

WUB MSJ Students Conduct Research on Disability Representation in Bangladeshi Print Media

Students from the **Department of Media Studies and Journalism (MSJ)** at the **World University of Bangladesh (WUB)** are conducting a research project titled *“Disability Representation in Bangladeshi Print Media”* under the supervision of faculty member **Shakil Reja Efti**.

The research team consists of **Md Masum Billah, Md Zarif Hasan Chowdhury, Angelica Ahmed Mirdha, Mahnaz Sharin Momo, Marzia Akter, Shariar Muhammad Sheli Binnas, Afsana Nazneen Papri, and Md. Mafizur Rahman Shovon**. The initiative brings together undergraduate students interested in journalism, media analysis, and social issues, providing them with practical experience in academic research.

The project began in early 2026 with the formation of a student-led research team focused on examining how disability-related issues are portrayed in mainstream Bangladeshi newspapers. The study aims to explore whether media coverage reflects inclusive, accurate, and socially responsible representation of persons with disabilities.

Since the beginning of the project, the students have participated in a series of training sessions, collaborative discussions, and academic workshops designed to strengthen their research and analytical skills. As part of the preparation process, the team explored key academic concepts, including literature review, peer review, qualitative and quantitative research methods, and scholarly databases such as Google Scholar. Students also received training in reference management tools such as Mendeley to support academic writing and citation practices.

“This project has helped us understand how academic research is conducted in practice and how media representation shapes public understanding of disability issues.”

“Through this project, we are gaining practical experience in data collection, analysis, and academic discussion beyond classroom learning.”

As part of the study, the research team selected several leading Bangladeshi newspapers, including *Prothom Alo, Bangladesh Pratidin, Kaler Kantho, Jugantor, Ittefaq, and Janakantha* for content analysis. In addition to examining published news content, the project incorporates semi-structured interviews to explore broader perspectives on disability representation, inclusion, accessibility, and media framing in

Bangladeshi journalism.

Supervisor Shakil Reja Efti emphasized the importance of student-led academic research in journalism education, noting that such initiatives help bridge the gap between classroom learning and practical media analysis. He also highlighted the role of research in developing students' critical thinking, analytical ability, and social awareness.

The project continues through regular online meetings, literature review sessions, collaborative task distribution, interviews, and data analysis activities conducted by the research team.

Students involved in the initiative shared that the experience has allowed them to move beyond traditional classroom learning and engage directly with real-world media and social issues through academic investigation.

The Department of Media Studies and Journalism at WUB continues to encourage student-led research initiatives that promote academic excellence, innovation, critical inquiry, and social awareness in the field of media studies and journalism.

Research Supervisor



Shakil Reja Efti

Lecturer, Department of Media Studies and Journalism

World University of Bangladesh

PhD CU (Australia) | MA CU (Czech Republic) | MA IU (Turkey) | BA IU (Turkey)

Selected Publications

- Efti, S. R. (2025). Podcasting and disability voice: A close analytical listening study. *The Australasian Journal of Popular Culture*, 14(2), 185–206.
- Efti, S. R., & Tufan, F. (2025). Beginnings of belonging: Analysing the introductory episodes of diasporic women's podcasts. *Journal of Global Diaspora & Media*, 6(1), 55–80.
- Efti, S. R., & Tufan, F. (2026). Podcasting as a space for disabled creators. *Disability & Society*, 41(3), 848–853. Routledge
- Efti, S. R. (2024). İngiliz Kolonisi Bengal'in Yazılı Metinlerinde Atatürk. *Atatürk Dergisi*, 13(1),

36-47.

- Efti, S. R., & Gönenc, A. Y. (2024). Bangladeşli Gazeteci ve Millî Şair Nazrul'un... *İletişim Çalışmaları 2023*, 133.

Awards & Recognitions

- **John Curtin Graduate Research Scholarship**

Curtin University, Australia

- **CEDIA Conference Bursary**

Awarded to present research at the CEDIA Conference on Inequalities and Diversity in the Arts, United Kingdom

- **Erasmus+ Exchange Scholarship**

For MA thesis research at Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

- **Most Original Research Prize**

ECREA RSS Postgraduate Conference "Thinking Through Sound", United Kingdom

Dr. Shakil Reja Efti supervises student-led research initiatives at the Department of Media Studies and Journalism, World University of Bangladesh, with a focus on media representation, disability studies, podcasting, and global communication.

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Research Team Profiles

Md Masum Billah

Semester: 8th | **WUB ID:** WUB25/24/02/21

Research Interests: Media framing, social representation of marginalized communities, Science Communication, Climate Change Discourse, Environmental Journalism.

Hobbies: Mentoring students in Mathematics and Physics, creative writing, cinematography, landscape photography, traveling.

Future Plans: Pursue MA/PhD in Environmental Media; develop frameworks for science-based climate reporting.

Motivation: To dismantle the "victimhood" lens in disability portrayal and advocate for rights-based, inclusive media narratives.

Md Zarif Hasan Chowdhury

Semester: 7th | **WUB ID:** WUB25/24/02/11

Research Interests: Media analysis, inclusive communication, digital media, representation of marginalized communities.

Hobbies: Photography, writing, traveling.

Future Plans: Work with development organizations on inclusion-focused research and journalism.

Motivation: To use research as a tool to highlight underrepresented voices and encourage positive social attitudes toward persons with disabilities.

Angelica Ahmed Mirdha

Semester: 7th | **WUB ID:** WUB25/24/02/14

Research Interests: Disability media, inclusive journalism, digital storytelling, social change.

Hobbies: Writing, traveling.

Future Plans: Conduct research on digital media, public perception, and representation of marginalized groups.

Motivation: To explore how inclusive media practices can reduce stereotypes and give visibility to overlooked voices.

Mahnaz Sharin Momo

Semester: 7th | **WUB ID:** WUB25/24/02/20

Research Interests: Disability communication, gender and society, inclusive media practices.

Hobbies: Content creation, storytelling, podcasts, documentaries, blogging, creative design.

Future Plans: Work in NGO/development sector on inclusion and community-based research.

Motivation: Inspired by observing challenges faced by an autistic individual; seeks to improve media empathy and understanding.

Marzia Akter

Semester: 6th | **WUB ID:** WUB25/24/03/32

Research Interests: AI in journalism, algorithmic influence, disability media representation.

Hobbies: Reading, films, creative writing, journaling, painting.

Future Plans: Explore AI's impact on journalism while continuing work on disability inclusivity.

Motivation: Childhood experience with an autistic neighbor revealed harmful media stereotypes; now seeks fair, respectful representation.

Shariar Muhammad Sheli Binnas

Semester: 6th | **WUB ID:** WUB25/25/04/58

Research Interests: Social change, aging experiences, youth mentality, disability narratives.

Hobbies: Content creation, writing, storytelling, cooking, traveling.

Future Plans: Research aging experiences in rural vs. urban Bangladesh; expand globally.

Motivation: Personal experience with a deaf uncle revealed societal bias; believes media can challenge stereotypes and foster inclusion.

Afsana Nazneen Papri

Semester: 6th | **WUB ID:** WUB25/25/04/59

Research Interests: Youth activism, disability communication, media ethics, gender and society.

Hobbies: Cinematography, photography, traveling.

Future Plans: Contribute to global research on inclusion and community development.

Motivation: To uncover hidden realities of persons with disabilities and promote compassionate, inclusive media narratives.

Md. Mafizur Rahman Shovon

Semester: 4th | **WUB ID:** WUB25/25/05/77

Research Interests: Technology innovation, AI, digital media, communication transformation.

Hobbies: Gaming, online entertainment, traveling, sports.

Future Plans: Integrate media, communication, and technology in research; focus on digital storytelling and accessibility.

Motivation: To shift disability representation from sympathy to dignity, equality, and respect through rights-based media approaches.

The Department of Media Studies and Journalism at WUB continues to encourage student-led research initiatives that promote academic excellence, innovation, critical inquiry, and social awareness in the field of media studies and journalism.