Journal of South Asia
(International Peer Reviewed Journals, Open Access Journal)

Competency-Based Training and Assessment System for TVET Institutions in Bangladesh

Shahidul Islam Talukder
Consultant (TVET)
Dhaka, Bangladesh

ABSTRACT

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) plays a vital role in equipping the workforce with the skills necessary for economic growth and development. In Bangladesh, the demand for skilled workers has surged as the country experiences rapid industrialization and urbanization. However, the existing TVET system faces challenges in meeting the needs of the labor market. This article explores the potential of Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) as a solution to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of TVET institutions in Bangladesh. It discusses the principles of CBTA, its benefits, and the steps for its successful implementation in the context of Bangladesh's socio-economic environment.

Keywords: *Competency Based Training, Assessment, TVET, Bangladesh*

INTRODUCTION

Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) is a modern approach to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) that focuses on developing practical skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for specific job roles. Unlike traditional education systems, CBTA ensures that learners acquire competencies aligned with industry standards and workplace demands.

In Bangladesh, TVET institutions play a crucial role in developing a skilled workforce to support national economic growth. However, challenges such as outdated curricula, a lack of industry collaboration, and ineffective assessment methods often limit their impact. To address these issues, the implementation of a CBTA system is essential.

A well-structured CBTA system emphasizes hands-on learning, flexible progression, and assessment based on demonstrated competencies rather than theoretical knowledge. This approach enhances employability, meets industry needs, and prepares individuals for both local and global job markets. By integrating CBTA into TVET institutions, Bangladesh can build a workforce that is more competitive, productive, and adaptable to evolving industry requirements.

OBJECTIVES
- Skill Development – Equip students with industry-relevant skills.
- Standardization – Establish a structured competency framework.

- Employability – Enhance job readiness and career opportunities.
- Flexible Learning – Allow self-paced skill development.
- Industry Collaboration – Align training with workplace needs.
- Assessment & Certification – Certify learners based on demonstrated skills.
- Teacher Training – Develop instructors for effective competency-based education.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) – Certify informal and non-formal skills.
- Workforce Productivity – Build a skilled workforce for economic growth.
- International Recognition – Align with global standards for better mobility.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) has gained global recognition as an effective approach in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). It focuses on equipping learners with practical skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for specific job roles. This section reviews relevant literature on CBTA, its implementation in TVET institutions, and its impact on workforce development.

1. Competency-Based Training and Assessment: Concepts and Framework

Competency-Based Training (CBT) is a structured approach where learners progress by demonstrating mastery of specific competencies rather than merely completing coursework (Wheelahan, 2010). It ensures that graduates possess the skills required by industries, thereby improving employability (Smith, 2013). The framework for CBTA includes clearly defined learning outcomes, practical training, workplace integration, and rigorous assessment processes (Hodge, 2007).

2. Global Best Practices in CBTA Implementation

Countries like Australia, Germany, and Singapore have successfully implemented CBTA in their TVET systems (UNESCO, 2018). In Australia, the National Training Framework is competency-based, ensuring industry alignment (NCVER, 2019). Germany's dual training system integrates classroom instruction with on-the-job training, making graduates highly skilled (Busemeyer & Trampusch, 2012). Singapore's Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) system provides a structured pathway for upskilling (ILO, 2020). These models demonstrate that CBTA improves job readiness and workforce productivity.

3. CBTA in Bangladesh's TVET Sector

Bangladesh has made progress in adopting CBTA through initiatives like the National Skills Development Policy (NSDP, 2011) and industry-driven training programs (BTEB, 2021). However, challenges remain, including outdated curricula, lack of industry collaboration, and inadequate teacher training (ADB, 2022). Studies suggest that aligning TVET programs with the competency-based model can significantly enhance graduates' employability and meet labor market demands (World Bank, 2020).

4. Impact of CBTA on Workforce Development

Research indicates that CBTA enhances workforce productivity by bridging the skills gap between education and employment (OECD, 2019). Employers prefer competency-certified workers as they demonstrate practical proficiency in real-world tasks (ILO, 2017). In developing economies, CBTA contributes to economic growth by creating a more adaptable and skilled workforce (UNDP, 2021).

5. Challenges and Recommendations

Despite its advantages, implementing CBTA in Bangladesh faces hurdles such as a lack of trained instructors, inadequate assessment mechanisms, and limited industry partnerships

(BIDS, 2023). To overcome these challenges, policies should focus on improving teacher training, modernizing assessment systems, and strengthening collaboration between TVET institutions and industries (ADB, 2022).

METHODOLOGY
The methodology for this study on Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) in TVET institutions in Bangladesh is designed to evaluate its implementation, challenges, and effectiveness. A mixed-method approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative techniques, is employed to ensure comprehensive data collection and analysis.

1. Research Design
This study follows a descriptive and analytical research design to assess the current status of CBTA in Bangladesh's TVET sector. The research examines training delivery methods, assessment procedures, industry collaboration, and challenges faced by institutions.

2. Data Collection Methods
The study collects data from both primary and secondary sources to ensure a well-rounded analysis.

a. Primary Data Collection
- **Surveys** – Structured questionnaires are administered to TVET students, instructors, and employers to assess their perceptions of CBTA effectiveness.

- **Interviews** – In-depth interviews are conducted with TVET policymakers, institutional heads, and industry representatives to understand implementation challenges and recommendations.

- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** – FGDs are conducted with TVET students and trainers to explore their experiences with competency-based learning and assessment.

- **Observations** – Field visits to selected TVET institutions help analyze the practical application of CBTA methods.

b. Secondary Data Collection
- **Literature Review** – Previous research, policy documents, and reports from organizations like BTEB, ILO, and UNESCO are reviewed.

- **Government and Institutional Reports** – Data from the National Skills Development Authority (NSDA) and Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) are analyzed.

- **Industry Reports** – Labor market surveys and employer feedback reports are considered to evaluate industry alignment with CBTA.

3. Sampling Method
A **purposive sampling** technique is used to select TVET institutions, ensuring representation from government, private, and industry-led training centers. The sample includes:
- **TVET students** (200 respondents)

- **TVET instructors and administrators** (50 respondents)

- **Employers and industry representatives** (30 respondents)

- **Policy experts and government officials** (20 respondents)

4. Data Analysis
- **Quantitative Data Analysis** – Survey responses are analyzed using statistical tools (SPSS/Excel) to identify trends and patterns.

- **Qualitative Data Analysis** – Interviews and FGDs are transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed to extract key insights.

- **Comparative Analysis** – Findings from Bangladesh are compared with international best practices to provide recommendations.

5. Ethical Considerations
- **Informed Consent** – All participants provide voluntary consent before data collection.

- **Confidentiality** – Data is kept anonymous and used strictly for research purposes.

- **Objectivity** – Findings are reported without bias, ensuring a fair assessment of CBTA implementation.

THE CONCEPT OF COMPETENCY-BASED TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT

Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) is an education and training strategy that focuses on the acquisition and demonstration of specific skills required in the workforce. Unlike traditional educational systems that emphasize the completion of courses or subjects, CBTA focuses on achieving competency standards that reflect what individuals can do in the workplace. This system offers several advantages, such as:

1. **Workplace Relevance**: CBTA ensures that the skills taught are directly aligned with the requirements of the labor market.

2. **Flexibility**: Learners progress at their own pace, advancing only when they have mastered a particular skill.

3. **Clear Standards**: Competency standards provide a clear, objective measure of performance, facilitating better assessment of learners.

4. **Improved Employability**: Since training is tailored to industry requirements, graduates are better prepared to meet the needs of employers.

CHALLENGES IN THE CURRENT TVET SYSTEM IN BANGLADESH

Despite the growing recognition of TVET's importance in Bangladesh, several challenges hinder the effectiveness of the sector, including:

1. **Outdated Curriculum**: The existing TVET curriculum is often disconnected from the changing needs of industries.

2. **Lack of Skilled Trainers**: There is a shortage of adequately trained instructors who can effectively deliver competency-based training.

3. **Inadequate Infrastructure**: Many institutions lack the necessary resources, equipment, and facilities to conduct practical, competency-based training.

4. **Limited Industry Collaboration**: The absence of strong partnerships between TVET institutions and industries results in training that is not aligned with real-world job requirements.

IMPLEMENTING CBTA IN BANGLADESH'S TVET SECTOR

To successfully implement CBTA in Bangladesh, several steps must be taken:

1. **Curriculum Reform**: TVET curricula should be redesigned to focus on specific competencies that meet industry standards. Collaboration with industry experts and stakeholders is essential to identify these competencies.

2. **Trainer Development**: Teachers and trainers must receive professional development and specialized training in CBTA methodologies to ensure they can effectively deliver competency-based programs.

3. **Assessment Systems**: The assessment system should be aligned with competency standards. This involves developing tools to evaluate practical skills and real-world problem-solving abilities rather than theoretical knowledge alone.

4. **Industry Partnerships**: Stronger linkages between TVET institutions and industries are necessary. Collaborative efforts can help design relevant training programs and provide learners with opportunities for hands-on experience in real work environments.

5. **Use of Technology**: Incorporating modern technology into TVET can enhance learning experiences and expand access to resources. E-learning platforms, digital assessment tools, and virtual simulations can play a pivotal role in competency-based training.

6. **Policy Support**: The government needs to support the shift towards CBTA through policy initiatives that incentivize both educational institutions and industries to embrace competency-based approaches.

BENEFITS OF CBTA FOR BANGLADESH

Implementing a CBTA system in Bangladesh offers several benefits:

1. **Economic Growth**: By providing a workforce with the skills demanded by industries, CBTA can drive productivity and economic growth in sectors such as manufacturing, construction, and information technology.

2. **Higher Employability**: Graduates of CBTA programs are more likely to be employed, as their skills are directly aligned with industry needs. This will help reduce youth unemployment and underemployment in Bangladesh.

3. **Improved Quality of TVET**: A competency-based approach ensures that training programs are more relevant, practical, and effective, leading to higher-quality TVET outcomes.

4. **Global Competitiveness**: With increased alignment between TVET curricula and global industry standards, Bangladesh's workforce will be better prepared to compete in international markets.

CONCLUSION

The Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) system offers a promising solution to the challenges faced by TVET institutions in Bangladesh. By aligning educational programs with industry needs and focusing on the practical application of skills, CBTA can enhance the employability of graduates and contribute to the country's economic development. While there are challenges to overcome, including curriculum reform, trainer development, and the establishment of industry partnerships, the benefits of implementing CBTA in Bangladesh's TVET sector are undeniable. Through targeted efforts from the government, educational institutions, and industries, Bangladesh can create a workforce that is well-equipped to meet the demands of the global economy.

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