



Career Planning and Aspirations of Bangladeshi Graduates: Analyzing Quality Education and Economic Opportunities

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Abstract

Bangladesh is an overpopulated country with a significant portion of educated youth preparing to enter their career after graduation. Mentors, family, career councilors, and societal expectations play a significant role in shaping the future career paths of youth. To conduct the research, mixed-method approach was followed. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were accumulated, where structured questionnaires were used to collect qualitative data using simple random sampling method, and FGDs were used to collect qualitative data. The findings indicates that 29% preferred career is in the public sector, and the reasons behind it are the stability of job and reputation and social value. Based on the findings, the major challenges students face are economic downturns, work-life balance concerns, geographic constraints, fear of rejection, etc. The research recommended redesigning the courses and developing skill development programme for proper implication of policy and education system. The findings of this study will help policymakers, educators, and career counsellors determine how they can guide current fresh graduates in determining their career paths. Based on the differences in the economic characteristics of Bangladesh, these results will help graduates adopt career planning strategies more systematically.

Keywords: Quality education (SDG 4), Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), Career goal, Skill Development, Youth

1. INTRODUCTION

Nation can stand strongly when its young generation is guided in the right direction without going astray and contributing to the country and its livelihood. The extent to which a nation is established depends on the education and mindset of its people [1]. A person's mind is shaped by his surroundings, his family, his friends, and the healthy environment of his educational background. As man grows up with these environments from his birth, a strong will is created as to how he should lead his life. As a result, from childhood, every human being has to develop his talent through the light of education [2]. Career planning and aspirations of fresh



graduates are central to shaping any country's future workforce and economic landscape. Bangladesh is filled with a very youthful population that is simultaneously experiencing rapid engagement with information, communication, and technologies (ICT) [3]. The Government of Bangladesh has diversified its education policy and education system to create skilled and educated manpower so that with every manpower can be created with practical and technical skills [4]. Bangladesh is a developing country and is plagued by various problems, one of which is overpopulation [5]. Among this large population of Bangladesh, a significant number is the youth community who will take Bangladesh's economic and political driving force in the future and have strong conviction to take the country forward. However, the path from this academic life to professional life is not easy at all, and Young has to go through many challenges to reach his desired destination.

After completing their studies, Bangladeshi graduates have to face various challenges while proving their competence in the job market, one of which is the mismatch between education and industry needs. Not having enough effective role is seen because our education system mostly focuses on theoretical knowledge, but our students do not have enough exposure to various other job market-related skills like communication, decision-making, and technical proficiency. Another challenge for fresh graduates is the lack of adequate practical experience and internship opportunities. Due to lack of adequate internship opportunities during graduation, students are not aware of the right workplace culture and environment, which makes them face various challenges in entering the workplace. The curriculum that is currently being used in our education system is really outdated. Because the matching of the practical education system with the traditional education system is not seen so much in the current curriculum. As a result, the requirements of the upcoming job recruitments of the present era cannot be connected from these curricula. Moreover, due to lack of adequate career counselling by university authorities, students are currently facing various challenges related to the job market. Apart from these, there are other challenges, such as poverty, lack of good mentorship, political influences, lack of proper vision of the future, and lack of proper family support and forward-thinking attitude.

But despite so many challenges and adversities, young people are working hard and persevering to reach their dreams and behind this hard work and perseverance is the long vision relationship of educational institutions, teachers, various mentorship firms and social media is an integral part. The Bangladesh government has implemented various programs to involve themselves more closely with these youth's educational status and technical education and is working to implement them properly [6]. One of the agenda of the current Government of Bangladesh is to transform Bangladesh into a Smart Bangladesh by 2041 [7]. As a result, the process of transforming Bangladesh into a Smart Bangladesh is underway by

including all the remote areas and marginalized communities of Bangladesh through this government project. Through this project, the youth community of Bangladesh is providing various types of ICT related training for free to involve themselves with the ICT system. At present, the Bangladesh government is providing various types of training to the youth through online platforms to increase their skills related to various careers and online [8]. After graduation, every graduate wants to achieve his/her desired job or career goal, but the technical skills required to achieve this career goal are not properly acquired during graduation. Even then they cannot engage themselves in any employment and spend their time in various forms of frustration. Due to this the unemployment rate in Bangladesh is very high at present and a large population of Bangladesh is living their lives under the curse of unemployment.

There is a link between education quality and career outcomes. The better quality education can be provided to the students during graduation and the more they can be exposed to different types of career counseling and the practical job market environment of the current market, the better their career success and outcome will be visible. In this case, sufficient advanced training for teachers is important. Through which they will create an environment to provide a fair education and through this the various skills of young students can be increased. Which will undoubtedly lead to skill development among the students and ensure their employability and subsequent growth in the job market. According to the population in Bangladesh, the number of jobs is proportionally less. Every year 1,70,000 youth come to the market looking for new jobs, and there needed 1.1 million new vacancies [9]. As a result, there is no guarantee that you will get a job after completing your studies. All these facts our students can know during their graduation due to which many of them take decisions about their future career during graduation. These decisions, however, are very personal.

However, family members, friends, teachers and career counselors play a major role. There are a lot of things that go into these career choices. For example, people who want to work for the Government have to prepare in a certain way. People who want to work in banks or the corporate sector or development have to develop in another way. Fresh graduates in Bangladesh face a complex interaction of personal, educational, economic, and societal elements that influence their future planning and goals [10]. These influences include personal, educational, and economic concerns. This may be accomplished by ensuring that the professional development of your young people is improved. This research is dedicated to develop a logical policy framework which enhances academic knowledge and benefitting the professional life of graduates in Bangladesh. This study mainly discusses the educational curriculum of young graduates, their future career plans and various societal factors that influence their careers. In addition to analyzing what kind of challenges young people are facing through this research, there is an

attempt to show how career counseling can be improved and how to match career with the current education system by making changes in policy formation. It is possible for Bangladesh to make use of the potential of its young people in order to stimulate economic growth and development. This may be accomplished by ensuring that the professional development of your young people is improved.

2. OBJECTIVES

The primary purpose of this research is to remove the mystery around this process, to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these individuals prefer to choose their career pathways and the challenges they face in accomplishing them. The main objective of this research:

To develop a logical policy framework that will enhance the sustainability rate of youth graduates' employment opportunities in Bangladesh and align them with education and skill development training.

2.1. Sub Objective:

1. To identify what is the career aspirations of graduates in Bangladesh.
2. How do graduates plan their careers, and what external factors influence them.
3. To evaluate what challenges they face to reach their career target.

The study looks at these objectives to fully understand career planning determinants for Bangladeshi graduates and recommendations that may usefully inform effective policies and practices for supporting their career development.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

When every young person of Bangladesh first steps into the education field, they and their family members have an aspiration and presuppose about what they will be after the end of their academic study. Many factors of family members work behind this idea or career-related desire. For example, Bangladesh is a developing and poverty-stricken country where every family member's main target is to become economically strong after graduation and support his family members. Due to various employment skill related gaps among these fresh graduates, it takes a certain amount of time to find the right job even after completing their studies. Bangladesh is a country of 160 million people, and 20% of the population is aged 15-24 [11]. 10.6% of young people are unemployed, and 29.8% of the country's young people are neither in school nor working or training [12]. The high unemployment rate among university graduates may be linked to their lack of skills

necessary to get jobs upon graduation. Moreover, the majority of employment opportunities in Bangladesh are found inside the informal sector, where wages tend to be low [13]. Nevertheless, it is evident that the country's education system fails to empower and equip graduates with the necessary skills to effectively participate in the labour market [14]. Consequently, the country is not benefiting from the substantial socio-economic contribution this segment could make of the population.

Every year about two million graduates of Bangladesh enter the market in search of new jobs but at the time of graduation they fail to fit themselves in the job market due to the lack of various technical skills and training, which makes them unable to financially support their families as well as the state. Because of this, educational institutions fail to produce competent and sustainable graduates, thereby impacting Bangladesh's economy [15].

Graduates have lacks of technical skills, including analytical thinking, problem-solving, arithmetic skills, decision-making, technical proficiency, communication, and interpersonal interaction skills [16]. Bangladesh have successfully achieved the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), for the overall economic growth of the country, employability and employment levels are important for the country. So that the people of this youth society can increase their educational standards and engage themselves in the field of work, the Government of Bangladesh is developing various policies to make the education sector stronger and stronger so that the career skills of this category of youth are more prepared. Currently there are 55 public universities and 114 private universities in Bangladesh [17]. In response to a highly competitive international market, the Bangladeshi Government has started working hard to better the quality of higher education services, specifically at the tertiary level by setting up Education Strategically aligned projects, for example, the Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project(HEQEP) which is financed by world bank. This project aims to better the quality of education and research expertise at the tertiary level with a focus on promoting effectiveness in the globalised marketplace hence; the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) is in the process of setting up a high calibre, skilled and experienced work force [18].

Currently, the job market in Bangladesh is narrow compared to the population, and the number of jobs is relatively low. After completing graduation, Bangladeshi graduates have to apply for an average of 17 jobs to get a job [19]. The country of Bangladesh is making steady progress towards becoming a middle-income nation [20]. These numbers ought to be cause for concern because, in the years to come, there will be a greater demand for individuals with a high level of education and expertise. However, according to the most recent statistics, the majority of graduates in Bangladesh have a tough time finding respectable employment

opportunities [21]. This is despite the fact that the young population of Bangladesh has to play a large role in the process of the country's growth. However, many who cannot adapt to this competitive work life and for the lucrative life in abroad, migrate overseas for higher education and employment [22].

The expectations of employable abilities held by employers can differ depending on the kind of country, the economic state, the business sector, and the size of the business [23]. Employable skills might differ depending on factors such as location, size, and the type of business market orientation [24]. There are four stages that contribute to good employability capabilities. First, one must acquire the necessary knowledge and skills; second, these skills must be applied in real-life scenarios; third, a person must present his or her skills to potential employers in order to boost employability chances; and finally, one must acquire the necessary skills required to secure a job, such as the ability to write a curriculum vitae and interview techniques, among other things [25]. Employability skills consist of a collection of talents, including the capacity to manage resources, interpersonal skills, communicate effectively, work well with others, and solve problems [26].

In order to ensure that a university's programme is of high quality, one of the most important performance indicators is the employability of graduates. Professional development opportunities are available to graduates in a variety of forms, including internships, part-time positions, summer jobs, and even jobs with reduced responsibilities. Most employees in the banking industry are required to carry out all essential monthly transactions while simultaneously interacting with customers and coworkers from various industries [27]. This is necessary to achieve overall success in the present dynamic work environment [28]. Those who are interested in working in the banking industry need to possess some essential talents, such as the ability to compute, analyse, and do numerical calculations. The lack of a placement policy, the mismatch of skills in the administrative and technical arenas during this fourth industrial revolution, and the inadequate development of skills all contribute to joblessness, which in turn generates sadness [29]. Bangladesh is experiencing high unemployment rates as a result of a persistent decline in employment elasticity, which refers to the incapacity of the economy to develop work possibilities in accordance with economic growth [30].

3.1. Gaps in Literature Review and research question

While critically reviewing the existing literature, some research questions are believed to be answered. It has not been found whether young graduates should use Plan B if their original plan fails for any reason. In the existing literature there is no correlation between the current curriculum that young graduates graduate with and the job study to which they are employed in the workplace. Hardly find out why graduates pick jobs of their choice as decent work and what challenges

they face in getting these jobs. These literature gaps lead to generate the below research questions:

1. Which decent jobs will be on the priority list of plan 'B' of young graduates when their career plan 'A' will fail?
2. Is the educational curriculum at graduation consistent with the employability test of young graduates?
3. Why do graduates pick jobs of their choice as decent work and what challenges they face in getting these jobs?

4. METHODS

The research methods section explains the systematic tools adopted for gathering and analyzing data pertinent to the goals of the study [31]. For this research, both qualitative and quantitative methods are used to obtain numerical as well as primary information from the respondents. Primary data is also gathered through personal interviews and focus group discussions. Secondary data was collected from various books, journals, articles, newspapers, study reports, and internet materials [32]. The research steps is as shown in Figure 1.

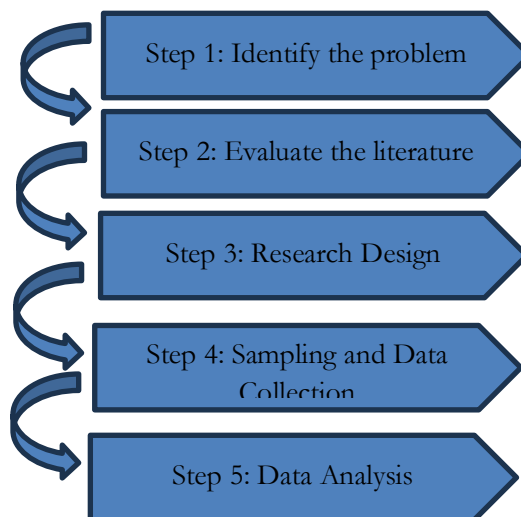


Figure 1. Research Steps

4.1. Identify the problem

This research project intends to explore the difficulties encountered by the Bangladeshi graduates in coping with the educational and employment link.

Numerous university graduates are on the rise, but many of them remain jobless because the education they go through is not enough and does not meet the demands of the job market. Moreover, insufficient focus on career development, obsolete program content, and lack of hands-on experience are other factors.

4.2. Evaluate the literature

A comprehensive analysis of existing literature serves as the background to explain the present conducted studies on the employability of graduates. Also other literature has pointed out increase in the skill gap, unavailability of practical attachments and poor career development among graduates in Bangladesh. This review of existing literature identifies the common causes, like a disconnect between the employed curriculum and industrial needs, and high levels of graduate unemployment, which calls for further action.

4.3. Research Design

To carry out the research, a total of 160 respondents were randomly selected for primary data collection using random sampling method. These 160 respondents were fresh graduates who had recently graduated. Among the 160 respondents, male and female respondents were equally selected for the gender-diversified analysis (Table 2). We collected data from university students who felt interest in this research and encouraged them to provide spontaneous feedback. Before collecting data, we explained the objectives of our research to them, and informed them about the data privacy policy and obtained their consent. We conduct FGDs to collect qualitative data. In this case, those who responded to the quantitative data collection were not selected as FGD respondents.

4.3.1. Sources of Data

To conduct the research both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data was collected from the structured interviews and FGDs, and secondary data was accumulated from various published papers, documents, and literature [33]. The primary data was collected by random field visits to the sample population location with structured questionnaire following the survey method [34]. Secondary data was collected from various books, journals, articles, newspapers, study reports, and internet materials [35].

4.3.2. Study Area

In-person and in-depth interviews were conducted in the four educational institutions of Chittagong. These educational institutions offered bachelor's degrees, and here, all students studied regardless of economic status, family

background, religion, and caste in the society (Table 1). We used purposive sampling tools to select educational institutions. We have selected the only public university in Chittagong district, which is located about 22 kilometers away from the city and where students from Chittagong city and other parts of the country come to study. We have also selected two colleges in Chittagong city, where most of the city's candidates study and a private university where subjects relevant to the current job market are studied.

Table 1. Research Study Area

Sl No	Institution Name	Institution Type	Established Date
1	University of Chittagong	Public	1966
2	Government Hazi Mohammad Mohsin College	Public	1874
3	Government City College	Public	1954
4	East Delta University	Private	2006

4.4. Sampling and Data collection

A structured questionnaire was used to collect relevant research data. The research data was collected including qualitative and quantitative methods [36]. In the quantitative data collection, structured questionnaire used including close-ended and open ended questions, and focused on their age, sex, financial conditions, educational background, technical knowledge, training details, and expected job sector. While qualitative data collection, total 4 FGDs were conducted with 32 respondents. FGD questions used related to their opinions, thoughts, feelings, and recommendations were incorporated. All of the respondents spontaneously and voicedly shared their views. The main goal of data collection through FGD was to go beyond the structural question to formulate the actual outline of the current situation. Through which we have been able to accurately bring out the respondents' opinions and thoughts about their current career beyond the boundaries.

Table 2. Sample Population

Sl No	Institution Name	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
1	University of Chittagong	24	16	40	25%
2	Government Hazi Mohammad Mohsin College	20	20	40	25%
3	Government City College	16	24	40	25%
4	East Delta University	18	22	40	25%
Total		78	82	160	

4.5. Data Analysis

For quantitative data analysis, the collected data was entered manually to the editing procedure to ensure that that data was accurate and understandable. Then the data was entered manually to the computer operating software and additional coding was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics like frequencies and percentages were calculated to understand the general trends. To understand relationships of various variables cross-tabulations were conducted. For qualitative data analysis, the study used coding system to identify the narrative statements of FGDs into percentages and frequencies for better understanding of the findings. The study followed thematic analysis and meaningful sentences were marked and highlighted. The transcribed texts were systematically reviewed and used open coding. To understand the final outcome, converting statistical data into a qualitative statement was done in order to make the message more understandable. During the data analysis process, the entire dataset and each data point were examine in great detail to identify recurring themes.

4.6. Ethical Aspects

All relevant ethical considerations were carefully considered before, during, and after the study. There was a clearly stated declaration regarding the objectivity and confidentiality of the respondents' information in the data collection mechanism, which was the questionnaires. Before interviewing or collecting data from any informant, we made sure they understood the research's purpose and how it would be used.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The target population were the students of the university level. Among the respondents, 72% completed the graduation, and 28% of respondents appeared on the examination. Our study found that 69% of respondents enrolled on the Masters's program, and 31% of respondents were not enrolled. After graduation, one of everyone's goals is to engage himself in the job of his choice. In this perspective, 29% of respondents replied for BCS and Government job, 21% for Private corporate jobs, 11% for the Banking sector, and 16% want to go to abroad for higher education (Table 3).

Table 3. Preferable jobs of Youth in Bangladesh

Preferable jobs	Frequency	Percentage
BCS and Government job	46	29%
Banking	18	11%

Preferable jobs	Frequency	Percentage
Development (NGO)	16	10%
Private corporate company	34	21%
Business	14	9%
Go abroad	26	16%
Others	6	4%
Total	160	

Government jobs and Bangladesh Civil Service Cadres (BCS) have a different demand for graduated youths compared to other Corporate Sector and Banking Sector jobs. Youth choose BCS and government jobs because of their much-appreciated reputation and societal value, Job stability and contribution to society. Economic & financial stability and career advancement opportunities are the main factors in the banking sector. Youth want to join the development (NGO) sector to engage in humanitarian work and face challenging environments and professional growth. Economic stability and fast career advancement are the main reasons for joining the corporate sector. Youths want to go abroad for better life and career advancement (Table 4).

Table 4. Reason of Career Selection

No	Desired job	Reason for the job selection	Percentage
1 BCS and Government job		Reputation and social value	30%
		Power exercise	9%
		Job stability	35%
		Work-life Balance	9%
		Contribution to Society	17%
2 Banking		Economic and Financial Stability	44%
		Career Advancement	56%
3 Development (NGO)		Humanitarian work	50%
		Challenging and Dynamic work environment	25%
		Professional growth	25%
4 Private corporate company		Economic and Financial Stability	65%
		Fast Career Advancement	35%
5 Business		Own freedom	43%

No	Desired job	Reason for the job selection	Percentage
6	Go abroad	Make innovation	29%
		Economic and Financial Stability	29%
		Career Advancement	38%
		Better life	62%

In response to the question, did you receive any advice during your graduation about what your career goals would be, 84% responded yes, and 16% of respondents responded no. Respondents stated that in selecting their career path, university teachers (26%), family members (19%) and professional career counsellors (15%) are the main influencers. Some respondents also answered that in selecting their career path, social media (13%) and friends (11%) also play a major role in choosing their own career path (16%) (Figure 2). Teachers play an important role in students' thinking and career development. The faculty of the university do a variety of activities related to the current job market and career development of their students, one of which is the attempt to send students on field visits as attachment programs to various industries.

Moreover, presenting the annual reports and activities of various organizations or industries to the class and using them in the academic field in the form of reports. Through all these activities students can get a comprehensive idea about the current market. Also, the teachers with their practical knowledge, represent the actual scenario of the field accurately through examples of the real corporate world, working culture and environment to the students. Through which the students plan to choose their career.

Students' family members play a huge role in determining their career path. Right from birth, their parents are biased and determine the career of their children and there is an attempt to force it on their children. Sometimes there is also pressure on what the future career will be based on the influence of other family members. But in this case, a student chooses a career without reviewing his own career plan or matching his talent or thinking with any sector. Which in the near future students will face various challenges. Graduates are more influenced by their friends and social media in selecting their careers. After reviewing these two fields, students themselves select their own careers. Most of them make their own decisions by looking at where their friends are coaching, which job they are more focused on, and in this case, various types of news and information on social media boost this level of influence.

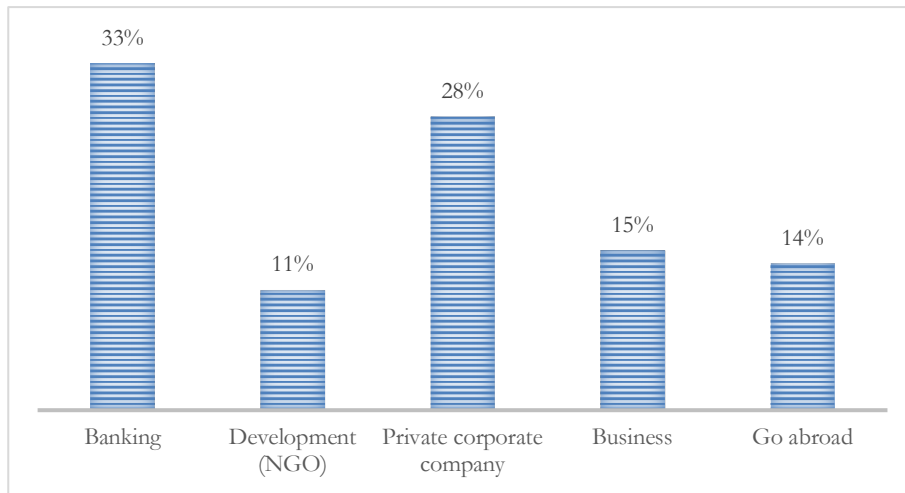


Figure 2. Career Influencers

In today's complex working environment, there is very little chance of selecting a specific career path, so many people have to plan for a 'Plan B' or another career path if they do not reach their desired career. In the response, 3% of respondents answered for the Banking sector, 28% for private corporate sector and 15% for business (Figure 3). A consistency can be seen in students selecting their specific careers by region. Especially since Chittagong city is a port city, there is a great opportunity to do business here.

In that case it is seen in this region that they intend to associate themselves with their family business after completing their graduation. Also graduates are seen preparing for government jobs as well as preparing for private banks. As a result if they don't get BCS or govt jobs due to some reason then they take exams in private banks and try to join there. There are very few govt jobs with govt jobs in Bangladesh so after graduation it creates really difficult situation for everyone when they don't get govt jobs. Compared to the number of vacancies in government jobs, government banks publish several times the number of job circulars every year. As a result of which the graduates set government jobs as well as public and private banks as their second choice.

There are many logical reasons why young graduates choose Plan B based on their desired career goals. One of them is that the number of jobs in the corporate and banking sectors is currently much higher than that of government jobs. Private jobs can be joined at any time and the job process is not as complicated as the government job process. For which fresh graduates are prioritizing various corporate jobs and banking sector after government jobs in their plan B (Table 5).

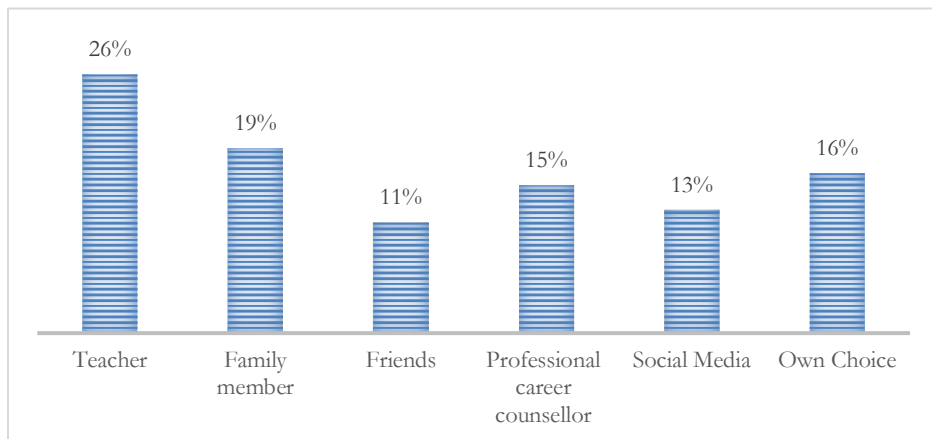


Figure 3. Career Plan (Plan B)

Table 5. Reason for choosing Career Plan B

Sl No	Working Sector	Reason	Percentage
1	Banking	The number of job posts is more than government jobs	27%
		Several bank circulars are available at certain times of the year	42%
		It is easier to get a job here than government jobs	31%
2	Development (NGO)	Getting a job here is easier than in other sectors	67%
		No bribery is required for employment	33%
3	Private corporate company	Easy to get into this sector through someone you know if you can't get a job elsewhere	32%
		Can switch from one job to another and increase your salary	41%
		Even if the job is lost here, the job can be arranged in any other organization	27%
4	Business	Apart from any other job can do business	67%
		Business has its own independence and does not have to work under anyone	33%
5	Go abroad	Easy to go abroad by arranging IELTS and funding	58%
		Possible to build a beautiful life if you can settle abroad	33%

91% of respondents believe that with all the academic studies, it is not really possible to ace the competitive exam of the current job market. One of the problems faced by fresh graduates today is lack of previous job experience (22%). Employers are willing to hire people who have previous work experience. However, because fresh graduates have no such experience, they have to face many challenges to get a job after completing their studies. Bangladesh is a populous country and every year about 2 million youths, after completing their education, are working with the determination to position themselves in the job market. However, they have to compete (26%) with previous candidates to survive in a new job, which is one of the challenges newly graduates face. However, one of the challenges is that our education system currently places more emphasis on theoretical education than practical education. Due to which they cannot engage themselves with various skill development training or capacity development programs (21%) during their studies. However, these skills are very much needed in the workplace. Apart from this, some other significant factors are skill mismatch, lack of adequate knowledge about the job market and insufficient networking (Figure 4).

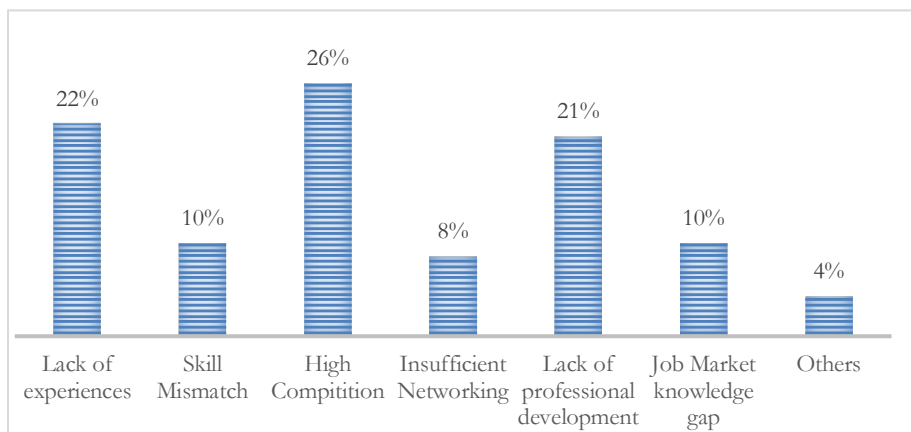


Figure 4. Reason of not getting job after graduation

One FGD respondent stated that,

“One of my challenges now after graduation is settling down. After completing our education, I have to leave the university hall and return to our locality. Because I have no relatives here, I cannot stay. But I felt that it would have been easier for me to get a job if I had been engaged with various types of job coaching development training currently. But since I have come here from other places, this is one of our challenges.”

In the response, how your academic background has prepared you for the upcoming career, one FGD respondent shared his view that,

“During our graduation, we gave regular presentations on specific topics, conducted field visits, and, depending on the field visits, submitted reports and analyzed the findings of those reports. We have attended various university job fairs and learned about the quality checks employers make.”

84% of respondents said they have engaged with the job coaching and skill development programme. The study found that they are enrolled with BCS job coaching, Bank Coaching, Various ICT courses (MS Office, Graphic design, freelancing etc), IELTS coaching and professional degree in PGD HRM (Figure 5). It is often seen that, after completing graduation, graduates engage themselves in various coaching and skill development activities for further career development. Coaching for government job preparation and bank coaching but these two coaching studies have some exceptions. Because in private banks and government banks, apart from other general subjects, mathematical and analytical ability and advanced level English language skill preparation is taken. In this case, those who only take preparation for government jobs or BCS, their preparation for banks becomes comparatively less. Similarly, for those who take bank preparation, government job preparation becomes comparatively less. But if those who take both preparations are deficient in preparation or if they don't use this important time properly, their skills in both jobs and passing the job test will decrease. Because currently the age limit for employment in Bangladesh according to which many students have put themselves in a strong position with the preparation of Bank and BCS coaching even after completing the previous graduation. In that case the freshers who pass the job exam have to fight with the students who have passed the previous graduation.

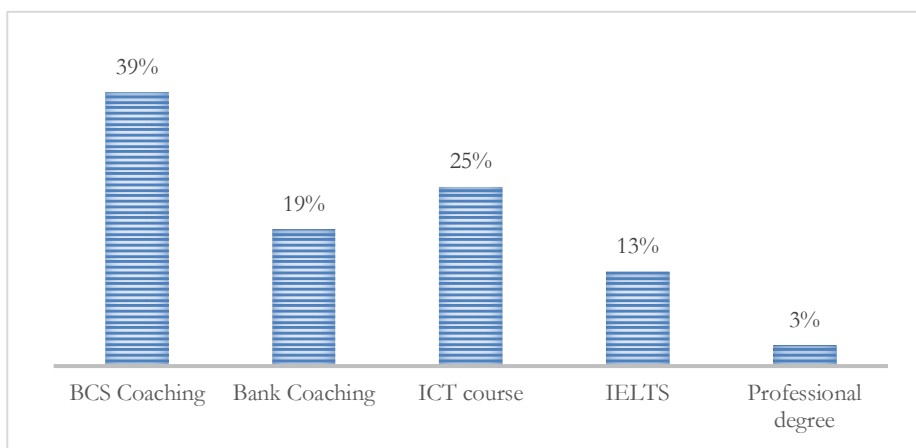


Figure 5. Enrollment status with capacity development programme

72% of respondents replied that the study of the job coaching is not compatible with graduation studies. One FGD respondent stated that,

“All the studies that we do during our graduation, we do not see the reflection of those studies that we see in the job coaching. In our graduation studies, we do not study Bengali literature, English literature, General knowledge, mental ability & critical thinking skills and, mathematics etc. but when it comes to the job field, the coachings put too much emphasis on the subjects and we have to study these subjects in a new way.”

36% of the respondents said that they have taken career tips from career counsellors, and in this case, career counsellors have given them counselling on their next career step depending on their career goals, strategy, and graduation CGPA. The study tries to identify the major challenges of the respondents and seek solutions for overcoming the issues, as stated in Table 6. Bangladeshi graduates face various challenges after completing their graduation. One of the challenges is that after passing the graduation, students think that their desired job is ready for them. But in the conditions of Bangladesh, he/she has to wait for a long time to get his/her desired job or government job. They have to put a huge endurance test. Because of this, our students are not ready enough to take the challenge of long term career planning and the miles to achieve it. Our graduates' family economic condition is not so stable that even after passing, their families will be able to bear their sustenance for more days. Because of this, many of them connect themselves to a job after graduation. But after getting connected to that job, not being able to do the work life balance properly, they cannot reach the future plans that they will have in their final career. Graduates also face a challenge named geography constant. Our graduates come from remote areas of the country to study, and after studying they have to go back to their remote areas to their own homes. Because they don't have any specific place to stay in the city area and have to remember that the exams of the jobs are conducted in the capital city or divisional cities, so coming from their homes and attending the exams is a regular challenge. Which gradually increases the level of fear of rejection and self doubt in them.

Table 6. Challenges in planning and pursuing a career and alternative solutions.

Sl No	Challenges	Solutions
1	Selection of long-term career planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self Assessment • Research and exploration of job • Set SMART goals • Seek Guidance
2	Economic downturns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill Development • Networking • Freelancing and part-time work • Adaptability and Flexibility
3	Worklife balance concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self Care

Sl No	Challenges	Solutions
4	Geographic constraints	• Time Management
		• Local Job Search
		• Relocation Assistance
		• Local Networking
5	Financial constraints	• Part-time work
		• Cost control
6	Self-doubt and fear of rejection	• Positive mindset
		• Surrounding support system

Social expectations and cultural norms are very influential in selecting their career decisions. The success stories of people around with their careers and these success stories influence lives to mark their careers. In this case, family members' desires also influence youths' career selection.

5.1. Practical Implementations:

The results of this study have various practical implications for education institutions and policy makers in Bangladesh aligned with various education sectors and labor market demand. One of the challenges of the present time is to align the graduates of the education system with the requirements of the industry. This will create an opportunity for the youth to save themselves from the clutches of unemployment and underemployment.

Educational institutions: There is a huge skills gap among our graduates. Aligning the young graduates with the modern work demands of the present era of globalization by changing this archaic education system which has been prevalent since the independence of Bangladesh is an important issue. In that case, the educational curricula in not updated according to the global trend, labor market demand and courses are not skill-based. The level of training and practical learning during academic studies is not satisfactory. Internship opportunities is much limited according to students demand.

The role of policymakers and career counsellors: Policymakers must put first those reforms, particularly in the education sector, that respond to the steady changes in the nature of work and the workplace. These may embrace the creation of public and private sector partnerships, focused on designing industrial relevant curricula to equip students with a particular emphasis on future skills such as data science, artificial intelligence and green technologies. The existing career services within universities are not up to mark to identify the students job requirements and align with the job market. The university career counselling programme is unable to address and guide students in choosing the right career. Career

counseling is unable to mitigate the effects of the social and family expectations that are deeply embedded in many societies and tend to push students into mainstream yet overcrowded professions.

The Impact of Family on Career Choices: The research identifies the role of families in career decisions in Bangladesh as a major factor and has observed that a number of students tend to pursue so-called prestigious or stable fields as compared to their own interests. That in most instances results in a mismatch between personal interests and market opportunities. It would be beneficial in reducing graduate unemployment and improving job satisfaction if both individual skills and market demands are used in making career choices rather than family or society dictating what one should pursue. The influence of family is likely to be very pronounced especially in settings where there is very little or no career guidance, resulting in frustration on the part of graduates who do not know how to find jobs effectively.

5.2. Quality Education and Decent Job, & Economic Growth

Quality Education and Decent Work and Economic Growth are the 4th and 8th goals of the Sustainable Development Goals [37]. These two goals are interrelated and involve various agendas, policies and activities. Quality education plays vital role in generating decent work and economic growth for young graduates. Factors to ensure quality education are connected with each other and without these factors we can imagine, a proper quality education will not be able to be properly imparted to the graduates of the young generation. If proper quality education is not provided properly then those who cannot enter descent works will not have any economic growth rate which will create obstacles to the development of a nation and reaching the desired goals. Curriculum development is one of the key factors in ensuring quality education. For this curriculum development or revision we must incorporate skill based courses. Teachers are required to undergo special training under the British curriculum and IT knowledge. All the sectors are deeply associated with the 'Information Society' where IT are widely used [38]. In the information society generations utilizes informations in a variety of way [39]. The government of Bangladesh is implementing SMART Bangladesh (Vision 2041) to make its people advance with ICT sector and IT enabled services [40]. Properly trained teachers can provide work oriented education to students. A competitive educational environment will be created by providing proper education to the graduates and it will be possible to ensure quality education in universities and higher education institutions only by creating this competitive educational environment.

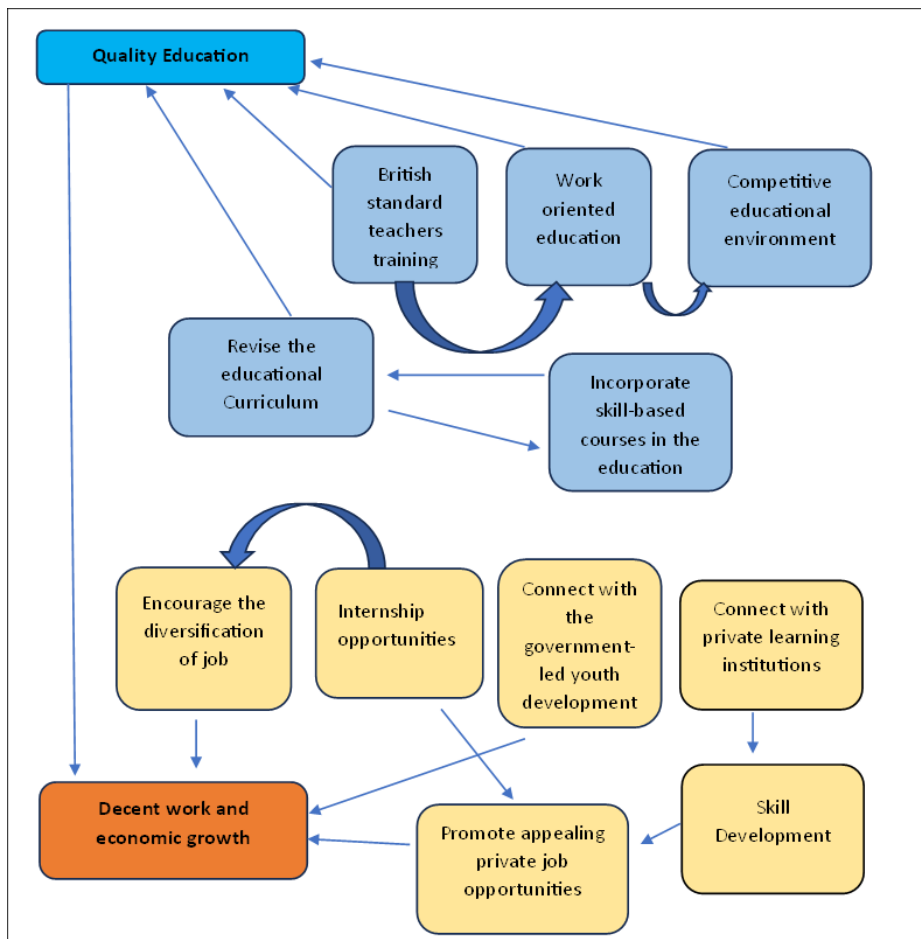


Figure 6. Relationship of quality education and decent work & economic growth

Quality education undoubtedly plays a huge role in creating decent work and economic growth. The internship opportunity will definitely create an impact of job diversification among our graduates. Bangladesh has various job opportunities. Fresh graduates have the opportunity to engage themselves with various types of employment by involving themselves with various government youth programs. Also, different types of private learning institutes develop the students' skills through capacity development through this skill development and they can seek different types of competitive private job opportunities. This will help them find their decent job and impact economic growth (Figure 6).

5.3. Logical Framework for Future Career Sustainability Of Bangladeshi Youth

Adapting quality education and training focused on job market requirements, the study's main aim is to increase the rate of youth graduates in decent work and increase their economic growth. This will boost the employability and sustainability of young Bangladeshi graduates while minimizing unemployment and overreliance on public jobs.

1) Revamping the Existing Education Structure

The primary goal is to reform the current education system so that students can be better prepared for the contemporary job market's challenges and opportunities. The first step would be to revise the existing curriculum in such a way that it aligns with global trends as well as what is required by industries. The students need to have relevant job specific knowledge and skills through incorporation of an outcomes-based curriculum (OBC) which gives clear learning objectives. Furthermore, improving teacher training is crucial for effective delivery of this renewed curricular program by instructors. By adopting British or European standards on teachers' training programs and making more opportunities available for continued professional development, teachers will become more versatile thus improving on the quality of education overall. In addition, students should not only excel academically but also possess abilities which will allow them adapt in real life situations since this means creating an environment that encourages competition and oriented towards employment.

This research should result in some specific outcomes. The students will have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge for job placement, as evidenced by a rise in employment rates among students graduating from this program. Moreover, it will lead to improvements in teacher competence and flexibility leading to a more vibrant and responsive educational system.

2) Increase and improve practical and real-world job requirements of graduates

The practical readiness of graduates should be increased to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry requirements. Holding workshops and meetings with industry practitioners to outline essential job skills that will help achieve this objective. The insights from these engagements must feed into the curriculum so that students learn competencies that they can apply directly in their jobs. Moreover, it enables graduates to gain valuable hands-on experience which helps them comprehend better what is expected by the industry before entering into the job market.

The expected outcomes of such activities are increased employment rates as well as graduates who are better suited for both present and future demands of the market. Indicators for success will comprise of a number of skill-based courses introduced during graduation, student reviews on those courses, number of industries linked with university managements, and number of graduates that take part in internships among others. Leading such metrics will denote how effective our education system has been in ensuring that students get ready for their respective jobs.

3) Graduates' capacity and skill development

The other key objective is to enhance the capacity and skills of graduates. This entails collaborating with governments involved in youth development programs and private educational institutions offering specialized training. Regularly updating training initiatives to meet shifting market demands and international trends will enable ongoing skill development for all graduates. Thus learners would have many opportunities for different learning styles and development within both technical and non-technical domains.

As anticipated, increased access to capacity development programs as well as highly skilled and versatile labor force would result; success will be measured by student enrollment within these programs, employment rates of alumnae who attended them, and incidence of interconnected government-led youth capacity-building initiatives. Such parameters will help us gauge effectiveness or otherwise on efforts aimed at enhancing graduate employability through skill enhancement techniques.

4) Diversification of job opportunities

In order to decrease reliance on government jobs and bring about a more varied job market, it is necessary to promote employment chances in the private sector by means of public-private partnerships (PPP). More options for work will be available especially in the private sector through encouraging diversity in job prospects. Graduates will get more alternative careers while this step could as well promote economic development through expanding roles of private sectors in creation of jobs.

The expected outcomes include a decline in depending on government jobs and more employment opportunities being offered by the private sector. Growth within private sector employment as well as reduced percentages of learners seeking government jobs for after graduation are some indicators that would show success. These indicators signify a transformation in the employment scene whereby privately owned establishments have become recognized as feasible occupations (Table 7).

Table 7. Logical Framework for Future Career Sustainability of Bangladeshi Youth

Objective	Activities	Outcomes	Indicators
Upgradation of the existing Education System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise the educational curriculum based on global trends. • Update the outcome-based curriculum (OBC) with clear learning objective. • Improve teacher training based on British Standard or European standards and increase training opportunities. • Make the educational environment competitive and work-oriented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students acquire job-related knowledge and skills. • Teacher adaptability and capacity increase. • The education system produce sustainable workforce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of employment secured by the graduates. • Performance (average score) of graduates in the job assessment test. • Percentage of graduates continuation of the job.
Increase and improve practical and real-world job requirements of graduates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop and meeting with industry professionals to map key skills required for job market. • Incorporate skill-based courses in the education curriculum. • Internship opportunities before enter the job market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher employment rates. • Graduates meet the existing and future market demand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of skill-based courses are introduced in the graduation period. • Students' feedback regarding the skill-based courses. • Number of industries are connected with the university authorities. • Number of graduates engaged in internship work.
Graduates' capacity and skill development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with the government-led 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students gain access to learning and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students enrolled in the capacity

Objective	Activities	Outcomes	Indicators
	youth development programme. • Connect with private learning institutions. • Update the training agenda based on changing market requirements and global trends.	skill development programmes. • Graduates are skilled in technical and non-technical sectors.	development programme. • Employment rate of graduates who enrolled in the capacity development programme. • Number of connected government-led youth capacity development programme.
Diversification of job opportunities	• Promote appealing private job opportunities with private-public job opportunities (PPP) • Encourage the diversification of job opportunities.	• Reduced dependency on government jobs. • Increased employment opportunities in private sector.	• Growth in private sector employment. • Decreased percentage in applying government jobs.

5.4. Limitations of the study

This study was conducted on the students of some specific regional universities. What we found may set limits to proper generalization because all the universities of the country were not under the sample criteria. Reliance on self-reported data from graduates may lead to bias. For example, overvaluing a skill subject may overstate the challenges it poses. They are not prioritized in some cases. It takes a few years to get the results you're getting in a career, and making decisions too quickly can be very likely to be biased. This study was not conducted on students over a long period of time. Their long term career progression was not reviewed. In this case, it has not been seen how various factors such as family influence, education, economic condition have an impact on career success over a long period of time. This study takes an in-depth look at various factors such as family influence, educational gap and labor market demand. But still some important factors like psychological readiness, global market, are not reviewed.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

To engage the youth graduates with the workforce there need some modifications. These modifications are narrated as follow.

6.1. Modify the Education System

The education system of Bangladesh should be made more work-oriented. The curriculum should be completely overhauled to be competitive and improve teachers' training. Students and Teachers' engagement in politics should be banned. There must be clear learning objectives for students to be more competent and boost their competencies. Unlike before, graduation programmes in Bangladesh that were used long ago should change to accommodate contemporary world requirements. Universities need to offer job oriented courses and skill-based trainings to students, and they should not simply limit knowledge to what is contained in their textbooks (Figure 7).

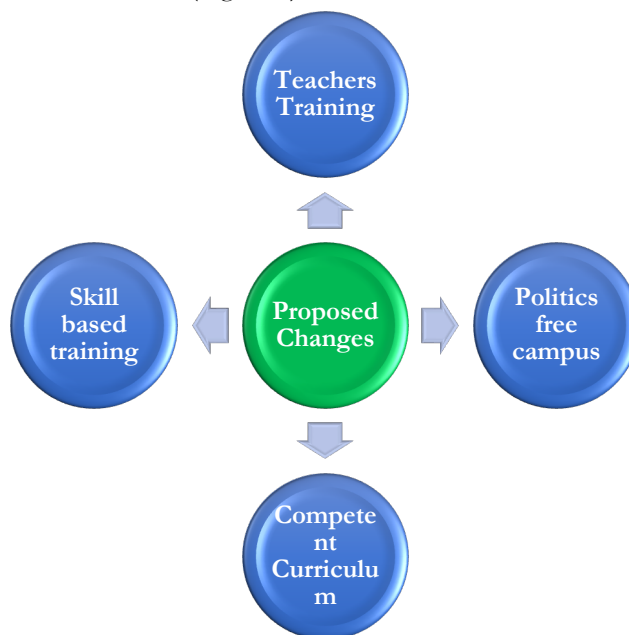


Figure 7. Modify the Education System

6.2. Graduation courses redesign

A good course design emphasises the student's development of how he/she can apply academic disciplines in real work environment. The higher learning institutions must recognize the skills required by the corporate world both at home and abroad for integration into the present curriculum. Students must have access

to skills based courses that help them grow their skills and personal attributes so that they can secure employment confidently in a global market full of competition (Figure 8).

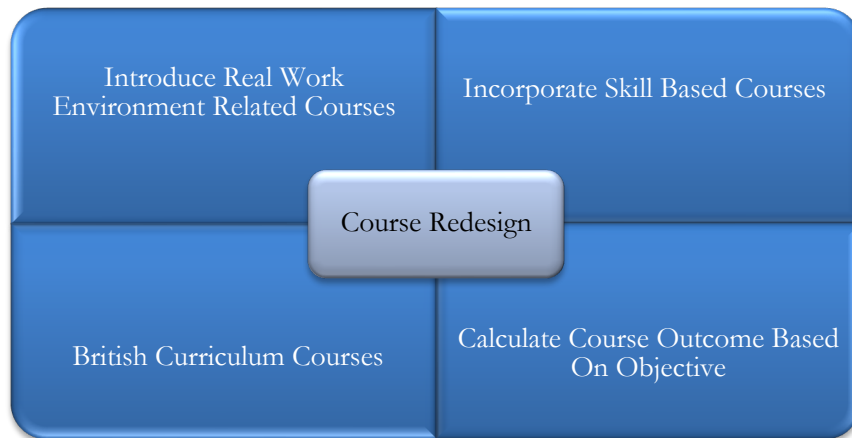


Figure 8. Course Redesign

The government must take the lead in providing students with skill development programs. These programs should also be user-friendly and available within learning institutions for easy and free access by all students. The setting up of meaningful collaborations between higher learning institutions and organizations to comprehend market requirements and enable students to gain internships as well as engage in other practical ways of learning, will facilitate the provision of skill development programs for employers demand-oriented purposes and guarantee the employability of graduates by exposing them to real life experiences. One way to decrease graduates' reliance on government or civil sector jobs would be to create and supervise more appealing private-sector job options via a public-private partnership. Furthermore, civil sector job openings might also experience an increase. A need therefore arises to improve technical vocational education and training. This will involve integrating it into the teaching programs of several schools and making it easily available and affordable. Additionally, the government has to encourage the establishment of more job opportunities within this kind of field.

7. CONCLUSION

The phase from education to employment is a crucial stage for the youths in Bangladesh, a country that is known for its wide-ranging, fast-growing populace. This study considers the significant role played by mentors, family members, career advisors, and societal norms on the career paths new graduates take. The career choices made at this point can greatly determine their success and happiness in

later life. In Bangladesh career planning strategies are important because of the specific economic conditions within the region. To become more employable and reach professional objectives faster, graduates must consider systematic and contextual approaches in their career paths. Overcoming the difficulties faced by young people just from university education in Bangladesh takes a broad way involving their personal ambitions, socio-economic conditions and overall educational issues. It's possible for supportive surrounding support and required provisions to assist young graduates in making well-founded occupational choices thereby leading to realization of both their personal achievements and economic development of the country.

Young graduates of Bangladesh have to go through a huge critical period from education to employment. The young people who come from marginalized poor communities severely struggle with educational deprivation [41]. These education-to-employment gaps are accelerating due to various challenges. These challenges include skill miss-match of academic disciplines with the job market, lack of access to industry-specific training during education, and limited career counseling. In order to handle these challenges properly, it is very important for policy makers, educators and career counselors to strengthen this support system by providing accurate information about skill development and future career planning among young graduates to stabilize them in a strong position. In this case the educational institutions need to integrate skill based training with the academic curriculum and ensure that the graduates have proper knowledge about the practical market and field and can make themselves more involved in that field. It is very important that comprehensive career counseling program can properly guide the young graduate students to take the right decision regarding their future career and enhance their capabilities by making a step to their career path. Through which they can match their career expectations with the current practical job market. Increasing internship and real work placement opportunities through collaborations with educational institutions and industries can create an opportunity to bridge the gap between academic learning and real work application or precisely align young graduates with the corporate sector. The education-to-work transition comes along with several considerations and factors that concern the policymakers, educators, and career guidance specialists. The policymakers should recognize the problem of having no or little technical skills or real training and address the problem by starting developing skill-based training regimes, enhancing career policies, and involving industries in academia. On the other hand, educators have the responsibility of reviewing their course content to help students acquire both technical skills and other necessary skills which include the ability to solve problems, interact with other people, and give directions. They need to build a new curriculum, placed less expectation on classroom learning, and center on development instead of only the skills. Finally, from the perspectives of these

societies, there would be a need for a third role – that of a career guidance counselor who facilitates the graduates' smooth transition into the world of work.

Future research must be conducted on larger scale studies that track where graduates are taking their careers over time. Such studies will undoubtedly help in identifying the factors influencing their decision making in the long term. Future research of this type will undoubtedly focus on what challenges young graduates face in managing their post careers and how various factors work to overcome these challenges and influence their subsequent careers elsewhere. The future avenue of research will focus on the examination of the engagement of the private sector in education and career management. Filling these gaps will allow the stakeholders to improve significantly the employability of the graduates which will not only be beneficial on an individual level but also boost the economy of the country.

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