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**Tackling Incidence of Academic Dishonesty
through the Competency Based Education
and Training (CBET) Framework**

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Tackling Incidence of Academic Dishonesty through the Competency Based Education and Training (CBET) Framework

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Introduction

The rapid ascension of Artificial Intelligence (AI), coupled with psychosocial disruptions due to COVID-19, has led to discordance in the cognitive development of younger generations, and is invariably experienced by educators at all levels in this digital age. Notwithstanding, the inception of Large Language Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, ClaudeAI, and Google Gemini has made penwriting and long hours of academic research a thing of the past. Bourne (2025) argues that the global education sector has experienced a digital transformation with the inception of AI, and has become key to pedagogical novelty. By proxy, our brains have habitually evolved to seek the fastest and most efficient pathways, requiring the least effort or expenditure of energy; some call it ingenuity, while others dismiss it as lackadaisical. Daringly, there is a semblance of insurgence against the traditional learning dogma, indubitably evident with modern generations, as AI and digital technology has taken over the mundane functions of data summary, synthesis, and redacting. There is growing incidence observed in academic dishonesty however, among students at the secondary and post-secondary level and “although AI offers the potential for enhanced teaching and learning, it raises questions regarding its appropriate scope” (Clarke, 2025).

Addressing Academic Dishonesty in the Caribbean

Students are unfortunately engineering novel avenues of proclaimed originality through AI, commensurate to growing efforts to reduce academic dishonesty incidence by facilitators. A 2023 survey on LLM usage by 3,017 students carried out by Pudasaini et al (2025) revealed that nearly one third admittedly use ChatGPT to aid them in completion of their homework, and “The rise of Large Language Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT and Gemini has led to a surge in academic misconduct” (Pudasaini et al., 2025). Despite this increase of academic dishonesty through AI usage, there is no observed combined Academic Integrity Policy fashioned for the Caribbean region to address this incessant issue. Recently the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) (the Caribbean region’s governing body for standardized assessments) published its intent of removing Student Based Assessment (SBA) for most non-practical subjects, in response to students using AI to fashion their portfolios to nigh perfection. Therefore, It is clear that overreliance on customary theoretical assessment for evidence of learning in this day and age should be tailored or rather discontinued in my candid opinion, and further centralise the Competency Based Education and Training (CBET) methodology to full effect. The CBET framework reverses the narrative of relying solely on pure theoretical assessment, through engaging psychomotor and affective domains as evidence of learning and competence for the modern student.

Context of the CBET Framework

Why fully centralise CBET? More appropriately, will it receive the necessary buy in and monetary investment to fully retrofit the Caribbean region’s education system in today’s economic climate? Competency Based Education and Training “can be defined as training based on the participant’s ability to demonstrate mastery of skills performed under certain conditions, to specific standards which he or she must acquire before moving to the next phase of learning or life” (Nyachiro, n.d.). CBET’s definition although elastic, has provided a systematic approach to addressing skills shortage, and it is heralded as an act of providence for potential



productivity evidence to employers; a skills transcript or passport for lack of a better term. The Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) architecture astutely provides an umbrella to CBET, and may not have the same level of publicity or prestige of regional universities and colleges, for instance the University of the West Indies (The UWI), University of Technology (UTECH), or the Mico University College (The Mico), but nevertheless it plays a pivotal role in driving economic resilience and attracting global talent through the brain gain phenomena or brain circulation. “TVET programs typically include a mix of classroom instruction, hands-on training, and experiential learning opportunities, and may be offered at the secondary, post-secondary, or higher education level” (Okoth, 2023).

According to Dambudzo (2018), employers have made numerous complaints about the lack of preparedness of school leavers for the job industry, and “the two [educators and industry] do not understand each other and appear to lack an understanding or respect for interests and requirements for the other and yet TVET institutions are there to service industry, and also ensure that their graduates get employed for personal and industry’s benefit in order to promote socio-economic transformation” (Davis, 2004, as cited by Dambudzo, 2018). The heightened dissonance between the competencies of hired workers and their qualifications has resulted in countless millions lost in capital and productivity hours. Notably, it can be reasoned that those same students that had the propensity and overreliance on AI during their studies would consequently succumb to workplace exposure; stymieing their critical thinking and deductive reasoning required for workplace augmentation and market adaptation.

In Jamaica, the HEART NSTA Trust was established in 1982 by then Prime Minister The Honourable Edward Seaga to address underdevelopment in Jamaica, at a time when the country faced bouts of economic stratification and unrest. The institution’s intent was to “provide vocational training across the island, which, in the long run, would have equipped Jamaican workers with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for higher levels of productivity” (HEART NSTA Trust, n.d.). Instinctively it has grown to champion TVET and the CBET methodology with much promise and results, with over 600,000 skilled workers and entrepreneurs to date, ready to inspire meaningful change with humble pride.

The Role of the Modern Educator

Efforts to cheat, regardless of context will be inevitable. With ongoing instances of Academic Dishonesty in the modern classroom, as an educator our role must decisively create a potent fissure in their efforts, perhaps not punitive in nature, but rather utilise positive reinforcement where necessary. This is where the belief in CBET methodology will flourish, as students demonstrating what they know not on paper but through guided practical simulation will eventually force themselves to improve. Benjamin Franklin once quoted that “Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.” Student involvement is critical for learning as there is a greater load of sensory information collected, and it builds rapport with the facilitator, leading to a greater probability of empowerment and confidence. Skills such as active listening, public speaking, negotiation, persuasion and storytelling would be amplified geometrically through CBET; skills that most C- executives treasure more than hard skills and technical competencies amid little contribution to process efficiency. Mark you, it is imperative to have competent skill workers, as they not only provide a higher productive throughput, but they instinctively make the workplace safer for themselves and their colleagues. “Employers too want soft skills, and they do want to know that their workforce is qualified and effective but they want the skills to be wrapped up and operate in situ” (Shakespeare, Keleher & Moxham, 2007).

Conclusion

Although the process of integrating the CBET framework for such a reform in the realm of education may be complex, bureaucratic, and easily misunderstood at first, the Return on Investment (ROI) for such an implementation would transfigure many Small Island Developing States’ (SIDS) economic infrastructures long term, which could ultimately attract new talent, become resilient to recession shocks, and aggressively drive technological ingenuity. I am confident that any Caribbean SIDS would hope to model a country such as Singapore: Singapore is 1/15th the size of Jamaica, yet has a 600 Billion USD economy recorded, according to the World Bank Group website (n.d.). The country learnt from early to take its education sector seriously, especially in the area of financial literacy. Artificial intelligence will not leave us, and it goes the same for academic dishonesty, however it is our duty as educators to establish an ethical platform of academic integrity and engineer new ways to combat cheating in our classrooms. The CBET methodology is a practical, effective framework that ensures students don’t heavily rely on artificial intelligence to give them all the answers. Instead, they can ethically use it to bridge gaps in their own learning, and address it with their facilitators in an appropriate context.

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