Reaping Demographic Dividends through ICT: A Case of FTFL Training

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Abstract

In order the harvest the advantages of demographic dividend, Bangladesh Computer Council undertook a project entitled Leveraging ICT (LICT) in order to build world class human resources to meet the demand of the IT/ITES Industry. As part of the project, a commendable number of youth were imparted training on the First Track Future Leaders, a component of the LICT Project, with a view to providing a package of skill training (both soft and core IT skills) among the youth people to prepare them as prospective future leaders for the IT/ITES industry. BARD was involved in organizing these training courses. This study basically aimed at: assessing the perception of trainees about utility of training course; identifying types of employment generated through the ICT training; examining the quality of employment generated in the ICT sector among the trained youth; and exploring the investment infrastructure in the ICT sector and finding out the prospect of ICT sector employment for comparatively low educated rural youth. The study was conducted following an online survey method, which was substantiated by content analysis and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The sampled population was 131 which was drawn from two major tracts of training i.e. IT and ITES following scientific procedures. The findings revealed that the ICT industry has huge potential but due to lack of properly trained young graduates, they cannot enter into the IT market. There are some Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institutions and Universities that are producing IT graduates but they fail to get a job in the IT market due to lack of required knowledge and skill because the TVET are following an outdated curriculum, lacking qualified teachers and practical orientation. The study findings suggest that the training course created equal opportunities for both male and female. The participants were highly satisfied with the training. The participants shared that some of the resource persons were related with the software company that helped them increase networking with the people of IT industry. To make the training more effective, the participants suggested forming homogeneous groups of trainees by separating experienced students from non-experienced students. Local resource persons who have idea about domestic IT industry should be involved more. The findings of the study reveal that there are lots of opportunities to involve rural youth in a planned way. Graduate students in Engineering field can be employed in Information Technology Services (ITS) especially in IOT (Internet of Things), Java, Web Development, CCNA (Cisco Certified Network Associate), Robotics, App Development, Machine Learning etc. Students having graduation in any subject can be trained in Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) such as Web Design, Networking, E-commerce, Database Management, Digital Marketing, Smart Executive/ Office executive, Graphics Design, BPO (Business Process Outsourcing), Basic Computer Literacy, Data Entry etc. Some students who have SSC can be involved in Hardware Maintenance. To get the benefits of the demographic dividend, both rural and urban youths should be imparted more and more IT related training.