Chapter 7
Current Trends and Issues in TVET of Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT
This chapter discussed current trends and issues in TVET of Bangladesh and challenges faced by the TVET programme in Bangladesh. The chapter drew attentions to the fact that due to tremendous development in the socio-economic status and technological changes around the world, consumers’ expectations towards the products and services have been changing rapidly thereby resulting into a highly competitive globalized market. In order to compete with these demands, government and private organizations should ensure best quality products and services for their customers. Every nation throughout this global village needs to have updated means, particularly in the area of updated knowledge and skills, to survive in this globalized open market. Many developing countries particularly from Asia and Africa are facing growing pressure to compete with the changing global market. Besides, most of the least developing and underdeveloped countries of the world are located in these geographical regions (Asia and Africa) where most of the poor people with low per capita income are living. In order to improve these conditions, they put emphasis on developing their manpower as per the global requirements. Most of the developing countries, therefore, consider Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as one of the main key agents to play the vital role for educating and training their huge unemployed population to become competitive human resources to enter into national and global market.
INTRODUCTION

Many studies reported that “development of vocational skills” and “promotion of lifelong learning” are recognized as core national strategy in many advanced countries such as Australia, Canada, Japan and United States (Agbola & Lambert, 2010; Coles & Leney, 2009; Drage, 2009; McGrath, 2012). Additionally, other countries such as Finland, Korea, Taiwan and Singapore strengthened their comparative progress and gained the competitive position in global market through adapting selected strategies in this TVET sectors (Hawley & Paek, 2005; Kuruvilla, Erickson, & Hwang, 2002).

On the other side, most of the developing countries still could not finalize the specific strategies and action plan like the developed countries. However, government and other non-government agencies of developing countries realized lately that TVET is an important area through which huge population could be turned into skilled manpower and hence they can contribute in the economic development. Anderson (2009) supports these arguments and claims that TVET is built on two key purposes:

1. Training which leads to productivity, which in turn leads to economic growth (training for growth);
2. Skills development which leads to employability, which in turn leads to jobs (skills for work).

Previous studies also showed that the integration of education, skills and work in Asia and Africa has been considered as a priority based action for human resource development through TVET which is given much more attention for their social and economic development (Aring, 2015; Boutin, Chinien, Moratis, & van Baalen, 2009). After realizing the potential strength of TVET sectors, continual efforts are made to improve the present conditions of TVET sectors. Many of these countries have already developed policies and strategies related to TVET and undertook great initiatives to improve quality of TVET sectors to meet the present challenges. Recent progress in the elaboration of national qualifications framework (NFQ) in Bangladesh, one of the developing countries of Asia, is an example of integrating joint efforts in government and private sector to ensure high quality TVET in order to meeting individual, enterprise and economic needs. With these brief introduction and background, this article aims to illustrate a number of new initiatives and challenges that TVET sectors of Bangladesh are encountering recently.

IMPROVING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF TVET

Improving the attractiveness of TVET education is an important issue that needs to be addressed. A substantial amount of research has been conducted to discuss how to enhance the image and attractiveness of TVET in many developed countries and very recently in developing countries (Coles & Leney, 2009; Nägélé & Bestvater, 2016; Ratnata, 2013). This attractiveness is now one of the major concerns regarding improving TVET sectors in Bangladesh like other countries. TVET sectors have not yet achieved better image to attract bright students to continue their education in these sectors. It is considered as a ‘second-class’ education in Bangladesh. In many cases, it is regarded as a last resort for those who fail to enter higher education or to leave formal education due to certain unforeseen reasons. This low attractiveness is seen due to certain reasons which is identified from the recent study of McGrath (2012):

• In most cases, very poorly qualified teachers for TVET;
• Low pass rates and it produce poor quality graduates;