

Review Article

## Impact of Skills Training for Young People to Generate Employment Opportunities in Bangladesh

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**Abstract:** With a large young population, Bangladesh provides a "demographic dividend" for further economic development. But given rising youth unemployment, especially among educated people, the nation finds great difficulty using this potential. A main cause is a notable mismatch between the demands of the fast-changing labor market and the skills taught by the current educational and training programs. Many employees—including those in the unofficial sector—do not have sufficient technical or occupational credentials. Reducing human resource shortages, improving sustained employability, raising production, and supporting economic growth all depend on the development of skills. Based on the given sources, this review article investigates the effect of skill development programs on employment prospects for young people in Bangladesh, points up important issues and skill shortages, and offers suggestions for enhancing the efficacy of these projects for creating employment possibilities.

**Keywords:** Training; skills development; sustainable employability; employment.

## INTRODUCTION

Particularly in times of demographic transition, education, knowledge, and skills are absolutely basic needs for preserving a quality lifestyle. Staying current with advances and trends has become vital with rising life expectancy and living standards, thereby underlining the growing relevance of elementary education and a need for continual learning, which is the basis of lifetime learning. According to this idea of lifelong learning, one should be able to always pick up fresh knowledge and combine it with current experience. Supporting skill development and national innovation frameworks depends on strengthening the human capital base by lifelong education (Alam, Hafaz, & Methe, 2024).

For decent employment and life, sustainable development calls for vocational education and skills. Ensuring graduate employability depends on skill development, so they are main players in charge of preparing the workforce, educational institutions are very important. They should also find challenges preventing the realisation of a sustainable workforce by means of practical skills development. Industry is also very important since they are demand-side stakeholders who gain from programs for skill development and significantly help to shape the approach of skill development (Alam, Ogawa, & Ahsan, 2024).

This background emphasises the need of investigating policies and financial instruments meant to improve the development of skills in nations like Bangladesh. The relevance of investments—including those from Japan—in efforts at skill development and its consequences for reaching sustainable development targets is one area of study (Alam, Ogawa, & Ahsan, 2024). Another is looking at particular activities under projects like the Enhancing Digital Government and Economy (EDGE) Project, which are linked with better pay and labour market integration and include IT training programs (Barasa & Ponzini, 2023). Within the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system, research also investigates the efficiency of several training courses and pedagogical strategies. Studies in this topic usually aim to provide a clear grasp and whole insight on the importance of contributions to skill development, examine the effects of interventions on labour market outcomes, and investigate ways of improvement.

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## Problem Statement

The mismatch between the need for competent workers and the great pool of young, frequently unemployed people presents Bangladesh's labour market's central challenge. Although the nation boasts a sizable workforce, a good fraction lacks the required qualifications for competitive employment in the changing market. Particularly tertiary education and TVET, the educational system has been found to be inadequate in generating enough competent and technologically advanced human capital. This results in a mismatch between the abilities job seekers have and those employer's demand. While businesses lack trained labour, this skills mismatch produces unemployed graduates. The fast technology advancements brought forth by the 4IR and changes in the global economy intensify the difficulties. Bangladesh is not yet fully using its demographic dividend, and the shortage of trained people limits economic development and competitiveness.

## Research Questions

- Based on the provided sources, the central research questions explored are:
- Which abilities are required for jobs in Bangladesh's local market as well as abroad ones?
- How different are the skills between young Bangladeshi migrants and citizens?
- What are the problems with acquiring skills and the factors influencing employability?

## Research Objectives

- Based on the stated or indicated goals throughout the sources, the main study aims pertinent to this review article are:
- To investigate Bangladesh's current labour market's present skill gap.
- To ascertain the degree of knowledge of possible new employees in these in-demand competencies.
- To pinpoint and evaluate the difficulties in enhancing human capital resources and putting successful young skill development initiatives into action in Bangladesh.
- To provide recommendations for enhancing employment opportunities through trainings at different levels.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on employment and skill development in Bangladesh have looked at many angles of the issue. Many of these studies find a theoretical basis in the idea of human capital, which holds that investments in education and training improve productivity and profits (Alam, Ogawa, & Ahsan, 2024).

One area of great emphasis is technical and vocational education and training (TVET). Research on the necessity of encouraging policies and strategies to connect TVET with Bangladeshi businesses improving employable skills is regarded to depend on cooperation between TVET institutions and companies (Alam, Ogawa, & Ahsan, 2024). Job placement, information sharing on present practices, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, career advice, counselling, and job placement support can all be part of this cooperation. Notwithstanding the significance, industry-academia linkages face difficulties including a dearth of thorough models for creating, running, tracking, and assessing industrial attachment programs in joint venture with industry. Strengthening this link could involve encouraging alliances via industry-based projects and apprenticeships as well as matching courses to industry needs.

Another important issue is how digital knowledge and technology affect the labour market. Globally, better earnings and labour market integration have been linked to IT training initiatives. Furthermore, connected to the expansion of the technology sector is the creation of indirect employment. Studies have examined how Information Communication Technology (ICT) affects human capital spill over effects in reaching knowledge-based economies (Ahmed, 2017, as quoted in Barasa & Ponzini, 2023) and economic growth (Kurniawati, 2021, as cited in Barasa & Ponzini, 2023). Incorporating current technologies like Robotics Process Automation and the Internet of Things (IoT) into the TVET curriculum presents difficulties even with these possible advantages; updated lab equipment and teacher training are therefore needed.

Particularly useful educational strategies in TVET have been investigated. Suggested as a successful method for improving subject-based knowledge, enthusiasm in learning, skill development, and creative idea generating is project-based learning (PBL). Particularly in engineering education, the Flipped Classroom (FC) pedagogy—often paired with Open Educational Resources (OER)—has also been under study. Implementing FC requires careful planning and usually benefits from customised learning management tools. Research indicates good opinions of the flipped classroom approach among students and can improve professional skills such lifelong learning, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills (Karabulut-Ilgü *et al.*, 2018).

Globally, even in developing countries, recognition of prior learning (RPL) has become a key policy tool since it allows one to record and evaluate skills and information acquired from informal and nonformal learning against business

or formal school competencies. Research on RPL's effects on work status and earnings as well as other job market outcomes.

Research challenges include possible biases and reliance on self-reported data as well as limited generalisability resulting from geographical focus (Ray, Bagchi, & Luna, 2023). Often a factor is data confidentiality; data sets are sometimes made available only upon justified demand to maintain participant anonymity.

Another area under investigation is gender equality, especially women's involvement and employment in TVET. Research on the part higher education plays in women's empowerment also look at (Ahmed & Hyndman-Rizk, 2020, as quoted in Alam, Hafaz, & Methe, 2024).

### Research Gap

Although the sources clearly show the existence of skill shortages and the vital need of skill development for young employment in Bangladesh, there seems to be a gap in the thorough assessment of the effectiveness of particular skills training programs and interventions in demonstrably increasing employment outcomes and earnings for young people across different sectors and socioeconomic levels. While some studies point out program evaluations or the need of improved employability, others highlight gaps and challenges in the training system; still, a methodical study of which particular training models, courses, and delivery systems produces the best employment results seems less important across the collective sources. Particularly for underprivileged people, the causal link between obtaining specific training and finding relevant, good job calls more research.

## METHODOLOGY

This review article uses a methodical literature review methodology to synthesise and critically evaluate impact of training on employment generation. The approach guarantees minimising bias and thorough coverage of pertinent studies. To guarantee wide coverage, including academic databases such Semantic Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholars etc., pertinent databases and sources were chosen.

### Analysis

In line with more general debates on human capital development, the results of this study highlight the crucial need of skill development in attaining sustainable employability in settings like Bangladesh (Becker, 2009). Particularly, the examination of Japanese investments emphasises their possible value to initiatives for skill development. Though it seeks to move to a knowledge-based economy, this is especially pertinent considering the acknowledged lack of sufficiently qualified and talented human resources in the nation (Alam *et al.*, 2024).

In line with other studies, lifelong learning clearly helps to foster career sustainability as well as skill improvement (Avis, Fisher, Thompson, 2018). According to the qualitative data, the lack of sufficient sectoral stakeholder involvement exposes a major obstacle to the development of skills through lifetime learning (Alam *et al.*, 2024). This implies that effective policy projects meant to support lifelong learning must aggressively involve several players.

Moreover, the study supports the idea that for those with informal or non-formal skills (Nakata *et al.*, 2021), Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can favourably affect job market results. This is offered as a policy tool of rising global relevance. As the impact evaluation study that examined effects on job market outcomes shows, evaluating the efficacy of such initiatives calls for careful attention of methodology.

Analysing particular industries, the Enhancing Digital Government and Economy (EDGE) Project in Bangladesh has great potential to generate thousands of indirect jobs through IT training programs (Barasa & Meneses Ponzini, 2023). But the writers point out that a dearth of causal research comparing treated and control groups limits the present literature—including their own analysis. This draws attention to a major area of future study needed to establish more certain causal relationships.

Using both qualitative (interviews with thematic analysis) and quantitative approaches (questionnaires with descriptive statistics), the study on talent management practices in private companies in Bangladesh (Ray, Bagchi, & Luna, 2023) The researchers admit limits include reliance on self-reported data and a geographical focus, which may impair the generalisability of the results even while they offer insights on local behaviours. Sometimes the ideas of talent management itself are employed synonymously with phrases like "talent strategy" or "succession management" which might affect how activities are seen and documented (Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Jackson & Schuler, 1990).

Regarding vocational education, the study of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) exposed new perspectives on approaches including the flipped classroom pedagogy (Karabulut-Ilgu *et al.*, 2018; Li, 2017). Though some point out a lack of thorough debate on methodological and theoretical viewpoints, existing research has examined

assessments of this methodology (Karabulut-Ilgü *et al.*, 2018). Research on student views and performance produce different findings; some show success in comparison to conventional approaches (Johnson Renner, & Leybourne, 2013; Kim *et al.*, 2014; Lo, Hew & Chen 2021; Yelamarthi, Hass, & Garrison, 2015). These mixed results should be taken into account during local implementation interpretation. Similarly, certain results (Nurhayati, 2023) show the possibility of project-based learning (PBL) in improving student outcomes and strengthening critical thinking abilities in polytechnic institutions; still, more study with more significant samples is advised.

Combining employer surveys with graduate assessments, analysis of the skills gap and young employment in Bangladesh has sometimes used mixed methods. These kinds of studies have found particular abilities employers want: communication, time management, and problem-solving. Another element covered in the research is the effect of world events including COVID-19 on young employment (ILO, 2020a). Moreover, it is argued that graduate employability and professionalism depend on soft skills being included into the TVET curriculum since conventional technical capabilities by themselves could not be enough (Ondieki *et al.*, 2019).

Overall, the study shows that although the value and possible advantages of skill development are well-known, major institutional and personal obstacles limit its efficient influence on lowering young unemployment and using the demographic dividend in Bangladesh.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the source analysis led numerous suggestions to improve the effect of skill development on young employment in Bangladesh:

Review current technical training courses to fit the expectations of the 4IR and the present market as well as the needs of dynamic economies. Create uniform standards, curriculum, and certification systems and include competency-driven training systems.

Strengthen the ties between TVET institutions and businesses to guarantee that training is pertinent and sensitive to market needs. Companies ought to be more involved in helping initiatives for skill development.

Emphasise training in soft skills (communication, problem-solving, teamwork) and hard skills (technical know-how, ICT, subject-specific knowledge) that employers most highly value.

Address the issues inside TVET institutions, including the absence of contemporary tools and resources, scarcity of competent teachers, and antiquated training approaches, therefore improving the quality of instruction.

Invest in resources and infrastructure to help public-sector educational institutions to offer quality education and chances for practical training.

Promote lifelong learning by including the idea into national policy and pushing government and other organisations to plan and fund ongoing skill development.

Create a national qualification system for international certification and establish a flexible and coordinated recruitment and training plan to meet the demand for particular talents in main overseas markets. Give need-based skill training on needed abilities like communication, basic education, technical know-how, interpersonal behaviour, awareness of the systems of the host nation,

Create particular plans, quantifiable objectives, and resource allocation pledges to give poor children, young people, and persons with disabilities access to skills development. Talk about issues including lack of fundamental knowledge and demand for fair accommodations.

Improve the cooperation among several ministries, donors, businesses, public and private providers about the development of skills.

## CONCLUSION

Although Bangladesh's high young population has a great potential, excessive youth unemployment resulting from a mismatch between labour market needs and skill gap prevents the realisation of the demographic dividend. The 4IR's arrival emphasises even more the need of acquiring pertinent technical, digital, and soft skills. Although most people agree that improving employability and economic growth depends on skill development, the current education and training systems—especially TVET—face great difficulties in quality, relevance, and accessibility, especially for underprivileged groups.

Bangladesh has to carry out thorough reforms emphasising on curriculum modernisation, enhancing industry links, raising the quality and resources of training institutions, and encouraging lifelong learning if it is to properly use its human capital. Preparing young people for both domestic and foreign employment markets depend on giving the growth of in-demand skills—including digital literacy and soft skills top priority. Bangladesh can greatly enhance the impact of skill development, boost young people's employment possibilities, and get closer to reaching its sustainable development targets by tackling these problems and putting the advised measures into use.

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