting the module was finding a suitable classroom for the students.

7. Providing feedback through review, error correction, and improvement strategies.

Teacher A: The teacher told us, that he believed feedback was essential for students to understand their areas of improvement. He usually gave oral feedback during face-to-face classes and sometimes asked students to submit their writing. Although he encouraged them to share any confusion about their homework, many did not complete it, and those who did rarely expressed their difficulties. Therefore, he often had to ask them individually during class.

Teacher B: She said that she had not formally conducted any mock tests but had taken a few informal ones. She explained that she provided feedback by first pointing out the students' mistakes and then offering corrections, suggesting alternative ways to express their ideas. She added that she also motivated them by explaining how small improvements in their responses could lead to better scores.

Teacher C: In response to the question, he stated that he typically assessed students by playing the audio and asking them to write down the answers. He noted that when students made spelling mistakes, he informed them that incorrect spelling could result in a loss of marks and emphasized the importance of learning correct spelling. He added that, in addition to this, he provided feedback by demonstrating relevant tips and techniques based on the students' individual needs.

8. Students face common difficulties in each IELTS exam section.

Teacher A: In response to the question, he stated that in the listening module, students often struggle due to the fast pace of the audio and their lack of regular exposure to English through TV or movies. He added that since the audio plays only once, students must concentrate and multitask by listening and writing simultaneously, which many find challenging—especially in multiple-choice questions where they miss the answer by the time they process the options.

Regarding reading, he believed it to be the most difficult module for his students, primarily due to their poor reading habits. Even high-performing students often struggle with complex sentence structures because they are not accustomed to reading extensively.

For the speaking section, he mentioned that the main issue is not vocabulary or lack of ideas but rather limited practice in speaking English. He tries to engage them in English conversations during class, although it's sometimes difficult as some students fail to understand.

Lastly, he identified writing as the most challenging module overall. Although students may know grammar rules, they often fail to apply them correctly due to a tendency to memorize rather than develop ideas. He emphasized that many students lack the ability to express themselves in writing, which he attributes to flaws in the education system. To address this, he focuses on teaching them proper writing structures.

Teacher B: The teacher told us, that in the context of her country, most students face difficulties in the speaking section due to frequent grammatical errors. She also noted that some students struggle with pronunciation. However, she believed that apart from these issues, their overall performance is relatively satisfactory, with fluency often being better than their pronunciation and grammatical accuracy.

Teacher C: In response to the question, the teacher stated that one of the common difficulties students faced in the listening section was understanding numbers, particularly when British speakers used "o" instead of "zero," which initially confused them. However, once he explained it, they were able to grasp it. He further mentioned that students also struggled with map-related tasks, flowcharts, and the monologue in the final section. Although he provided practice across all sections to help them get accustomed to the format, he was unsure whether they had fully overcome these challenges.

9. Motivate struggling students with clear band descriptors and practical tips.

Teacher A: In the response of our question he told us that, he motivates students who struggle to improve their scores, and he stated that he actually appreciates students who show a genuine interest in self-improvement. He mentioned that if he were asked to compare naturally good students with those who are eager to improve, he would prefer the latter. He observed that naturally good students often lack the motivation to progress further, whereas students who are determined to improve receive his suggestions, and at times, he even provides them with detailed guidelines. He added that he encourages them by assuring that with consistent practice, they can enhance their scores. Moreover, he strives to instill a sense of discipline in his students.

Teacher B: The teacher answered us, that regarding motivating students who struggle to improve their scores, she stated that she always advises them to speak in English regularly. She emphasized that if students continue speaking in Bangla and expect to excel in the IELTS test, it would not be possible. According to her, consistent and long-term practice is essential. She explained that just as fluency in Bangla comes from daily use, the same applies to English. She also encouraged students to not only speak but think and even dream in English—especially during the 10 to 15 days before the exam—to make their speaking more natural and confident.

Teacher C: The teacher explained that he informs them about the band descriptors

and the specific requirements needed to achieve a good band score. He also provides them with useful tips and tricks for each section of the exam. He noted that these strategies have proven effective, citing an example of a student who initially scored around 15 but was able to improve dramatically to about 28 by the final class.

10. Improve logistical support, provide materials, and assign dedicated instructors.

Teacher A: The teacher stated that the institution should be more flexible. He suggested that a permanent room should be allocated for the IELTS classes and that the sound system needed improvement. He recommended appointing instructors who are truly eligible, experienced, and passionate about teaching IELTS. He further mentioned that the institution might consider offering online courses alongside offline classes, as many professionals were unable to attend in-person sessions due to their jobs. He emphasized that time constraints and the institution's distance from the main city—along with severe traffic issues—made it difficult for some learners to attend. Therefore, he believed that introducing online options would be a beneficial step toward improving the IELTS course.

Teacher B: In response to the question, she answered us, that she had not thought about it before, but suggested that there could be fixed rules for the course so that neither the institution nor the students would face difficulties in finding a room. She recommended that the room be arranged in a way that simulates an actual IELTS mock test environment, enabling all skills to be practiced smoothly. For instance, she mentioned that having a proper sound system would help students practice listening, and the presence of a projector and other facilities would allow the instructor to show slides, which could support the development of skills like reading and writing. She believed that a well-prepared room would significantly benefit the students and motivate them to attend the classes more regularly.

Teacher C: The teacher told us, that he had several suggestions for improving the course. He emphasized the need for enhancing the institution's logistical support to facilitate the overall effectiveness of the program. He suggested that necessary materials should be provided, and instructors who are prepared and available to conduct the classes should be appointed. He noted that, since the institution offers both university and IELTS courses simultaneously, faculty members are often engaged with other responsibilities. Therefore, he believed that a dedicated instructor should be assigned specifically for the IELTS course. He concluded by stating that the logistical and other forms of support associated with the course should be properly addressed.

6. Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the effectiveness, challenges, and potential areas for improvement in the IELTS course offered at Green University of Bangladesh (GUB). The views of both students and instructors reveal important details about the course structure, logistical arrangements, and teaching methods.

6.1 Benefits and Positive Aspects

Both students and instructors recognized several strengths of the course. Many students appreciated the program & affordability and accessibility, which allowed a diverse group of learners to take part. Instructors noted that the course not only prepared students for the IELTS exam but also improved their overall communication skills, boosting their confidence in real-life situations. Additionally, students valued the practical emphasis on mock tests and feedback sessions, which closely resembled actual exam conditions and provided personalized support. The instructors highlighted the course's role in promoting social mobility by helping students achieve higher band scores and pursue opportunities abroad. The structured modules that covered all four IELTS components ensured a well-rounded approach to skill development.

6.2 Challenges Faced

Despite its strengths, several challenges were identified. Students reported difficulties in adjusting to varying class schedules and inconsistent room assignments, which disrupted their learning experiences. Logistical issues, such as poor sound systems and inadequate classroom facilities, created additional obstacles. Traffic congestion and lengthy commutes also impacted attendance and punctuality. From a teaching perspective, instructors encountered challenges with diverse student groups, where differing skill levels necessitated tailored instruction. Some students found it hard to understand accents in listening tasks, navigate complex sentence structures in reading modules, and apply grammar in writing exercises. Instructors also noticed that students often lacked discipline and consistent practice, which negatively affected their performance.

6.3 Recommendations for Improvement

Both instructors and students identified several areas for improvement. Enhancing logistical arrangements, such as having fixed classrooms with modern teaching aids, would foster a more stable learning environment. Instructors suggested offering supplementary materials and extra practice tests to cater to the diverse needs of learners. Having dedicated IELTS instructors and administrative staff could ensure smooth course delivery and personalized support. Instructors

also highlighted the importance of intensive speaking practice, exposure to various accents, and strategies to cope with exam anxiety. Encouraging students to incorporate English into their daily lives, such as thinking and dreaming in English, could further boost fluency and confidence.

7. Conclusion

This study highlights the varied experiences of students and instructors in the IELTS course at Green University of Bangladesh. While the course is affordable, accessible, and effective in preparing students for the IELTS, there are logistical challenges and pedagogical gaps that need to be addressed. Improving classroom facilities, streamlining schedules, and providing additional practice materials can greatly enhance outcomes. The findings emphasize the need for tailored support for students with different skill levels and the importance of a holistic approach to language learning. Future research could investigate the long-term effects on student performance and employability, aiding in the ongoing development of the course.

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