

BTEC Assessors of Levels 2 and 3 in the Kingdom of Jordan: Challenges and Solutions

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the challenges faced by assessors (teachers) of the National BTEC Program at the 2nd and 3rd levels in schools across the Kingdom of Jordan, as well as the solutions proposed by the assessors themselves. The research employed a qualitative approach, utilizing a phenomenological design. Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with twelve assessors (both male and female) from public and private schools, along with a focus group interview with four assessors (both male and female), in order to gather their perspectives on the challenges and proposed solutions. A criterion sampling method was used to select the sample. The assessors identified three main issues within the program: challenges related to student engagement and participation, educational challenges, and stringent administrative restrictions. In response, the assessors proposed several solutions, including the provision of essential resources for the program, enhancement of professional development for assessors, offering student support, and revising current policies. The study recommends further investigation to assess the effectiveness of these proposed solutions on the professional program.

Keywords: BTEC, Vocational Program, Education, Jordan, Educational Challenges, professional development, Assessor

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INTRODUCTION

The BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) program, offered by Pearson in England, is a globally recognized vocational, technical, and professional education program (Mitton & Hensby, 2024). It aims to deliver high-quality educational experiences, emphasizing practical and professional skills across various technical fields, including Business Administration, Information Technology, Engineering, and Hospitality (Pearson, 2025).

In Jordan, the Ministry of Education launched the BTEC program in both public and private schools to enhance vocational and technical education. The program was promoted as an ideal opportunity for students seeking international qualifications and those aiming to enter the workforce while pursuing higher levels of the BTEC program, including Levels 4 and 5 (Atkinson, 2024).

The BTEC program was introduced in Jordan in 2000 in select private schools where English is the language of instruction, known as the 'International BTEC Program.' In 2023, several public and private schools began teaching the BTEC program in Arabic, referred to as the 'National BTEC Program' (Ministry of Education, 2023). These programs correspond to the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. The Level 2 BTEC program aligns with the 10th grade, while Level 3 BTEC is equivalent to both the 11th and 12th grades. Upon successful completion of both levels, students are awarded an international diploma in their field of study. This diploma qualifies them for university admission or for advancing to higher levels of the BTEC program, such as Levels 4 and 5 (Ministry of Education, 2023). This research will examine the challenges faced by both the international and national systems at Levels 2 and 3.

The BTEC programs, both international and national, in Jordan are structured to enhance students' skills in technical disciplines, preparing them for entry into the workforce by the age of 18 (Swinton, 2020). While academic programs focus on theoretical knowledge, technical programs offer both knowledge and practical experience. A key benefit of these programs is that graduates develop strong personalities, a passion for learning and work, professionalism, and increased employability (Mitton & Hensby, 2024).

BTEC assessors (teachers) each specialize in different fields, as required by Pearson. For example, business courses must be taught by an instructor with expertise in business administration. Pearson supplies textbooks, a scheme of work, and an assessment plan for each discipline. Schools are expected to follow Pearson's guidelines to ensure an effective teaching and learning environment. Pearson's assessments consist of set and authorized assignments. Set assignments must be completed at school, while authorized assignments can be worked on at home. Once a student submits an assignment, the assessor reviews the work and assigns a grade of pass (P), merit (M), distinction (D), or unclassified (U). If a student receives a U grade, Pearson allows them to resubmit their work after making the necessary revisions.

The Ministry of Education aims to broaden the scope of the program by introducing new fields, including cosmetics, multimedia, and agriculture. To support scientific research in these areas, this study provides valuable insights into overcoming various teaching challenges. However, there is a significant gap in the literature regarding the various dimensions of the BTEC program, including its challenges, risks, and teaching environments. This article addresses that gap by exploring the challenges faced by BTEC educators and other important factors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching BTEC at Levels 2 and 3 presents unique challenges compared to academic disciplines. These challenges stem from the need to teach both vocational and academic skills within the program. This review explores the difficulties faced by BTEC assessors in managing this dual-focus curriculum.

Educational and Curricular Challenges

The combination of vocational skills and academic knowledge presents challenges for instructors within the BTEC program (Peng, Sun, & He, 2022). According to Antera (2021), the absence of structured educational strategies leaves program teachers struggling with the difficulty of managing both vocational skills and academic content. Ernsting (2022) echoed Antera's findings, highlighting that vocational educators may face challenges in balancing theoretical and practical teaching requirements due to limited resources and time constraints. Both Peng, Sun, & He, and Ernsting agree that continuous professional development and skill enhancement are essential for instructors to effectively navigate these dual teaching demands.

Digital Learning during the Pandemic (COVID-19)

During the pandemic, schools transitioned from on-campus to digital education (Sutarni, Ramdhany, Hufad, & Kurniawan, 2021). While this shift impacted all students, vocational program students faced greater challenges. Academic students were able to continue their education effectively despite the obstacles both students and teachers encountered with online learning platforms. In contrast, vocational students struggled considerably with the use of these platforms, particularly in applying practical skills specialized to their fields, which are central to their programs (Drost & Levine, 2024). Huda (2023) further emphasized that digital education for vocational students proves ineffective, as it requires adequate training and robust digital infrastructure.

The Effect of Limited Resources

Vocational educators frequently face the ongoing issue of limited resources, which hinders their ability to provide effective instruction. According to Atkinson (2024), the shortage of technological and educational resources is one of the primary obstacles, resulting in subpar education. Similarly, Huskinson, MacKenzie, Pond, & Goodman (2020) found that the scarcity of resources in the program has forced BTEC teachers to purchase necessary materials out of their own pockets. Both studies suggested that senior management should allocate sufficient funding for the program.

Teacher Burnout and Work Overload

BTEC educators often experience burnout due to high levels of stress and demanding workloads. According to Rababa & Al-Momani (2021), the complexity of the BTEC curriculum and the limited support available contribute to increased stress and tension among teachers. Preechawong, Anmanatrakul, Pinit, & Koul (2021) also highlighted that the theoretical and practical components of the BTEC program make it challenging for teachers to fully cover and achieve all the intended educational outcomes. These studies suggest that smaller class sizes and the provision of adequate support can help reduce teacher turnover intentions stemming from stress and job dissatisfaction. The findings emphasize the importance of addressing these challenges to maintain the quality of the educational process.

The challenges faced by BTEC assessors are complex and multifaceted, spanning areas such as workload, curriculum, digital education, and both administrative and assessor support. To effectively address these challenges, a comprehensive and targeted approach is necessary. This strategy should prioritize providing support for BTEC assessors, addressing resource shortages, enhancing administrative assistance, ensuring manageable workload distribution, and regularly revising the curriculum plan.

METHODOLOGY

Design

This qualitative study employed a phenomenological approach to explore the challenges faced by assessors in the National BTEC program at Levels 2 and 3, while also proposing potential solutions to address these issues. Stolz (2023) suggests that examining a phenomenon involves understanding individuals' perceptions of aspects that are not yet fully comprehended.

Sampling

The author implemented purposive sampling (criterion sampling) to collect the data. In this type of sampling, the author placed the selection criteria and considerations including:

- The sample included assessors who were selected from private and public schools
- The sample included assessors from the BTEC program levels 2 and 3 who teach the available vocational fields in Jordan, such as Business Administration, Information Technology, Engineering ... etc.
- Each selected assessor should have taught in the BTEC program for at least 5 years, either in the national or the international program.
- The sample involved 50% males and 50% females.
- 50% of the selected assessors were from public schools and 50% were from private schools.
- The sample included 16 participants:
 - 12 participants were individually interviewed
 - 4 participants were interviewed in a focus group (assessors from public and private schools).

Table 1: The selected sample and the focus group:

Sector	Participant	Sex	Experience
Public sector	X1	Male	5 Years
	X2	Female	5 Years
	X3	Male	7 Years
	X4	Female	7 Years
	X5	Male	5 Years
	X6	Female	6 Years
Private sector	X7	Male	9 Years
	X8	Female	8 Years
	X9	Male	7 Years
	X10	Female	5 Years
	X11	Male	5 Years
	X12	Female	6 Years
Focus group	F1	Male	6 Years
	F2	Female	8 Years
	F3	Male	7 Years
	F4	Female	5 Years

Data Collection Tools

The raw data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, conducted individually. To strengthen the findings of the study, a focus group discussion was held with an additional four assessors. Each of the 12 selected assessors participated in an interview lasting approximately 15 to 20 minutes. The interviews took place in private rooms to ensure there were no distractions. Prior to the interviews, each participant signed a consent form, granting permission to be videotaped and agreeing that the provided information would be used and analyzed for the research.

The interviewer began each session with casual conversation and simple questions to help the interviewee feel at ease, as all interviews were recorded on video. Participants were encouraged to share their thoughts freely, recalling any information they wished to discuss, and were also invited to contribute additional comments or insights. The interview consisted of seven core questions to answer the overarching research question of this study: “What challenges do BTEC assessors encounter when teaching the BTEC courses, either at Levels 2 or 3, and what possible solutions do they suggest?”

- What external factors do you feel affect you the most when teaching the BTEC program?
- What internal factors do you feel affect you the most when teaching the BTEC program?
- How do BTEC students’ abilities and needs differ from academic students, and how would you deal with these variations?
- What resources do you feel are missing when teaching the BTEC program?
- What support do you feel is missing when teaching the BTEC program?
- What solutions would you suggest to overcome the challenges of the program?

Data Analysis

The audio-recorded videos were transcribed. The transcribed data were refined, translated from Arabic to English, and converted into relevant phrases without excluding any comments, notes, or information provided by any participant (Table 2). The data underwent the process of content analysis to identify any hidden concepts, themes, or patterns within the data (Lindgren, Lundman, & Graneheim, 2020).

The data were analyzed using NVivo software, where codes were generated from the data. These codes were then organized into themes, categories, and subcategories. At this stage, the data became more meaningful. Simultaneously, the analyst made adjustments to the codes, themes, and categories to ensure they were well-structured and coherent.

Table 2: Data refinement: Emerged themes, categories, subcategories, and codes.

Themes	Categories	Subcategories	Codes
Educational Challenges	Limited Resources	Limited educational materials	"Inadequate Resources" "Old materials"
	Differentiated Education	Trouble in addressing different student needs	"Varied Abilities" "Individualized learning"
	Curriculum Hardship	Imbalance between theoretical knowledge and practical skills	"Curriculum Inconsistency" "Purely Theoretical"
Student Engagement	Motivation Challenges	Problems in keeping student interest	"No Motivation" "Lack of Interest in the Material"
	Attendance Problems	Student absence that affects learning outcomes	"Absenteeism," "Irregular Attendance"
	Behavior Challenges	Continuous Class Disruption	"Disrupting Behavior" "Classroom management"
Administrative Restrictions	Time Management	Limited time for preparation and rectification	"Time Limitations" "Overwhelming Workload"
	Professional Growth	Insufficient training in certain specific fields	"Need for Specialized Training" "Professional Growth"
Proposed Solutions	Allocation of Resources	Increased funding for classroom resources and materials	"Additional Budget" "Resource supply"
	Professional Growth	Targeted training in BTEC-skills	"Workshops" "Skill Improvement"
	Student Support	Improved student engagement and initiative counseling	"Counseling programs" "mentorship"
	Policy Adjustments	Flexibility in assessment and curriculum to match real-world skills	"Adaptive Study Course" "Review of Policies"

Validity

In qualitative research, validity refers to how accurately the data collected from participants reflects their true and unbiased perspectives (Coleman, 2022). For this study, the participants were actual BTEC assessors from Levels 2 and 3, which significantly enhanced the validity of the findings. The participants were encouraged to share their thoughts freely, and the environment was conducive to open dialogue—relaxed and free of pressure—allowing them to recall and express all relevant information. These steps contributed greatly to the study's validity. Additionally, participants' responses were directly quoted and refined by eliminating irrelevant content, further strengthening the validity of the results.

FINDINGS

Educational Challenges

The concept of educational challenges emerged from the obstacles encountered by BTEC assessors at Levels 2 and 3 while delivering course material, addressing students' learning needs, and balancing the theoretical and practical demands of the curriculum. These challenges impact not only the quality of teaching and learning but also assessors' motivation, creativity, and their ability to meet the expectations of key stakeholders, including students and their families. The three main factors representing these educational challenges are Differentiated Instruction, Resource Constraints, and Curriculum Difficulties.

Limited Resources

Resource shortages often pose a challenge for BTEC assessors at Levels 2 and 3 when delivering both theoretical and practical aspects of the program. The hands-on application within the BTEC curriculum is essential and closely linked to understanding theoretical concepts. However, BTEC assessors consistently report that the necessary tools to facilitate these practical applications are lacking. Participants highlighted the absence of essential tools in the workshops:

“We do not have enough books and teaching aids in the school. This makes the teaching process very difficult and sometimes we cannot meet the required standards.”

“We have difficulties in accessing some tools such as computer software for IT courses, the matter that delays the teaching and learning process.”

“Modern resources are necessary to engage the students. I suffer from a severe lack of engineering workshop equipment. This negatively affects my students.”

Differentiated Education

Teaching strategies, such as differentiation, are essential in the BTEC context because students have varying educational levels and learning abilities. BTEC assessors emphasized that although it is challenging to implement these strategies due to the time-consuming preparation process, they are necessary to accommodate the differences in students' learning styles and intellectual capabilities:

“My vocational students possess varying learning abilities, which presents a significant challenge due to the limited resources at my disposal. As assessor, this can be quite frustrating, especially when I struggle to align the content I need to teach with the available resources and the diverse abilities of my students. This continues to be a considerable challenge.”

“The problem is that using differentiation strategies with students takes a lot of time to prepare. Sometimes it takes 4 hours to prepare a single presentation, and this only covers one or two classes. On top of that, assessors need intensive and continuous training to use differentiation strategies correctly because students have different abilities. But in the end, all students must learn and achieve success.”

The use of differentiated instruction in vocational classrooms is crucial because it ensures all students have the opportunity to learn and enhances their chances of success. However, the lack of technical and administrative support—such as the absence of interactive screens in classrooms and the lack of lesson plans—may hinder the effectiveness of this strategy. The shortage of resources and educational guidance can reduce the impact of differentiated instruction methods in the classroom, negatively affecting student outcomes.

Curriculum Hardship

Assessors have expressed concerns about the complexity of vocational materials in the BTEC curriculum, noting that it places a greater emphasis on theoretical content rather than practical application. They also found vocational subjects to be challenging and burdensome due to their theoretical focus. Despite the intended emphasis on practical learning, assessors reported that these subjects remained predominantly theoretical and did not adequately prepare students for the job market as expected:

“Vocational subjects are often quite challenging, and the lack of practical application in theoretical courses leaves students unprepared for the job market. This complexity presents a significant challenge for assessors, as the rigid structure of these subjects limits flexibility and does not promote hands-on training.”

“Assessors strive to bridge the gap between theoretical concepts and practical application. However, many students fail to recognize the connection between the two. This presents a significant challenge, as it not only affects students' understanding but also makes it difficult for assessors to effectively deliver theoretical content while ensuring its practical implementation.”

“Vocational education materials are often extensive and overwhelming for both assessors and students. This challenge is particularly evident among students with learning difficulties, who require more time to complete specific tasks. The vast scope of the content can be daunting, leading to disengagement and frustration.”

These challenges, as highlighted by vocational assessors, create a significant gap that educators attempt to bridge without clear, professional guidance. As a result, students are not adequately prepared, both academically and professionally. The rigidity of the vocational curricula further intensifies the burden on assessors and hinders students' ability to grasp practical applications effectively, ultimately affecting their performance and future aspirations.

Student Engagement

Student engagement in vocational program classrooms presents several challenges. According to participants in this study, student engagement and involvement in the program are generally low, making it difficult for assessors to encourage active participation during classroom sessions. This is primarily due to students feeling disengaged by the overwhelming amount of theoretical material and frustrated by the limited focus on practical application. As a result, their academic performance and overall achievement are negatively affected. Student engagement in this context can be examined through three key dimensions: Lack of Motivation, Attendance Issues, and Behavioral Challenges.

Motivation Challenges

Motivation in students is evident when they demonstrate enthusiasm and interest in their studies. However, in vocational programs, students often lack the motivation and engagement necessary for active participation. Despite assessors' repeated efforts, creating a stimulating learning environment remains a challenge. The core issue lies in students' disconnect from the academic content, as they seek material that aligns with their personal and professional aspirations. As a result, assessors observe a lack of motivation and reluctance among students to participate in discussions and activities:

“Many students refrain from engaging with the content provided in textbooks, as they perceive it to be irrelevant to their future practical lives.”

“When students struggle to comprehend the presented material for any reason, it becomes challenging for assessors to foster a stimulating and engaging learning environment. Consequently, this impacts their academic progress and future educational development.”

Based on the participants' responses, it is clear that a gap exists between the content of the scientific material provided in vocational programs and the personal and future aspirations of students, as it does not align with their interests. Therefore, assessors should establish a direct connection between the course content and its practical applications in the market, ensuring its relevance to students' experiences in order to enhance their engagement and motivation.

Attendance Problems

Assessors also highlighted the issue of frequent student absences, which significantly disrupt the educational process. Some students regularly miss classes or choose not to attend lessons. Irregular attendance is attributed to various factors, including peer influence, personal challenges, and a perceived misalignment between the curriculum and their future aspirations. These factors collectively contribute to the burden of absenteeism:

“A significant number of students frequently miss classes, causing them to miss essential foundational knowledge. As a result, assessors are burdened with the need to repeatedly explain concepts from the beginning.”

“Absenteeism is a major challenge in the vocational program, posing a persistent issue that is difficult to fully resolve despite its substantial impact.”

Regular class attendance is crucial for students' active participation and success, as absences hinder their understanding of the material and engagement in practical activities. To address this issue, assessors should implement strategies such as offering more flexible and engaging content to enhance students' motivation to attend and participate.

Behavior Issues

Student behavior issues in the classroom are often linked to psychological disorders, disrespect towards assessors, or a failure to adhere to the school's social norms. The assessors involved in the study noted that they frequently observe inappropriate behaviors, many of which stem from external psychological factors unrelated to the school or its environment. These behaviors include conflicts among peers, class disruptions, and non-compliance with the school's behavioral guidelines. Such issues affect all students and hinder the overall educational process in the classroom.

“I've observed that some students struggle to follow behavioral guidelines in class. Their behavior can be inappropriate, and they occasionally show a lack of respect for their peers. This sometimes leads to arguments, disrupting the flow of lessons and negatively impacting the learning experience.”

“External psychological issues seem to contribute to the worsening of these behavioral challenges in certain students. Some exhibit excessive hyperactivity, while others struggle to remain quiet and engage meaningfully in class. Instead, they prefer off-topic conversations with their peers outside of school. These behaviors appear to stem from underlying psychological difficulties.”

It is clear that students' inappropriate behaviors are influenced by external factors rather than the school environment, such as class progression and engaging discussions. This issue should be addressed through targeted, interactive guidance to better understand how to manage students' psychological challenges.

Administrative Restrictions

Vocational subject assessors encounter significant administrative challenges that undermine their motivation and professional performance within the program. These challenges arise from a lack of essential resources and rigid administrative policies that hinder effective teaching. Strict adherence to predefined curriculum timetables limits the time allocated for practical application, while the shortage of resources further exacerbates these difficulties. Collectively, these factors reduce the effectiveness of vocational education and hinder the overall efficiency of both students and assessors.

Time Management

In vocational programs, time management presents a significant challenge that requires attention. Study participants reported that the administrative guidelines are not universally applicable or aligned with daily activities. Instead, they primarily focus on preparing volunteer materials for classes and adhering to rigid time schedules. Assessors face substantial difficulties in managing their time due to the administration's lack of clear task assignments and failure to provide materials in a consistent and organized manner. As a result, assessors experience an increased workload, which ultimately affects their performance and overall efficiency.

“As a assessor, I dedicate my entire day and personal time to completing the administrative tasks assigned to me, including writing and preparing lessons in various formats, among other responsibilities.”

"These administrative tasks consume all of my personal time. As a result, when it comes to grading students' homework, I find myself struggling to allocate enough time to provide meaningful feedback. This prevents me from offering the necessary reviews that could help improve their performance, particularly in specialized areas."

The issue of time limitations is apparent, as assessors highlighted that the preparation required for teaching within a rigid timetable consumes a significant amount of time, often infringing upon their personal time. This added workload can result in decreased efficiency among assessors.

Professional Growth

Vocational assessors often feel overlooked when it comes to ongoing training and professional development opportunities. This is due to factors such as time constraints, limited resources, and low motivation, which arise from their heavy workloads.

"I find it difficult to allocate time for scheduled training sessions, as there are limited opportunities, such as workshops, due to time constraints. Furthermore, the heavy workload leaves me feeling overwhelmed and stressed."

"I am eager to learn and incorporate new methods in my field and teaching practices, but the limited time available, combined with the numerous tasks at hand, makes this challenging."

One of the key challenges faced by assessors is the lack of career development opportunities, which often leads to frustration and reduced efficiency. On the other hand, the provision of training programs can significantly boost assessors' motivation, enthusiasm, and job satisfaction, ultimately enhancing their performance.

Proposed Solutions

Given the various challenges faced by assessors in vocational programs, it is essential for the relevant authorities to take immediate action to address these issues and improve the teaching process. The analysis of assessors' responses in this study identified several potential solutions to ease the challenges within the program. These solutions highlight the importance of increased resource allocation, revisions to administrative policies, greater support for assessors' professional development, and comprehensive assistance for students. By implementing these measures, many of the difficulties assessors face can be alleviated, providing both psychological and academic support. Ultimately, this would enhance assessors' effectiveness, leading to better student outcomes and achievements.

Allocation of Resources

Effective resource allocation for vocational programs is critical, as consistently highlighted in assessors' responses. They underscored the importance of having access to adequate educational tools, resources, materials, and modern technology to improve the learning experience. In particular, assessors emphasized the need for resources that support practical learning, such as computer labs and engineering workshops. Some also pointed out that the lack of these resources is a significant barrier to effective teaching and learning. Therefore, prioritizing an appropriate budget to acquire the necessary tools and resources is vital to enhance student engagement and integration into the educational process.

"We are experiencing a substantial shortage of resources to support the program, including essential equipment for engineering workshops. Additionally, there is a lack of technology to assist in presenting educational materials, with the traditional approach proving to be increasingly ineffective."

"In many cases, we are compelled to rely on outdated teaching methods, which leads to student disengagement and undermines the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process."

The responses from assessors and the subsequent analysis clearly highlight a shortage of resources, which poses a significant barrier to effective teaching. The lack of a dedicated budget to acquire essential resources is identified as the primary cause of this shortage. Additionally, the continued reliance on outdated teaching methods is regarded as ineffective. As such, it is vital for the responsible administrations to prioritize budget allocation in their plans to address this resource deficit.

Professional Growth

Professional development and training are essential for enhancing assessors' skills, allowing them to refine their teaching strategies, strengthen their expertise, and stay current with the latest effective methods. These opportunities not only boost assessors' confidence but also reignite their passion for teaching. During interviews, assessors stressed the urgent need for diverse training programs and workshops tailored to their specific fields to further develop their skills. When assessors experience professional and skill growth, it has a positive impact on students by improving their understanding and engagement in the learning process.

"We urgently need specialized and continuous training, as traditional teaching methods have become outdated and ineffective. The training should focus on developing our professional and technical skills, particularly through the use of modern educational technologies."

"Workshops help boost assessors' confidence and reduce the likelihood of them leaving their positions. Moreover, they enhance assessors' skills, which in turn leads to greater student engagement in the subjects."

Professional development is crucial for both assessors and students. Therefore, senior management should organize ongoing training workshops to enhance assessors' skills and motivate them to improve their effectiveness in the teaching process. Ultimately, this will benefit students.

Student Support

Providing ongoing support for students in vocational programs is essential for increasing their engagement and ensuring their success. Assessors emphasized the importance of continuous guidance and an individualized education system that addresses both academic and psychological needs. This consistent support, combined with motivation, guidance, and effective integration, can help students feel fully supported, build confidence, and successfully overcome the challenges of the program.

"The availability of appropriate support for students in vocational programs is crucial, as it helps students feel supported both academically and psychologically, thereby enhancing their participation and integration in the program."

"The availability of continuous psychological support is essential for assisting the student. Additionally, having an appropriate system for individualized learning helps students better understand the material and increases their participation in classes."

This study found that students in vocational programs need academic, psychological, and guidance support to enhance their engagement and help them overcome challenges. This support includes ongoing mentorship, personalized learning, and continuous training activities that foster adaptability, encourage participation, and promote integration.

Policy Adjustments

Administrative changes and reforms are essential to improve the teaching process by streamlining study plans within flexible timeframes and increasing practical application activities that benefit students. Rigid policies create challenges for both assessors and students and do not align with students' needs. Therefore, relevant administrations should review and revise these policies to ensure they are flexible, purposeful, and aligned with the program's objectives.

"The program and administrative policies are overly rigid, offering little to no autonomy for assessors in both instruction and practical application. To foster creativity and improve student outcomes, it is crucial to revise these policies and introduce greater flexibility into the vocational program."

"Assessors need adjustments to certain policies and greater flexibility in study plans and teaching methods to ensure a more positive impact on student learning and engagement."

The assessors acknowledged that the current policies are ineffective and lead to significant frustration for both educators and students, rather than offering the necessary support. Revising these policies and introducing more flexible measures to alleviate the burden on assessors is crucial for improving the teaching process and ensuring student success. Therefore, administrations must reform existing policies to prioritize assessor empowerment, enhance their effectiveness, and foster student achievement.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study explores the challenges faced by BTEC assessors at the 2nd and 3rd levels in both public and private schools in Jordan. It identifies three key areas of difficulty: educational challenges, student engagement, and administrative restrictions. The findings reveal that these obstacles disrupt the teaching process, ultimately affecting student performance and their ability to succeed in the subjects taught. During interviews, assessors expressed significant stress due to the overwhelming pressure they face. One assessor even mentioned feeling on the verge of giving up because of the immense workload, with no clear outcome in sight. This highlights the urgent need for reforms in professional programs to prioritize the mental well-being of both assessors and students, enhance assessors' skills, and improve student performance.

The rigidity of the educational process poses a significant challenge, often preventing assessors from keeping pace with technological advancements and the demands of the industrial and digital revolutions. In vocational education, some programs operate within strict, inflexible frameworks, making it difficult to align theoretical subjects with labor market needs. This misalignment creates a gap that can only be bridged by effectively integrating theoretical knowledge with practical market requirements. Moreover, this gap negatively impacts employability, compounding the issue. Assessors are often forced to follow rigid guidelines, sometimes at the expense of students' future success and efficiency. The situation is further exacerbated by outdated curricula, limited professional development opportunities for educators, and a lack of meaningful partnerships with external companies for hands-on learning experiences.

Educational challenges, such as limited resources and complex curricula, hinder the effectiveness of the educational process. Assessors often struggle to align theoretical curricula with practical application, which is essential for preparing students for the workforce. Additionally, issues such as low student participation, integration difficulties, inconsistent attendance, and negative student behavior create significant challenges in vocational programs. These factors lead to poor student performance and considerable frustration for assessors. Administrative constraints, such as insufficient time and limited opportunities for promotion and professional growth, exacerbate these challenges, leading to assessor burnout, lack of motivation, and difficulty balancing professional and personal life.

The disconnect between educational policies and the realities of teaching in schools significantly hinders the teaching and learning process. This misalignment fails to keep pace with evolving industry demands, leading to stagnation in education, despite vocational programs being designed to equip students for the modern workforce. Despite these challenges, assessors continue to adapt their methods to maximize learning outcomes. Additionally, the lack of collaboration between schools and businesses limits students' practical experience, further widening the gap between education and market needs.

Assessors have proposed effective solutions to address the challenges within the professional program. They emphasized the importance of acquiring necessary resources, particularly modern technology, which enhances teaching effectiveness and boosts student engagement. Offering opportunities for professional growth is also crucial, as it helps assessors refine their teaching techniques and fosters a dynamic, non-frustrating learning environment. Professional development not only enhances teaching efficiency but also positively impacts student performance and behavior. Additionally, students can be supported through the creation of guidance programs that improve engagement with the material and encourage active participation. This fosters a conducive learning environment that promotes student success and excellence. Regarding policies, assessors recommended revisions to make them more flexible and supportive, with a focus on improving assessor effectiveness and prioritizing student success through increased engagement and participation.

According to assessors' feedback on the proposed solutions, these measures are effective in addressing the challenges faced by the professional program. Assessors highlighted the importance of providing necessary resources, offering professional development opportunities to enhance their skills, and ensuring adequate support for students, including counseling and mental health services. Furthermore, they stressed the need to modify existing policies to make them more flexible. Assessors also emphasized the importance of implementing and sustaining these solutions to ensure meaningful improvements in the program, both in the short and long term. They also highlighted the necessity of effective communication between assessors and administration to keep them informed of new developments and to consider their suggestions.

This qualitative study discusses the problems faced by assessors in the national BTEC program in Jordan at the 2nd and 3rd levels and emphasizes the need for urgent intervention to address the challenges assessors encounter. The study addresses the educational challenges and the complexity of the subjects, which contribute to weak student participation and integration into the program. It also discusses the challenges posed by administrative restrictions, which prevent flexibility in the program and directly affect both assessors and students. Interventions are critical to prevent program failure and help students succeed.

Implementing the solutions proposed by assessors—allocating necessary resources, providing professional development for assessors, supporting students, and modifying policies—can improve both the teaching experience for assessors and the learning experience for students. This can be achieved by providing continuous support and flexibility within the program to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Focusing on student integration and participation is key to student success and maintaining a high-quality educational environment. Therefore, future research should explore the extent to which these solutions impact the improvement of the BTEC system in public and private schools. Finally, cooperation between assessors and administrations is essential to implement these solutions, with priority given to the professional development of assessors, followed by the allocation of necessary resources, and the modification of policies to align with the program's goals.

This study examines the challenges faced by BTEC assessors in Jordanian schools at the second and third levels. The findings, including identified problems and proposed solutions, are applicable to all schools in the Kingdom offering vocational programs based on practical learning and competency-based assessments. These results can be generalized to other schools due to the common challenges—such as resource shortages, student participation and integration issues, and

administrative limitations—that are prevalent across nearly all educational institutions in Jordan. Additionally, the similar demographic structure across Jordan supports the generalization of these findings to all vocational learning institutions in the country.

Limitations and Future Studies

This study provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by assessors in the vocational program and proposes effective solutions. However, it has some limitations. The study relies exclusively on a qualitative approach, gathering feedback from a limited group of assessors, which may not fully capture the experiences of other educational institutions regarding the challenges within the professional program. Additionally, the qualitative approach may result in significant variations in assessors' opinions, as the sample size is smaller compared to the larger samples typically used in quantitative research.

Therefore, the proposed future research includes the following:

- Investigating the long-term effects of the solutions suggested in this study on the BTEC program in Jordan, with a focus on providing necessary resources, assessor professional development, and modifying program policies.
- Conducting a quantitative study to assess the impact of utilizing artificial intelligence-based technology to overcome administrative restrictions.

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