

# **Challenges and Priorities of TVET system in Bangladesh**

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## **Abstract**

Bangladesh like many other countries has a mismatch between the programs run by TVET institutions and the skills sets required by industry. TVET programs are mostly supply driven rather than demand driven and lacked sufficient hands-on practice and industry attachment. The social and economic trends predicate the need for reforming the TVET Systems in different developing countries with a view to have a new development pattern which holds a culture of economically, environmentally and socially sustainable development. It is fact that TVET is the source of world class work force. This paper critically reviews the major challenges facing in TVET system in Bangladesh and Proposed the way forward. This paper is also aiming to specify the challenges facing the TVET System reform and identify the basic concepts of improving the quality of TVET delivery, improving of training related affairs, delivering a TVET demand approach, assuring TVET institutional development, provision of capacity building instruments and transfer of training technology in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Challenges, TVET

## **1.0 Introduction**

The changing nature of the world of work, especially due to globalization and technological changes, demands how these changes impact upon the quality of social, economic and environmental conditions. TVET can play an instrumental role in developing a new generation of individuals who will face the challenges of achieving sustainable socio-economic development. The TVET in most of the developing countries is expected to play two crucial roles in the national sustainable (social, economical & environmental) development. The first role of TVET is to provide training opportunities and career advancement avenues for the increased school leavers. The second role is to provide skilled manpower that is needed at all levels of the economy of a country. The skills so developed should be able to lead to self-reliance in the absence of salaried employment and enhance the industrialization process. TVET has been used by several developing countries as an instrument of sustainable development. Bangladesh has a relatively large number of unemployed people. This is as a result of declining employment in the public and private sector. Moreover, despite that developing countries have a large cheap unskilled work force, as a result of lack of education and training, the core role of TVET in enhancing the informal sector and in offering skills and knowledge to the unskilled has not been keenly appreciated in most of the developing countries like Bangladesh.

## 2.0 Major Challenges in TVET in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is facing a number of challenges in TVET system. The urgent challenges in TVET are to bridge the demand for jobs with the actual needs of society and industry. The image and status of TVET has consistently faced problems as it is perceived by some as second-class education. These difficulties must be met with a renewed effort to raise the public perception of TVET. The Promotion of TVET for girls and women, this is essentially an issue of access to TVET and, once girls and women enter TVET institutions, how they are received and accommodated. Attracting more female instructors and administrators into TVET is a major challenge in the future. There is a major problem associated with high cost of construction, equipment, maintenance and the provision of consumable training materials. Routine and preventive maintenance have also constituted persistent problems. TVET curriculum update is another challenge as because we are living in the age of changing technology. There are many challenges in TVET in Bangladesh such as; poor quality (Trainer & Trainee), Poor infrastructure, High dropout rate etc. Among the challenges Skills mismatch, Skills gap and Lack of linkage between institutions and industries is discussed as follows.

### 2.1 Skills mismatch:

Skills, knowledge and innovation are important driving forces of economic growth and social development in any country, and those countries with higher levels of education and skills, adjust more effectively to challenges and opportunities in the global economy. Skills imbalances and mismatches are usually defined either in terms of excess (over) or deficient (under) qualifications or skills possessed by individuals relative to job requirements. Skill mismatches is clearly shown by fig. (a)

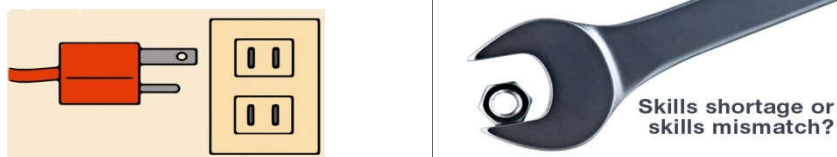


Fig: (a) Skills Mismatch

Matching skills to job market needs is imperative not only because of the need to confront the simultaneous occurrence of skill shortages and unemployment in various heterogeneous regions or industries of Bangladesh. In Asia-Pacific region, Bangladesh is struggling to respond to the skills needs of their workforces.

The skills mismatches are due to the following reasons:

- a) Increasing Globalization.
- b) New technology
- c) Changing technology.
- d) Changing patterns of work.
- e) Mismatch between supply (training) and demand (skills required).
- f) Lack of adequate industry participation.
- g) Over qualification & under-employment;
- h) Under qualification (including skills gaps reported by employers);
- i) The changing nature of jobs, including polarization;
- j) Lack of modern tools and equipments
- k) Lack of tripartite (Government, Employer and Worker) approach.

Skills mismatches can be minimized by proper addressing the above issues.

## 2.2 Skills-gap

In a dynamic and convergent world, marked by rapid technological innovations and pervasive competitions; skills-gap has become a point of major concern, as companies/industries seek to hire the most competent employees and countries seek to reduce unemployment ratios. In Bangladesh, the concern is overwhelming as there is a significant increase in the level of unemployment. In many cases even the employed are not able to perform efficiently and effectively because of low skill levels. So skills-gap is an area that should be addressed urgently.

Skills-gap is shown by fig. (b)

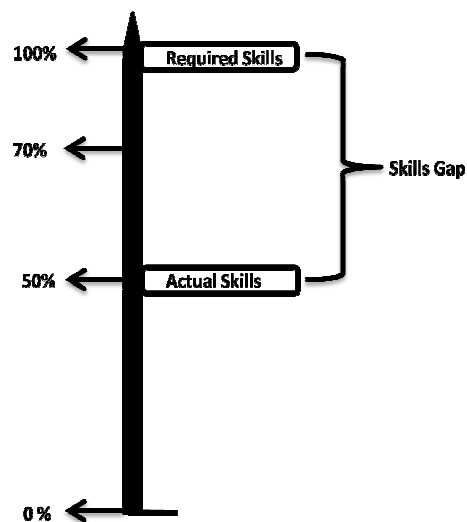


Fig: (b) Skills-gap

Skills-Gap is defined by the difference in the skills required on the job and the actual skills possessed by the employees are called as skills-gap. Skills-Gap can be clearly explained by the following relation.

**Skills-gap** = (Skills required on the job) – (Actual skills possessed by the employee).

The impact of the skills-gap is far reaching and varied, with effects on global economies, human capital development, and business performance. In advanced economies, skill imbalances will lead to more long-term and permanent joblessness and a greater polarization of incomes between high- and low-skilled workers. Developing economies likely will slow their climb into higher value-added industries and see millions of low-skilled workers trapped in subsistence agriculture or urban poverty.

### **2.3 Lack of linkages with industries**

Industry is the primary consumer of TVET graduates. It is estimated that up to 80% of skills development is provided by Industry for its own workers. Industry is always operated by latest technology and is driven by profit. So the relationship of TVET institutions with industries is of paramount importance since the primary business of these institutions to interpret the market demand signals and prepare human resources to satisfy the manpower needs of industry. Sustainable relationships or linkage between TVET institutions and industries is to be established for reasons which benefit both entities. But reality is that in Bangladesh the industry-institution linkage is not strong. For this reason TVET graduates fails to meet the skills need for the industry. If there is strong linkage between the industry and the institution, then workforce from TVET institutions will be able to meet the demand of industry and ultimately TVET system will be sustainable and effective.

### **3.0 Key Issues for Sustainable TVET in Bangladesh**

It is a matter of common scenario that Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is considered as inferior education by most of the citizen of a country. Most of the citizens think about general education. They usually think for social status and images. This is the reality in case of technical and vocational education and training. It is true that TVET is pre-requisite for a developing country like Bangladesh. So sustainability of TVET system is very essential for a country.

Thus sustainability of TVET can be achieved by properly addressing the following issues:

- a) Keep pace with new technologies is a must
- b) Increased women participation in TVET
- c) Continue updating of curricula as per demand of the local and global market
- d) Industry institutions linkage
- e) Increased training facilities for teachers' and trainers.
- f) International Linkage and cooperation for sharing exchanging technical knowledge.
- g) International recognition of TVET

#### **4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations:**

The governments and the private sector in Bangladesh should above all recognize that TVET is an investment not a cost, with significant returns including the well being of workers, enhanced productivity, international competitiveness and economic growth in the long run. TVET and Skills is the currency of future. The global economy demands much more from people than it has in the past. Competition is no longer just local but global, driving up the demands on employees, focusing employers on creating employees that are more fully engaged in the world of work. The problem of skills mismatch can be minimized by developing demand driven TVET system. Skills-gap can be reduced by ensuring quality training and re-training. Emphasis should be given on updating curricula for present and future employment.

For a TVET system to become a success, it needs to have government support in the way of a continual funding stream. Whether from international groups or by utilizing a state Training Fund (TF), this policy decision is essential to a long term effective TVET system. Finance is the life blood of any system. Without proper funding even the best TVET system cannot be sustained in a manner which supports business and growth in the country. While the quality of any TVET is greatly determined by the industry partners, so involvement of industry is very essential. It is important for trainees to be able to enroll easily in training facilities. An effective Technical and Vocational Education and Training system within a country is a critical pillar of any successful economy.

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