

Cybersecurity and Quantum Computing: Challenges and Countermeasures

Nafee Ibn Sabah

B. Sc. In Software Engineering

DAFFODIL INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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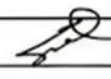


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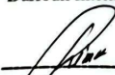
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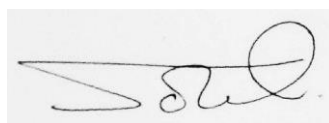
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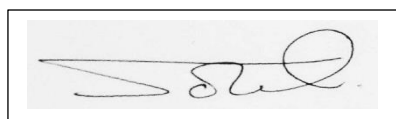
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Cybersecurity and Quantum Computing: Challenges and Countermeasures

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Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of
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Department of Software Engineering (Major in Cyber Security)

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Lastly, I am eternally grateful to my family for believing in me and providing me with support which is akin to a cornerstone in my academic journey.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents for their unconditional love and support which made this all possible. Their firm belief in my potential has been an invaluable motivation for this study.

This thesis is also dedicated to any future students who would like to study quantum computing and cryptography and would find this study helpful in understanding how it works.

ABSTRACT

It would be wrong to say classical computers are the future because now this is the age of “Quantum Computers”. This study aims to explain how it works, what are the issues with current cryptographic solutions that are vulnerable to quantum level attacks, provide case studies, performance and security trade offs along with challenges and discussions in case-by-case study. This entire paper aims to simplify the process and provides valuable insights into various available solutions. There isn’t a single one fit for all solution when it comes to cyber security and especially when it comes to Post Quantum Cryptography and as a result many different types of the PQC models are briefly studied to form an opinion on which one to use for which cases along with helpful benchmarks which ultimately helps in making a decision regarding which one to use depending on case by case scenario. This thesis also briefly studies on the economic implications on losses due to cybersecurity.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| QKD | Quantum Key Distribution |
| PQC | Post Quantum Cryptography |
| HNDL | Harvest now, decrypt later |
| LWE | Learning with errors |
| ML-KEM | Module Lattice based Key Encapsulation Mechanism |
| ML-DSA | Module Lattice-based Digital Signature Algorithm |
| BD | Bangladesh |

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Title**Error! Bookmark not defined.** Bangladesh Economic Data

Appendix B: Title Hash Algorithm data

INTRODUCTION

Opening Statement

With the emergence of quantum computing, it's imperative that a proper quantum resistant environment is set up to counter it, not only that but also to make sure to minimize damage and use the best one for the best case, the main problem being the lack of information in one place as it is a new topic. While there are many existing solutions, many still needs improvements and must be studied upon to make a proper informed decision.

Quantum Computers

The quantum computers work in Qubits, which unlike the traditional bits consisting of 0s and 1s, it is a bit different. A qubit can be in a state of 0, 1 or both at the same time and as a result compared to classical computers, the mathematical computation possible while qubits are much faster and efficient in nature. (1) (3)

To fully understand how quantum computing works, we need to visit the elements of quantum mechanics which are superimposition, entanglement and quantum interference. To briefly explain each element, it would be as follows:

Quantum Superimposition: It's when a quantum element and in our case the qubit can exist in multiple state at the same time and as a result can be exponentially faster when thousands of qubits are formed and used to compute things. (2)

Quantum Entanglement: It's when two or more particles get linked in a such a way that one's state can influence the other and vice versa, it forms sometimes of tether-like connection despite the distance covered between them effecting each other's state. (2)

Quantum Interference: When quantum states overlap each other, they can also form and change depending on if its constructive interference or destructive interference. The overlap might affect other states involved and is best demonstrated on double slit experiment. (2)

Table 0.1 Classical Computer Vs Quantum Computer speed

| Classical Algorithms with Exponential Runtime | Quantum Algorithm with Polynomial Runtime |
|---|---|
| 10 seconds | 1 minute |
| 2 minutes | 2 minutes |
| 0.3K years | 10 minutes |
| 3.3K years | 11 minutes |
| Around 13.8 billion years | Around 24 minutes |

As we can see that while for very simple tasks like managing various spreadsheets or modifying documents as needed is where classical computers and their algorithms work the best as they are easy to compute, but for complex works like breaking encryption, training various AI models it's a clear win for quantum algorithms. (4)

There are many other areas that also benefit from such kind of quantum computing, but the focus of this thesis paper would be on the field of cybersecurity as it's one of the major areas now where modern solutions are not even considered without a quantum environment. There are many things that must be addressed first before we go into the technical details of the studies that are done over the years which resulted in fascinating finds which also includes Quantum key distribution also known as QKD. (1) (3) (5)

Cryptographic keys are used to identify, encrypt and decrypt data as needed, it is often used for digital security and in an essential element of Post Quantum Cryptography or PQC. (5) (6)

Classical Cryptographic system and PQC

In classical cryptographic systems such as RSA, Diffie-Hellman, ECC it is seen that due to its dependency on integer factorization and discrete logarithm they are strong against classical cryptographic system, however, they are weak against quantum algorithms where it was decrypted very easily. People depended on this kind of algorithm for so long that it was thought to be almost indestructible and thus as a result was implemented almost everywhere possible. (8)

When developing their quantum environment one of the notable algorithms developed by IBM was Shor's algorithm which not only helped decrypt and decode RSA but also other current classical encryptions in place faster than even the classical supercomputers. Not only that, but the adversaries also responsible for stealing data attempted to follow the "HNDL" model which would yield stolen data that can be used when quantum computing reaches maturity and is available to a certain degree. This not only creates an issue with the existing security solution but also creates a new threat of cyber criminals stealing data as man in the middle attack being very common. Thus began the development of PQC which helped resist quantum level algorithms and also help create techniques such as using QKD to make sure key exchanges can be done safely. (9) (10) (11)

In order to make sure the keys shared are not being eavesdropped or being watched by anyone, QKD was formed also known as Quantum Key Distribution, it's a method where keys used in cryptographic operations are shared between the sender and receiver and if any middleman tries to spy on it the quantum state changes and alerts that the key is no longer secured for operation. It utilized quantum entanglement and any attempts to observe or measure it can disturb the system allowing it to be highly secured. (5)

QKD under normal status

Under normal circumstances any QKD type of cryptographic exchange would look like something like this:



Figure 0.1 *QKD under normal status*

Source: Self-made by Canva

As shown in figure 1.1 we can see that a typical key exchange is happening with no middleman or eavesdropping from someone else. As its a quantum state, it wont change as it is not observed while in transit thus maintaining its properties while also being fast and efficient.

This is just an example of the first QKD type of technique used in development as there are various other types as of which many are still under experimentation and development which would also require further testing documentation. Different type of techniques has different types of weaknesses and strengths, in that case depending on use case the best algorithm is selected.

QKD during middleman attack

We already know that when observed, the quantum states change and as a result this can be utilized to make sure nothing is observed while the keys are in transit, a common type of attack named man in the middle is when someone steals data in transit or spies on them, sometimes depending on the situation they can even impersonate one of them for additional information. To avoid that, QKD helps as it changes drastically when observed by an unintentional third-party during data transit or key exchanges.



Figure 0.2 *QKD under observed status*

Source: Self-made by Canva

With only a small change due to state shifting while being observed the entire key changes drastically alerting the ones that the key has been observed and thus the data transit has been compromised by someone who is observing them. (7)

Table 0.2 Classical Cryptography Vs PQC

| Classical | Quantum |
|--|---|
| Based on mathematical computation | Based on Quantum mechanics |
| Straightforward | Sophisticated |
| Huge scope | Limited scope as of this moment |
| Well established and tested | Early stage of development |
| Less Expensive | Much more expensive |
| Bound by computational power and its limitations | Bound by laws of physics so needs no upgrades |

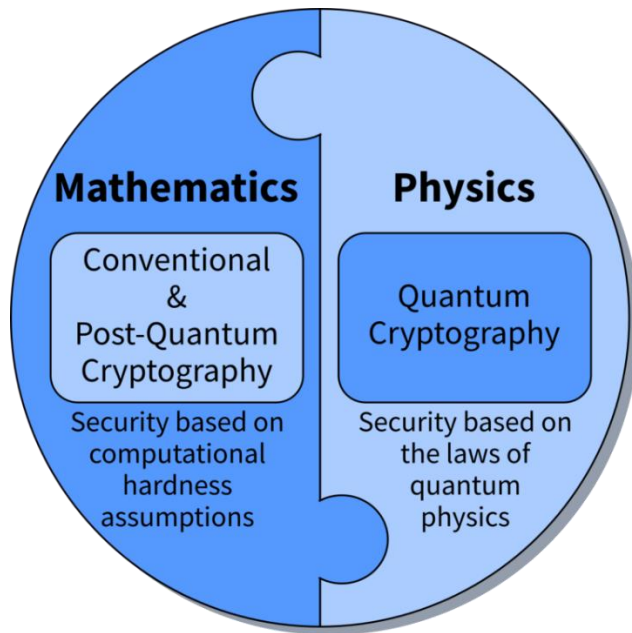


Figure 0.3 Yin & Yang representation of PQC and CC

Source: (12)

Due to the lack of cybersecurity, the world can lose up to an estimation of around 10.5 trillion USD or equivalent up to 2025 and that amount is shockingly high as even after so many security measures are in place, the cybercriminals always finding ways to circumvent the system security and thus creating crisis among people. This clearly means not a lot of people are still aware or care about their digital wellbeing as a recent survey suggested that phishing is still one of the major ways money is lost due to people falling victims to cybercrime. (13)

Table 0.3 Global Cost Timeline

| Year | Amount in trillions |
|------|---------------------|
|------|---------------------|

| | |
|------|------|
| 2019 | 3.21 |
| 2021 | 6.00 |
| 2023 | 8.10 |
| 2025 | 10.5 |

The shocking part of the data is by the end of 2025 at a loss of 10.5 trillion it boils down to a loss of around 330,000 USD per minute or even 5.5K per second, despite so many security in place, in a world without security the amount could have easily tripled with no way of getting back lost funds due to the presence of cryptocurrency .

This thesis aims to provide both exhaustive and properly structured analysis of various types of algorithms present within the current post quantum cryptography and help analyse different trade-offs that might be present between the types, their implementation and use cases depending on various their efficiency and performance.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Table 21 Literature Review

| Serial Number | Author-Year | Title | Contribution | Limitaiton |
|------------------|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| 1. | Bernstein et al. (2009) | Introduction to post-quantum cryptography | Introduction to PQC | Many information old and outdated now as better solutions exist. (14) |
| 2. | Buchmann et al. (2017) | Postquantum Cryptography— State of the Art | Unique Key System | Using unique key systems also used only one key per message so it was slow. (16) |
| 3. | Hülsing (2013) | Shorter Signatures for Hash-Based signature schemes | Reduced signature size | Each key was one time only which used more resources. (15) |
| 4. | Bernstein et al. (2015) | SPHINCS: Practical Stateless Hash- Based Signatures. | Introduced stateless hash- based signatures. | Cannot be used for key reuse as the signature size is big. (17) |

| Serial Number | Author-Year | Title | Contribution | Limitaiton |
|---------------|---|---|-------------------------------|--|
| 5. | Shahid et al. (2020) | WOTS-S: A Quantum Secure Compact Signature Scheme for Distributed Ledger. | Secure Blockchain. | Onetime key usage. (18) |
| 6. | Sjöberg (2017) | Post-Quantum Algorithms for Digital Signing in PKI. | PQC algorithms. | Theoretical Information only (19) |
| 7. | Suhail et al. (2021) | On the Role of Hash-Based Signatures in Quantum-Safe IoT. | Hash based signatures in IoT. | Lacked proper algorithm with real world applications. (20) |
| 8. | Hegde, Jamuar, and Kulkarni (2023) | Post Quantum Implications on Private and Public Key Cryptography. | Used multiple keys | Very high computational overhead (21) |
| 9. | Chambers, J. (2023) | What should we be doing with | A very business focused | No actual plans for planning on what to prepare |

| Serial Number | Author-Year | Title | Contribution | Limitaiton |
|---------------|------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | quantum computing? | article showing importance of waiting for quantum computing to mature. | for once PQC reaches maturity. (4) |
| 10. | IBM (2024) | Shor's Algorithm | Can speed up exponentially | Sometimes unstable and has errors that needs further testing. (9) |
| 11. | Khalil. M. (2025) | The cost of cybercrime statistics is projected to be \$10.5 trillion annually by 2025 | Depicts some of the highest level of financial loss for 2025 due to quantum attacks | No preventive measures or backup plans talked about. (13) |
| 12. | Regenscheid, A. (2024) | Transition to Post-Quantum cryptography standards | Talks about migrating current infrastructures and system to PQC | Lack of demographic-based research needs to cover wider areas. (11) |
| 13. | Sanghadia, P. (2025) | Understanding Quantum Key | Security in form of QKD | Still in experimental |

| Serial Number | Author-Year | Title | Contribution | Limitaiton |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| | | Distribution (QKD) | unbound by classic hardware limitation. | phase and needs further testing (7) |
| 14. | Sharma, A., & Naik, G. M. (2025). | A case study on the implementation of Caesar, ViGenere, and RSA Ciphers. | Discusses various classic ciphers in modern settings. | Without modern implementation and modification, will eventually be toppled by Quantum computers. (8) |
| 15. | Demir et al. (2025) | Performance Analysis and Industry Deployment of Post-Quantum Cryptography Algorithms | Vast study on PQC and NIST standard CRYSTALS-Kyber and CRYSTALS-Dilithium | Relies on specific CPU architecture. (22) |
| 16. | Scrivano (2025) | A Comparative Study of Classical and Post-Quantum | Practical use of Hybrid structure in PQC with | |

| Serial Number | Author-Year | Title | Contribution | Limitaiton |
|---------------|-------------|---|---|------------|
| | | Cryptographic Algorithms in the Era of Quantum Computing. ArXiv.org. | studies to critical threat model. (23) | |

17.

18.

19.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Methodology Principles and step by step guide:

Proper methodology principles were followed to make sure this paper is both insightful and useful in terms of both academia and personal knowledge in this field. Data was collected through fair means and proper citations were given where appropriate.

- 1) First relevant literature works in forms of papers, journals, internet articles, eBooks were read to get relevant knowledge needed for this study, all the things in this thesis under citations are mentioned in the reference page with valid information.

- 2) Then each work is properly analysed while taking relevant notes and data collection starts.

- 3) In case on unavailable data, data is simulated or collected from other reliable sources.

Sample methodology of a custom hashing algorithm and how it works



Figure 3.1 Methodology of a HAS01 algorithm, modified Syrga 1. Source: Self-made on canva

Step 1: Key Generation:

A pseudorandom number generator creates a set of secret subkeys which later combines to form secret main key. Later it goes through HAS01 algorithm multiple times to create intermediate subkeys and then finally after multiple hashing public key is formed.

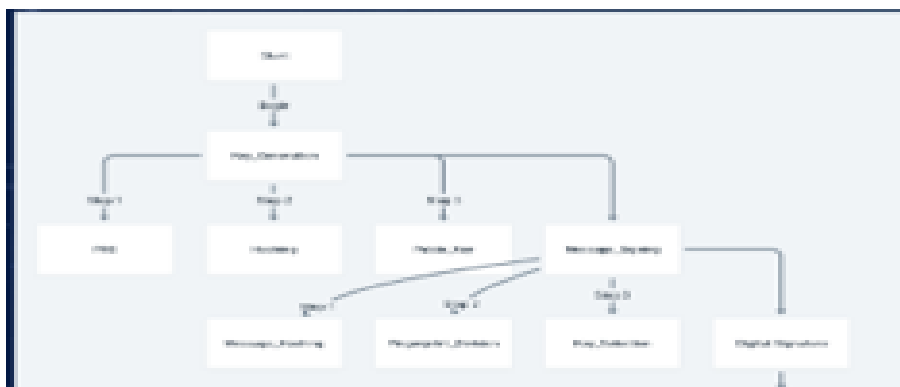


Figure 3.2 Another representation of HAS01



Figure 3.3 Hash-based algorithm methodology and workflow
Source Made on canva

Step 2: Signing message:

Hashing the message using HAS01 while creating a fingerprint and then it is divided into 32 smaller bits. Each part selects a segment from one of the intermediate secret keys. A digital signature is created using the selected elements and another hashing round is done in reverse order. The algorithm uses the intermediate secret keys in reverse order for subsequent messages which make sure each secret key is used once. The final hashed value combined with data like how many rounds forms the digital signature.

Step 3: Signature Verification:

Receiver gets the message, signature and the public key. Receiver hashes the message and checks if fingerprint matches and processes the rest using the public key.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Test Results:

Table 4.1: Comparing various results after studying following methodology

| Algorithm Type | Mathematical Background | Key Size | Signature | Efficiency | Security |
|----------------|---|----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Lattice-Matrix | LWE | Small | Medium | Hugh | High |
| Code-based | Syndrome Decoding Problem | Large | Small | Medium | High |
| Hash-based | Collision Resistance | Medium | Large | Medium | Very high |
| Mutli-variate | Solving various multi variate equations | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium |

These results show the following conclusion:

Lattice based algorithm: Strong performance with moderate number of resources needed.

Code based: Huge key sizes which are more suitable for high-capacity storage units.

Hash-based: Highest security but also needs high storage and bandwidth to match.

Table 4.2 Some benchmark scores on different platforms

| Algorithm | Key Size (KB) | Encryption (ms) | Decryption (ms) | Signature Size (byte) | Signature Time (ms) | Verif(ication) (ms) |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| ML-KEM-768 | 1.2 | 0.01 | 0.02 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Falcon-512 | 0.9 | N/A | N/A | 666 | 0.18 | 0.05 |
| SPHINCS+-128f | 0.03 | N/A | N/A | 17088 | 15.45 | 0.22 |
| Classic McEliece | 261 | 0.22 | 12.81 | N/A | N/A | N/A |

From this set of data, we can deduce:

ML-KEM and ML-DSA: Best used where there is a very high frequency of transactions happening all at once and digital signatures.

SPHINCS: Best used for long term planning in archival.

Lattice-based: For maximum schemes of efficiency with firmware.

ICT shares: Bangladesh ICT shares are dominated by large companies

Global annual loss vs BD loss: Annually by the end of 2025, global losses can get up to 10.5 Trillion USD, to compare if BD has 1% of the economic weight that would be 105 Billion at base, now if we take in the factor of BD not being a primary target and reduce the amount of loss to 77 Billion, Bangladesh having an estimated worth of 450 Billion is still losing 16.38% on cyber-attacks.

4.2 Challenges:

- 1) Side channel attacks or SCAs: During the study the quantum environment is vulnerable to various kinds of physical leakage like Power, EM emissions, timing etc to recover keys which leaves them vulnerable, further studies might help develop something that will fix the issue in the future.
- 2) Financial burden: Some hardware and maintenance can be extremely cost prohibitive as quantum technology is new and not fully matured yet to the point of proper understanding. As a result, sometimes the cost can way overweight the return in case of smaller scenarios where PQC might not be viable yet.
- 3) Complexity: Coding in a proper and secured way while also making sure proper controls are in place in case of anomaly as sometimes due to compiler optimization issues or specific hardware issues that might lead to something worse, further studies need to be done to make sure nothing happens.
- 4) Transition Risk: Sometimes transitions from classical to PQC is not fully done so a hybrid approach is taken which sometimes is not perfect and can be exploited.

- 5) **Operational Risks:** PQC and Quantum computing in general is still new and as a result there will always be some sort of operational risk if handled by untrained users. So, both caution and carefulness must be maintained at all costs.

- 6) Due to various hardware and software limitations, implementing it into BD infrastructure might become harder than it should be as many of the existing systems are old

- 7) **Financial Burden:** Many small to medium companies are unwilling to implement a portion of their budget into this technology making it harder to convince potential stakeholders to prioritize security on the long run.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Concluding discussions:

While no clear one fix for all exists in this PQC environment it is still very much dependent on lot of factors like area, hardware, requirements, likelihood of being attacked by a quantum computer etc. However, hash-based algorithms seemed to have a perfect combination of security and performance which will allow us to implement into broader spectrum of devices.

Further studies and testing might also yield greater results for which more time and resources are needed as this entire topic although new but very quickly evolving and we should evolve wit it as well. But overall a hash based algorithm would be the best suit for most of the things in BD infrastructure.

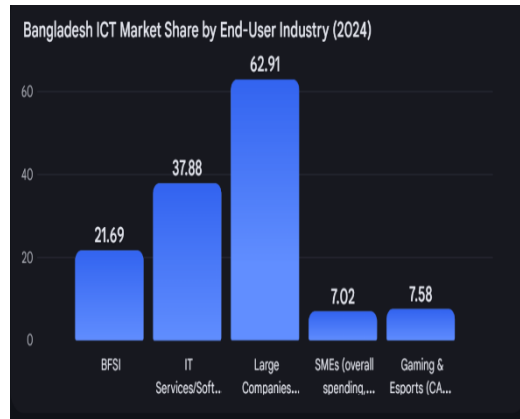
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Appendices

A



BD economic sector in IT



Global losses due to cyber security

B

| Scheme | Formulas | Parameters | Security Level, b |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Syrqa-1 Modified version | $b = k(\log(t/k))$ | $k = 32, t = 256$ | 96 |
| HORS [26] | $b = k(\log(t/kr))$ | $k = 16, t = 2^{10}, r = 1$ | 96 |
| W-OTS+ [19] | $b = n - \log(w^2l + w)$, here $l = l_1 + l_2, l_1 = \left\lceil \frac{m}{\log w} \right\rceil, l_2 = \left\lceil \frac{\log(l_1(w-1))}{\log w} \right\rceil + 1$ | $n = 128, w = 21, m = 256$ | 113 |
| W-OTS ^{PRF} [19] | $b = n - w - 1 - \log(lw)$, here $l = l_1 + l_2, l_1 = \left\lceil \frac{m}{\log w} \right\rceil, l_2 = \left\lceil \frac{\log(l_1(w-1))}{\log w} \right\rceil + 1$ | $n = 128, w = 8, m = 256$ | 100 |

Syrqa Data and formula

| Scheme | Key Size (KB) | Signature Size (KB) | Key Usage |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------------|-----------|
| WOTS [7] | 4.8 | 4.8 | One time |
| WOTS+ [7] | 3.7 | 3.2 | One time |
| WOTS ^{PRF} [7] | 3.2 | 3.2 | One time |
| HORS [7] | 3.1MB | 1.2 | Few time |
| Syrqa-1 | 8 | 1.033 | Few time |

| Length Hash Value | Classical Security Level, (bit) | | Quantum Security Level, (bit) | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| | Preimage | Collision | Preimage | Collision |
| 160-bit | 160 | 80 | 80 | 53 |
| 256-bit | 256 | 128 | 128 | 85 |
| 384-bit | 384 | 192 | 192 | 128 |
| 512-bit | 512 | 256 | 256 | 171 |

| | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Signature Size: 1.033 KB | Public Key Length: 8 KB | Private Key Length: 8 KB | Maximum Message Size: Not explicitly limited, depends on message hashing and system memory limitations |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum System Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ 2.7 GHz multi-core CPU ◦ 8 GB RAM ◦ SSD storage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended System Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Intel Core i5 or AMD Ryzen 5 for optimal performance | | |

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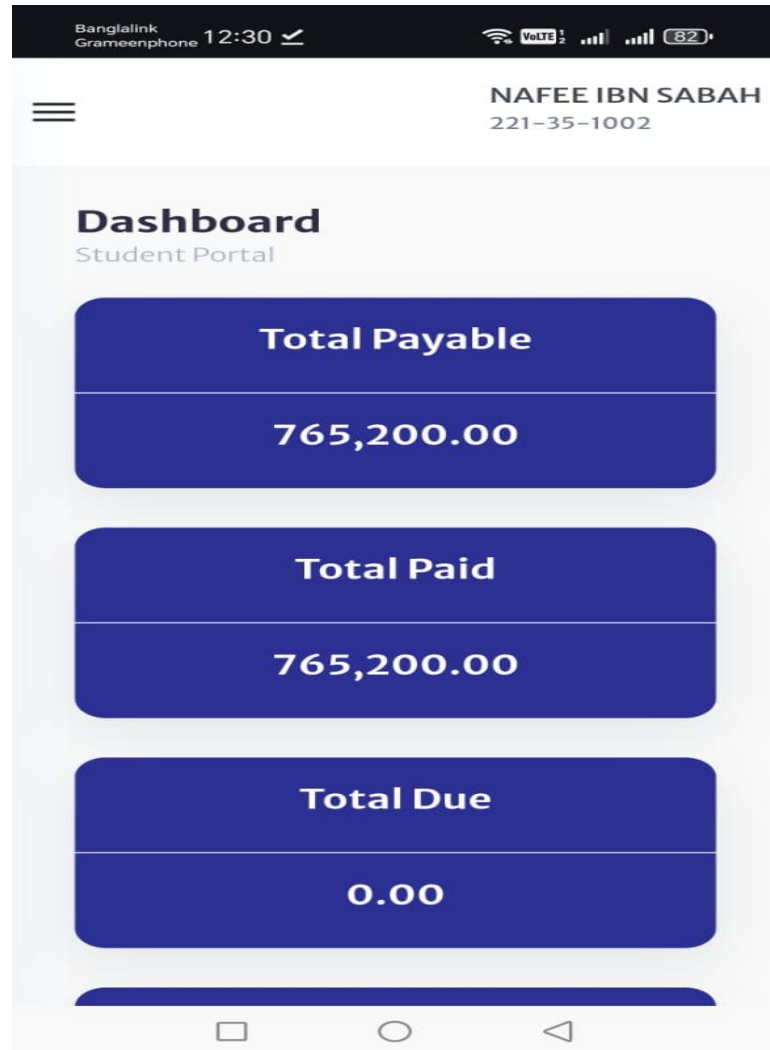
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