



Development of Human Resources for Better Utilization in Home and Abroad

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INTRODUCTION

1. Bangladesh is densely populated country with limited resources. Its' vast manpower constitutes a potential resource for development. As such human resource development is one of the main objectives of the government alongside generating productive employment opportunities both in home and abroad. This is necessary not only to accelerate the process of poverty alleviation but also to survive in a competitive market economy. Globalization has pervaded the world economy in the recent decades at an unprecedented pace. We are about to enter the third phase of globalization. In the first phase, goods moved globally, in the second stage, capital and now it is the turn of skilled labour.

2. Huge population of Bangladesh is considered as the burden for country. It is also considered as one of the significant barriers for poverty alleviation. Human resources are the most powerful propeller of a country's economic growth and development. With the rapid progress of globalization in the recent decades, the need for conversion of human group into the resources has increased. A well skilled manpower can have potential impact on the overall economy by proper employment in home and abroad. Asian countries like China, Japan, Singapore, and Malaysia are prominent in utilizing their human resources. Bangladeshi workers are mainly employed in the semi-skilled and unskilled end of the labour market both in home and abroad. But incase of overseas employments the increasing competition from newly emerging labour sending countries has resulted in a decline in wages and other conditions of work.

3. Bangladesh Government identified the issue in its right context and there have been many initiatives including setting up institutions for training and human resource development, formulation of overseas employment policy and setting up a new ministry for the overall better management and monitoring of the issue in home and abroad. The Government of Bangladesh needs to make a paradigm shift in its strategy to create skilled manpower for better employment in home and abroad. The Government needs to focus on making a base for producing the skilled manpower through its education curricula. Presently the issue is addressed by vocational education to develop the skilled manpower.

EXISTING SCENARIO OF MAKING SKILLED MANPOWER

Overall Scenario

4. The structure of the formal education system in Bangladesh mainly consists of primary, secondary, higher secondary and college or university education. A comprehensive educational structure is given at Annex A. At present, the mainstream education system in Bangladesh is structured as one or two year pre-primary education imparted in private schools or kindergartens and informally in government primary schools for six months. Five year compulsory primary education for the six to ten years age group is imparted mainly in government and nongovernmental primary schools. In metropolitan cities however, government and nongovernmental primary schools cater to the educational needs only for the poorer sections of the people, as the better off families usually send their children to Private English Medium schools or secondary schools that run primary sections as well.

5. On completion of primary education, students join for junior secondary education that spans over three years. At the end of this phase of education, some students branch out to join the vocational stream, offered at VTI and TTC run by the MOE and the MOLE respectively. While, students in the mainstream continue in government and nongovernmental secondary schools for two years secondary education in their respective areas of specialization, i.e. humanities, science, commerce, etc. At the end of their secondary education, the students sit for their first public examination named SSC under the supervision of six education boards. Undergraduate education for two to four years is offered to the students at a number of public and private universities, degree colleges, technical colleges and specialized institutions. Postgraduate education normally of one to two year duration is provided at universities, selected degree colleges and institutions. After having such effort to develop the human resources the unemployment rate among the educated segment of the population is alarming. It is 4.3 percent of the total educated peoples.

Technical Training Environment

6. There is about 2728 vocational or technical training institutes in Bangladesh. Though these institutes are admitting more than 2, 41,336 students. The TVET policy guidelines and implementation strategies are decided by the NCSDT and the BTEB. The TVET is provided at the secondary level. For the largest number of informal trade courses, the TVET starts after eight years of schooling and for few selected trades, after secondary level. The TVET programmes run by the Government agencies; NGO's and private institutions are nonstandard and informal except the VTI of the MOE and TTC of the MOLM.

7. The growth of private trade schools in the country is primarily hinged to the large scale export of skilled and unskilled manpower to the Middle East and other countries. These types of private trade schools offer informal and nonstandard training of short duration. It is very difficult to get the exact number of private trade schools, the type and quality of training they offer. They are not registered or affiliated with any training agencies. They prepare their own syllabuses and arrange for test and certification. They do not in most cases have qualified teachers and proper training facilities. Their certifications in most cases not recognized outside Bangladesh.

8. Technical education programme is designed to produce mid-level technical supervisory workforce with employable skills in different specialized areas. The technical courses are of three-year duration. The entry requirement is SSC in any branch. The technical diploma courses are offered in existing polytechnic institutes, agricultural institutes, textile institutes, forest school, printing school and glass and ceramic institute. The enrolment capacity of these institutions are 2, 41,336 per year.

9. Technological courses are offered for producing professional technologists in the fields of textile and leather. Specializations available in textiles are yarn manufacture, fabric manufacture, wet processing and garment technology. Those available in the area of leather technology are leather, footwear and leather product technology. The duration of these courses is four years. The entry requirement is higher secondary certificate that is 12 years of schooling in the science group.

Training Curriculum of VTI

10. The vocational education curriculum integrates general education and vocational skill content. The general education part here gives more stress on application. The NSS content is the vocational content. NSS classifications are Basic, NSS II and Master. The articulated vocational education programmes are SSC(Voc), HSC (Voc) and HSC (BM).

11. The SSC (Voc) courses for two years comprise grades ninth and tenth of the school years. Students are required to attend 1,512 periods of instruction in the institution plus eight weeks on the job attachment in a year. A student passing SSC (Voc) courses can go for further education in the technical and vocational education stream or in the general stream or can enter the job market as NSS grade II skilled worker. The entry requirement for SSC (Voc) is eight years of successful schooling in the general stream of education. The institutions that offer SSC (Voc) courses include 1224 secondary schools, 64 VTIs and 13 TTCs. The SSC (Voc) courses are offered in the areas of agriculture, ceramic, engineering, fisheries, leather, livestock, textile, etc. The number of first year students in the government and private institutions in different trade areas is 10, 8,882.

12. The HSC (Voc) students are required to attend 1,512 periods of instructions in the institution plus eight weeks on the job attachment training in two years. A student after passing HSC (Voc) course can go for further education in technical, engineering and general stream of education or can enter into the job market as NSS grade I, highly skilled worker. The entry requirement for HSC (Voc) is SSC (Voc) in the respective specialized areas.

The HSC (Voc) courses are offered in 64 VTIs.

Evaluation of Existing Technical Training System

13. There is no technical and vocational institution in primary level of education. "Ebtedayee" the primary level of Madrasah education has no scope for technical or vocational education. Accordingly, technical and vocational education in Bangladesh is designed in three phases under two major levels of secondary and tertiary level of education.

14. Vocational courses mostly start from secondary level. The certificate courses prepare skilled workers in different VTIs, starting from ninth grade after completion of three years of schooling in secondary school. At this level the courses are diversified in different vocations spread over one to two years duration. Recently, two years duration vocational courses have been introduced at the higher secondary level in government managed vocational training institute named as TSC. Diploma courses prepare the diploma engineers at the polytechnic institutes. This course spread over for four years duration after passing the SSC examination. BTEB grants affiliation to the technical institutes. It conducts examinations of the students completing different courses in different vocational and technical education. It also awards certificates to the successful candidates.

Lacking of Present Training System

15. Technical and vocational education is limited and is viewed as an option for only those students who are not bright enough to go to the university. This view is deeply rooted in the society. Consequently, for those who are enrolled in technical schools, motivation is low and the drop out rate is high. This perception would be changing if job is guaranteed with proper salary either home or abroad.

16. The technical and vocational education system in Bangladesh suffers from serious deficiencies in training equipment, facilities and instructional materials which do not allow the trainees to acquire adequate practical knowledge on the subject. As a result, the quality of the students from these programmes has not been matching the international standard.

Strategy And Initiatives by the Government and Other Agencies

Role of Government

17. BMET was established in the year 1976, with specific purpose of meeting the manpower requirement of the country and for export of manpower as well. BMET is engaged for over all planning and implementation of the strategies for proper utilization of manpower of the country. It is also engaged in human resources development and to provide employment services both in country and abroad. Presently BMET is under administrative control of MEWOE. Bureau is performing all functions relating to migration process including licensing of recruiting agents.

Role of Non – Government Agencies

18. In order to reduce the financial burden in the education sector, private sector education is being encouraged. A large number of schools, colleges, madrasahs, and universities have been established in the private sector in Bangladesh. There is an IIT, formerly ICTVTR a subsidiary organ of the OIC. The centre has been mandated to provide technical training of international standard needed for the industrial, economic and social development of Muslim Ummah through offering long regular courses in engineering and technologies, trades, organizing short and special knowledge and skill updating courses along with technological and industrial research. It also conducts research in the field of human resources development with particular emphasis on technical and vocational education. The IIT offer a great variety of academic and training programmes, starting from the lowest trade level to the highest Post Graduate Diploma and Master's Degree in technical education encompassing Certificates and Diploma in Vocational Education, BSc Diploma in Technical Education, Higher Diploma and BSc Engineering Degree in Electrical and Electronic and Mechanical Engineering with various specialization in different rare technologist such as Computer Science and Technology, Power System, Energy, Production and Engineering.

Outcome of Existing Technical Training System

19. Bangladesh produce a limited scale professional, managerial, administrative, technical, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers including experienced garments workers, both male and female with several years of experience in different industrial fields.
20. Bangladesh has now a large number of Computer Operators, Computer Engineers of both on hardware and software, Programmers, Web Page Developer, Networking Specialist and System Analyst. They are available for domestic and overseas employment.
21. A large number of road transport workers are available for employment both in home and abroad. It includes professional, technical and skilled personnel experienced in operation, repair and maintenance of all categories of vehicles including trucks and heavy vehicle equipment's are available for employment.
22. Persons of all categories need for administration and operation of port facilities are available. These include inland Masters, Engine Drivers, Oil Men, Pre-sea Trained Nautical Cadres, Stevedores, Tally Clears, Crane Operators, Fork Lift Operators, Riggers, Security, Management and other categories.
23. Experts with Bachelor's Master's and Ph.D. degrees and technicians with several years' experience in agricultural development, livestock, fisheries, forestry horticulture development and research activities are available in the country, in addition skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled shepherds with sufficient experience are also available for foreign employment.
24. A large number of persons with university degrees in engineering science, humanities, fine arts and social sciences with experience of teaching in schools, colleges and universities are available in the country for foreign employment. Lack of fluency in English is the major handicap for this large reservoir of people to be gainfully employed abroad. A large number of Bangladeshi hotel personnel are working in various reputed hotels abroad, mainly in the Middle Eastern countries. The HMTI run by Bangladesh Tourism Corporation turns out a good number of trained hotel personnel every year.

DRAWBACKS IN CREATING THE SKILLED MANPOWER

25. The rate of unemployment among the educated segment is 4.3 percent of the total educated population of the country. This indicates that there is a misalignment between the existing education curriculum and the prerequisites for employment both in home and abroad. Human resources development through the technical training lacks in proper funding by the Government and investment from the private agencies are also not sufficient to meet the demand. There is no nationwide research, regarding the quality and quantity of technical training for better development of the human resources.
26. Technical institutions available for training to develop valuable and stable skilled manpower lack in infrastructural facilities to impart the require training in an efficient and effective manner. Quality of the available technical institutions are very uneven. Some of those do not provide quality teachers, materials or other necessary resources and assistances that a trainee need to succeed. The Government is also reluctant in its oversight of the programmes.

NECESSITY OF SKILLED MANPOWER BY BANGLADESH

27. Bangladesh is one of the most populated countries in the world. This large population, consider as one of the main reasons for poverty and social instability. A close study indicates that the number of labour forces in Bangladesh is in the increasing trend. Again, according to the HDI published by UNDP in 2008 the HDI for Bangladesh is 0.524 which gives the country a rank of 147th out of total 179 countries. Number of labour forces in Bangladesh is increasing while HDI is in opposite trend. This will have a negative impact on the overall employment state and the unemployment rate will increase. If the situation continues in same pace, then it will significantly increase the poverty level, overall GDP will decrease and will threaten the socioeconomic condition of Bangladesh in the days to come.

28. Bangladesh exports four categories of manpower namely professional, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled. From 1976 to 2008 she exported a total of 28, 88,897 unskilled, 10, 02,767 semi-skilled 9, 57,500 skilled and 3, 02,300 professional to various countries. It is observed that unskilled workers hold the highest share of export. Refer to the Figure – 1. Under this circumstance Bangladesh earned the foreign remittance approximately USD 7.9 million in the year of 2008. It allows Bangladesh to hold the sixth position among other remittance receiving countries.

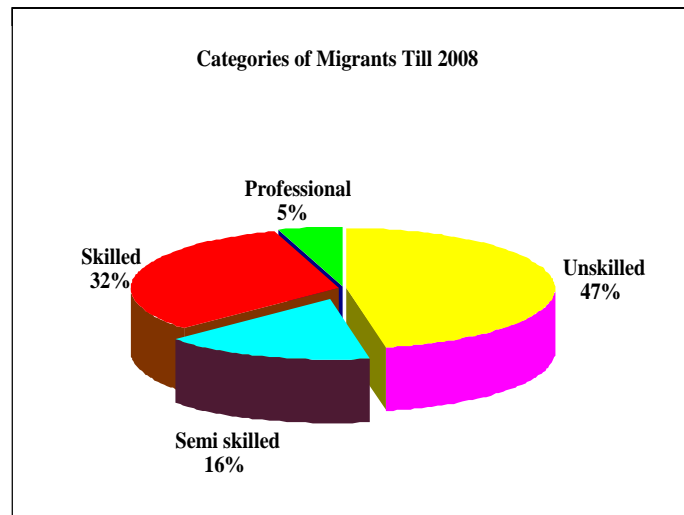


Figure – 4: Categories of Migrants Till 2008

MEASURES TO WAY OUT

29. In the short and medium term Bangladesh should target occupations such as agriculture professionals; agriculture workers; clerical and secretarial occupations; bookkeeping professionals; technical skill holders; plant and machine operators; construction workers; chefs and caterers; security professionals; craft makers; accountants, technicians, drivers, carpenters, masons, mechanics, electricians and drivers.

30. It is also important to explore sectors or occupations where women workers can be safely employed and exported. Some of the sectors, where women workers can migrate safely are packing, nursing, baby-sitting, health assistant, dress designing, textile related occupations, food processing, garments, reception and secretarial occupations, artistic works, beauticians, bookkeeping, banking etc.

31. The existing educational curriculum need to be revised to make it a skilled or technology oriented with an emphasis on spoken English. This will enable an individual to be employed in any sector on which he has some knowledge. Beside this it will also encourage the students who are not capable of pursuing their study at any stage of educational career.

32. General mass in our country lacks in technical education. They are often badly trained in technologies which are not well suited for the job market. As such due attention by the concern authority is require in technical education. Government, NGOs and other stakeholders need to work in hand to hand basis. Government need to create a congenial atmosphere and to ensure socio political stability with in the country so that the development process continues uninterrupted.

CONCLUSION

33. Presently Bangladesh economy is going through multiple crises other than feeding the hungry. Bangladesh being one of the Least Developed Countries of the world, her focal point is to transform the huge population into potential resources to alleviate acute poverty, boost up her economy and subsist in the era of globalization. Fast growing global economy is driven by innovative technologies and an integrating market. There has been a tremendous spurt in the growth of international trade in goods and services along with a significant rise in international financial flows. Movement of people and international migration is also on the rise, there is misalignment between labour demand and labour supply in local labour markets. From the point of view of a developing country, one potential benefit is the receipt of financial remittances from the nation's migrants living and working abroad.

34. The number of skilled people, skills and quality of the exportable people need to be improved, since only a few thousand technical and professional graduates passing out with relevant skill sets for the global economy. If Bangladesh has to penetrate the more lucrative markets in terms of salary and remittances potential it must improve the quality and skills of its workforce. Language skills also become a major deterrent of manpower export to many of the European and more developed Asian countries such as France, Germany, Sweden, Russia, Japan, Italy, South Korea and Spain.

Technological changes in the form of automation, computerisation, numeric control etc have a significant effect on skills and knowledge obsolescence among workers and managers. The changes in the occupational structure have increased the demand for more highly educative people in technical, professional and managerial positions and lessen the demands for lesser skilled workers. This change has encouraged more people to attend college, proliferation of adult education programmes, and various programmes of retraining for the unemployed.

35. Bangladesh has polytechnic, agricultural, allied industrial, textile, leather technology and commercial institutes. Moreover, there are technical universities. All these institutes provide diploma, BSc engineering, masters on technical subjects, post graduate diploma and diploma in vocational education. Vocational institutions produce certificated officers for merchant marine, diploma in marine technology, electricians, mechanics, marine mechanist, garments workers, computer skill, draftsmen etc. Besides, NGO's and private institutes also provide various vocational and technical training in the country. But efforts of concern lacks in proper harmonization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

36. Considering the immense importance of skilled manpower, its overall impact on the socioeconomic development and to survive in the global labour export market Bangladesh need certain specific measures to enhance its' capability, to create the skilled manpower for better employment both in home and abroad. Beside the existing technical education curriculum, technical or skilled oriented subjects considering the existing and future field of employment may be suitably incorporated in the formal educational training curriculum and make them compulsory for the students.

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