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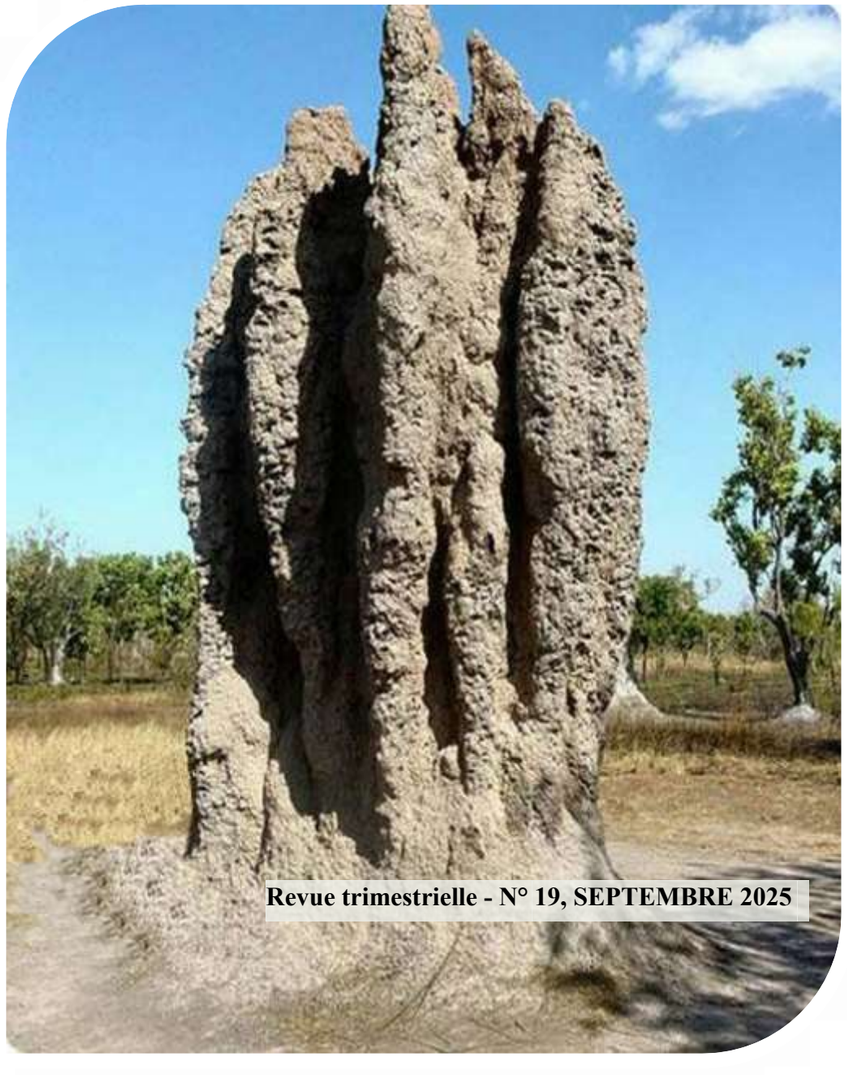

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"Dama Ninao" est une revue scientifique interdisciplinaire qui accepte et publie tous les articles relevant des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines. A cet effet, elle s'intéresse aux études et théories littéraires, linguistiques, sociologiques, philosophiques, anthropologiques et historico-géographiques. La Revue "Dama Ninao", entendu "L'Entente" en langue kabyè du Nord Togo, est créée dans l'intention de matérialiser la mondialisation ou la globalisation qui s'opère avec l'esprit d'équipe et d'échanges et la désuétude du monde autarcique. Le monde scientifique universitaire ne peut échapper à cet esprit d'équipe qui fonde un creuset où « le fer aiguise le fer », les échanges se croisent, puis s'entremêlent pour aboutir à une reconstruction des connaissances scientifiques individuelles dans la collectivité.

La Revue Dama Ninao nous renvoie à la Civilisation de l'Universel du poète sénégalais Léopold Sédar Senghor, qui prône la porosité des âmes avec l'acceptation de l'autre, de ce qu'il dispose d'utile pour mon avancement : sa civilisation, sa culture, sa langue … Elle se fonde notamment sur la philosophie de Paul Ricœur qui préconise la perception de Soi-même comme un autre. Considérer soi-même comme un autre aux yeux de l'autre, nous amènerait à faire taire nos distensions et ressentiments afin de redimensionner notre espace, reconstruire notre histoire et notre société.

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Au confluent de diverses sciences, la Revue Dama Ninao se propose de promouvoir la recherche scientifique et universitaire en impulsant le dialogue interdisciplinaire, le dialogue entre divers champs disciplinaires et divers contributeurs du monde universitaire.

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La taille des articles

Volume : 10 à 15 pages ; interligne 1.5, police 12 pour le corps du texte et les courtes citations ; police 11 pour les longues citations, Times New Roman, les références des citations doivent être incorporées dans le texte. Exemple : Guy Rocher (1968, p. 29), pas de référence en foot-notes à l'exception de quelques commentaires.

Ordre logique du texte

- Un **TITRE** en caractère d'imprimerie et en gras. Le titre ne doit pas être trop long ;

- **Nom et prénom(s)** du contributeur ou des contributeurs, **nom de l'institution** d'appartenance, **adresse mail**

- Un **Résumé (Abstract)** de 8 lignes en français et anglais, en interligne simple, suivi de 6 **Mots clés** (**Key words**)

- Une **Introduction** : elle doit avoir une problématique, une méthode et une structure.

- Un **Développement** : les articulations du développement du texte doivent-être titrées comme suit :

1-Pour le **Titre** de la première section

1-1-Pour le **Titre** de la première sous-section

1-2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième sous-section

2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième section

2-1-Pour le **Titre** de la première sous-section

2-2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième sous-section

3- Pour le **Titre** de la troisième section (si l'auteur de l'article le souhaite)

-Une **Conclusion :** elle doit être courte, précise et concise en mettant en relief l'authenticité des résultats de la recherche.

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- de matérialiser le monde universitaire qui est un creuset où « le fer aiguise le fer », les échanges se croisent, puis s'entremêlent pour aboutir à une reconstruction des connaissances scientifiques individuelles dans la collectivité ;
- de promouvoir la recherche scientifique et universitaire en impulsant le dialogue interdisciplinaire, le dialogue entre divers champs disciplinaires et divers contributeurs du monde universitaire.

La revue Dama Ninao a une portée scientifique et sociale. A cet effet, elle publie tous les articles relevant des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines et s'intéresse aux études et théories littéraires, linguistiques, sociologiques, philosophiques, anthropologiques et historico-géographiques sur appel à contribution thématique (colloque) ou varia. Elle est un espace de rencontre, de construction et de reconstruction des réseaux relationnels et scientifiques.

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Revue Dama Ninao

REVISITING CONCEPTS OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION IN BRITISH AND BENINESE CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

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Abstract: This study revisits the concepts of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as a pathway to professional integration, with a comparative analysis of the British and Beninese systems. Adopting a comparative education approach, it enables cross-analysis of institutional models, funding mechanisms, and policy orientations in both systems, and human capital theory that examines how vocational skills contribute to productivity and national development. Findings suggest that Britain's competency-based frameworks, strong employer partnerships, and apprenticeship schemes could offer valuable lessons for Benin, while the British system could, in turn, learn from Benin's community-based informal sector training models that address local needs, and its recent reforms, such as competency-based certifications and public-private partnerships.

Keywords: Technical and Vocational Training, Professional Integration, Comparative Education, Human Capital Theory, Britain, Benin.

Résumé: Cette étude analyse l'Enseignement et la Formation Techniques et Professionnels (EFTP) comme voie d'intégration professionnelle, en comparant les systèmes Britannique et Béninois. Adoptant l'approche de l'éducation comparée et la théorie du capital humain, la recherche identifie les atouts, défis et bonnes pratiques transférables. Les résultats indiquent que les cadres Britanniques axés sur les compétences et les partenariats avec les employeurs peuvent inspirer le Bénin, tandis que le Royaume-Uni peut tirer profit des modèles Béninois de formation informelle communautaire et de ses réformes récentes. L'alignement sur les besoins industriels, l'intégration des compétences numériques et le renforcement des partenariats public-privé apparaissent comme essentiels pour améliorer l'insertion professionnelle et réduire le chômage des jeunes dans les deux contextes.

Mots-clés : Formation technique et professionnelle, Intégration professionnelle, Éducation comparée, Théorie du capital humain, Royaume-Uni, Bénin.

Introduction

Challenging with a rapid globalisation, technological change, and shifting labour market demands, the importance of technical and vocational education and

training (TVET) has focused attention on the worldwide scales. TVET is increasingly known to be a key tool for coping with youth unemployment, reducing skills gaps, and promoting inclusive economic development. However, despite its potential, TVET continues to face numerous challenges particularly in terms of perception, relevance, and effectiveness in facilitating professional integration, and leading to jobless situations around the world.

Thus, in developed countries such as the United Kingdom, technical and vocational training has gone through significant reforms aiming at aligning education with industry needs and offering alternative pathways to employment. Nevertheless, vocational education is still often viewed as inferior to traditional academic systems, both socially and institutionally. In contrast, in developing nations like Benin, the TVET system struggles with inadequate infrastructures, outdated curricula, limited industry involvement, and strong societal preferences for general education. These contrasting realities reveal the complex gaps between culture, policy, and education in fostering vocational training systems.

Considering these differences, it becomes essential to revisit the concepts, structures, and roles of TVET in both British and Beninese contexts. How do these systems prepare learners for the world of work? To what extent are they effective in promoting sustainable professional integration? And how do cultural and educational frameworks influence the design, implementation, and societal perception of vocational training?

This study seeks to critically analyse and compare the TVET systems of the United Kingdom and Benin, focusing on their contributions to professional integration. By exploring both the institutional and cultural dimensions of vocational education, the research aims to explore strengths, challenges, and lessons that can inform policy and practice in both contexts.

Thus, this research work is designed in five parts. The first part deals with the Introduction to the study; the second part accounts for the literature Review; the

third one is concerned with the presentation of the main findings generated by the study; the fourth part is about the critical analysis of findings, and the fifth one suggests some recommendations.

I.Introduction to the Study

1.1. Background and Context of the Study

To begin with, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has long been regarded as a crucial pathway for equipping individuals with practical skills and knowledge that respond to the demands of the labour market. Some researchers have realised that vocational training often serves as a bridge between education and employment, enabling learners to integrate professional life, while contributing to national development (Foster 45; Oketch 67). Despite its global relevance, the perception, structure, and effectiveness of TVET vary significantly through cultural and educational systems.

Besides,in Britain, the roots of vocational education date back to the Industrial Revolution, when apprenticeship systems and technical schools emerged to provide skilled labour for industrial growth (Green 23). Over time, government policies have sought to align vocational education with economic modernisation, innovation, and global competitiveness. Today, the British model emphasises a dual approach that combines academic and technical pathways, thereby ensuring flexibility in a rapidly changing labour market (Keep and Mayhew 14). Nevertheless, challenges remain in overcoming the enduring stigma that vocational training is less prestigious than traditional academic education.

For this reason, in Benin, the development of TVET has occurred under the dual influence of indigenous apprenticeship traditions and colonial educational legacies. Traditional master-apprentice systems have coexisted with formal structures introduced during the French colonial period, creating a hybrid model (Nouatin 89). In recent decades, Benin has attempted to modernise its vocational sector through state reforms and international cooperation, yet the system continues to face

challenges. These include inadequate infrastructures, a deep gap between training and labour market needs, limited consideration of informal skills, and weak integration with higher education (Adjovi112).

In addition, cultural perspectives play a defining role in fostering vocational education in both societies. In Britain for instance, TVET is increasingly integrated into national strategies for employability and lifelong learning, whereas in Benin, cultural values of communal learning, informal apprenticeship, and reliance on traditional crafts remain central (Trudell 56). This contrast requires the need for a comparative approach to understanding how cultural and educational contexts influence the design, delivery, and reception of TVET. Revisiting the concepts of technical and vocational training in both Britain and Benin is therefore essential. As a result, a comparative analysis of their systems reveals both strengths and limitations in preparing youth for professional integration. More importantly, such an inquiry offers insights into how vocational training can be improved to be a driver of employment, social inclusion, and sustainable development.

1.2. Importance of TVET in Global and Local Contexts

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has benefited from international recognition as a strategic driver of human capital development, employability, and economic competitiveness. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) emphasises that TVET plays a key role in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4, which calls for inclusive and equitable quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all ("UNESCO Strategy for TVET" 7).Thus, globally, TVET is not only a response to industrial and technological changes but also an essential mechanism for addressing unemployment, poverty, and social inequalities (Trrpney and Hombrados,2013, p.5). Therefore, by equipping individuals with marketable skills, we think, TVET enhances productivity and contributes to sustainable economic growth.

Indeed, at the international level, countries with strong vocational systems such as Germany, Switzerland, and Singapore demonstrate that structured and well-funded TVET models can lead to lower youth unemployment rates and smoother school-to-work transitions (Euler,2013, p.19). These systems also show how vocational training can enhance innovation and adaptability in the face of rapidly evolving labour markets. As such, global debates increasingly highlight TVET not as a second-class pathway but as a central component of lifelong learning and professional integration (Billett 41, 2011, p.41).

In local contexts, however, the importance of TVET is shaped by cultural, economic, and historical factors. In Britain, TVET is valued as part of a dual system that provides alternative pathways to academic education, though it still struggles with public perceptions of lower prestige compared to university degrees (Keep and Mayhew,201, p.14). Recent reforms, such as the introduction of T-levels, aim to raise the status of vocational education and improve links between training providers and employers. In Benin, TVET plays a vital role in youth employment and poverty reduction, especially through apprenticeship systems that have been deeply rooted in cultural traditions. Thus,UNESCO notes that reforms in Benin, including the establishment of a National Qualifications Framework, aim to modernise the sector and ensure that skills training meets labour market demands (“Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Benin”). Thus, in both global and local contexts, TVET remains indispensable for promoting employability, social inclusion, and economic development. While advanced economies provide models of effective integration between vocational training and industry, countries like Benin illustrate the challenges of aligning traditional apprenticeship systems with modern policy frameworks. In this context,a comparative approach reveals that despite differences in resources and structures, TVET has a universal importance in preparing individuals for productive and dignified work.

1.3. Problem Statement

In today's dynamic labour market which is marked by rapid technological shifts and pervasive youth unemployment, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is increasingly recognised as a pivotal pathway toward employability and equitable economic development. Yet TVET continues to grapple with significant systemic and cultural obstacles in both developed and developing contexts.

It is important to mention that ,in the United Kingdom, despite growing interest among young people in vocational processes such as apprenticeships, the TVET sector remains constrained by chronic underfinancing of Further Education (FE) institutions and persistent social stigma. As a result, Financing cuts since 2010 have slashed adult learner participation by nearly half, with real-term per capita support down by 28 percent and apprenticeship subsidies failing to meet rising demand.

Moreover, vocational pathways are still widely perceived as fallback options relative to academic system, a reputation which is reinforced by cultural perceptions equating TVET with failure to pursue university .Meanwhile, in Benin, although the government has prioritised TVET within its Education Sector Plan (2018-2030) and is investing in initiatives such as National Qualifications Frameworks and Recognition of Prior Learning systems, the sector remains hamstrung by insufficient infrastructures, inadequate financing, and weak capacity for quality delivery . Additionally, efforts to modernise TVET through digitisation, necessary for aligning with labour market needs, are still nascent.

Thus, these stark discrepancies underscore an urgent need for a critical, cross-cultural investigation: how do the educational policies, institutional infrastructures, and cultural attitudes in the UK and Benin influence the effectiveness of TVET in achieving sustainable professional integration? Without such comparative analysis, TVET's untapped potential to support workforce readiness and socio-economic

development remains at risk, and hinder the sustainable development of nations we are pursuing.

1.4.Purpose of the Study

Above all, the purpose of this study is to critically examine and compare the structures, implementation strategies, and socio-cultural perceptions of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the United Kingdom and Benin. In addition, this comparative analysis aims to understand how educational policies, institutional capacities, and cultural values shape the effectiveness of TVET systems in promoting professional integration and employment outcomes.

What is more is that, as economies globally shift toward skill-intensive industries, the need for responsive and inclusive TVET systems has become increasingly urgent. In the UK for instance, recent policy discussions have focused on reviving vocational education to address the skills gap, particularly through reforms to apprenticeships and further education (Financial Times). However, social stigma and underfunding continue to reduce the status of vocational training compared to academic pathways (BBC News).

Similarly, in Benin, the government has undertaken efforts to modernise its vocational education system through digital transformation and competency-based training. Yet, structural weaknesses such as poor infrastructures, or inadequate ones, low funding, and limited public-private partnerships persist (UNESCO; World Bank).

Consequently, by revisiting these systems from both a policy and cultural standpoint, this study seeks to identify key challenges and opportunities that impact the success of TVET in both nations. Ultimately, the research intends to provide practical recommendations to improve the quality, relevance, and perception of vocational training, thereby supporting sustainable employment and inclusive development.

1.5. The Research Methodology

To begin with, the United Kingdom and Benin are selected as contrasting case studies using purposive sampling. The UK represents a highly structured, industry-connected TVET system that demonstrates strong labour market integration (DfE 12). Benin, on the other hand, is a developing country where the TVET sector faces challenges of informality, low funding, and weak certification, resulting in lower employability outcomes (Atolah and Djibril,2012, p.58). This contrast makes them ideal for a comparative education study framed by human capital considerations.

Besides, this study adopts a comparative education approach grounded in Human Capital Theory to examine the effectiveness and perception of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the United Kingdom and Benin. The objective is to analyse how educational structures and socio-cultural environments shape TVET's contribution to professional integration in each context.

Also, the research focuses on a qualitative comparative case study design. The UK and Benin are selected based on their contrasting educational and economic systems. The former as a developed economy with an evolving vocational sector, whereas the latter as a developing country actively reforming its TVET system. This contrast offers a rich basis for understanding how different political, cultural, and institutional contexts influence TVET outcomes.

For this reason, the comparative education approach facilitates cross-national analysis by situating TVET systems within broader historical, socio-political, and economic frameworks (Bray, Adamson, and Mason). In addition, the study will follow Bereday's model of comparative education, which involves: (1) description of the systems, (2) interpretation of cultural and contextual factors, (3) juxtaposition, and (4) comparison.

Moreover**,** this study is focused on Human Capital Theory, as developed by Becker and Schultz, which posits that investment in education and training enhances individual productivity and, by extension, national economic growth (Becker). Thus,

TVET, as a form of skills-based education, is viewed as a critical means of increasing human capital. This framework enables the analysis of how both countries view and invest in vocational education as a tool for labour market integration and national development.

In fact, Human Capital Theory is particularly relevant for examining policy decisions, such as the UK's reform of apprenticeship funding and Benin's adoption of competency-based training, both of which signal investments in vocational skills as economic assets (Odjo Mitchell, 2024).

In the same vein, Schultz emphasises that "knowledge and skill are a form of capital, and investments in human capital leads to an increase in both economic output and workers' earnings"

In other terms, this echoes the foundational premise of Human Capital Theory, anchoring the argument that TVET is not merely a training mechanism, but a strategic economic investment. Schultz's grassroots observations are that training empowers individuals more sustainably than aid, and reinforce the importance of TVET as transformative rather than remedial. In short, this theory legitimises policy incentives, such as Benin's NQF or UK apprenticeship schemes, as tools to grow national productivity through workforce development.

2.Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual Clarification and TVET Evolution

To begin with, the concept of education can be perceived as: ' 'Processes by which societies deliberately transmit their accumulated information, knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values, skills, competences, and behaviours across generations. It involves communication designed to bring about learning''(UNESCO Glossary). In other terms, Education is seen as a socio-cultural mechanism, and as an intentional societal effort to convey knowledge and values from one generation to the

next. From this perspective, education plays an important role in the sustainable development of nations, as it permits the teaching and the learning processes.

Besides, in a more operational perspective the same document reveals that: ‘’education is typically defined as an organised and systematic instructional process aimed at facilitating learning for a specific target group. It is most often delivered within a structured system’’ (Education’’ UNESCO-UNEVOC Glossary).

Specifically, as for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), UNESCO defines it as :’’ Educational programs combining general knowledge, practical skills, and technological understanding aimed at preparing individuals for specific occupations ‘’ (UNESCO 3). At this level, the overall objective of these concepts is to train individuals for professional integration and their employability for the welfare of people and their development.

Historically, TVET systems evolved from craft-based apprenticeships toward structured curricula integrated into national education systems. In the United Kingdom, TVET has been modernised as “Further Education” to increase its social status and respond to industry needs (Keep, 2010, p.241).

Conversely, in Benin, informal apprenticeship models continue to dominate, with approximately 70% of vocational learning taking place outside formal institutions (Adomou and Hounkpe,2019, p.112). This contrast reveals differing historical process, which impact the societal value attributed to vocational education. Thus, in Benin context,populations are not educated on how vocational education is another pathway to earn one’s life.What is worth for them,is to become civil servant. Cultural factors, including the belief that intellectual labour is superior to manual work, reduce the attractiveness of TVET programmes. Consequently, little attention is focused to technical and vocational education training.Having briefly displayed this issue, what have previous works on the study revealed?

2.2. Previous Studies on TVET in the UK and Benin

Some studies conducted in the United Kingdom reveal the positive outcomes of structured qualifications such as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and modern apprenticeship schemes, which are supported by strong industry partnerships (Keep244). According to a UK Department for Education report, over 60% of further education students gain direct access to employment within six months of completion (DfE 10).

In contrast, research in Benin identifies serious challenges: insufficient funding, poor equipment, and a deep gap between training programmes and labour market demands (Atolah and Djibril, 2021, p.56). The World Bank reported in 2017that formal TVET graduation rates in Benin remain at about 30%, significantly below global averages (World Bank, 2017, p.22). These disparities show the need for comparative investigation. So, few research works have examined the issue. We can now examine some gaps this study is about to fill in.

2.3. Identification of Research Gaps

Although several studies have examined TVET reforms in Africa and Europe separately, there is limited comparative research that analyses TVET in Benin and the UK through a cross-cultural framework focused specifically on professional integration. Existing literature rarely offers concrete adaptation strategies that consider both sociocultural and institutional contexts. As a result, there is a gap in proposing feasible recommendations for Benin based on lessons from the UK while adapting them to local realities. This study aims to fill that gap by examining both systems comparatively and providing culturally contextualised recommendations.

2.4. Cultural Perceptions and Societal Roles of TVET

The perception of TVET varies considerably among countries. In the UK, public campaigns such as “National Apprenticeship Week” have improved the image of vocational training, though elite academic routes still dominate social prestige

(Spours and Hodgson, 2018, p. 179). In Benin, vocational training is often viewed as a "second-chance" pathway for those who failed in general education (Zinsou, 2020, p.129). Cultural factors, including the belief that intellectual labour is superior to manual work, reduce the attractiveness of TVET programmes. Hofstede's cultural dimension of "power distance" also helps explain the preference for university degrees as signs of higher social status (Hofstede, 2001, p.97). As a result, even skilled vocational graduates in Benin may struggle to gain recognition or confidence from employers.

2.5. Relationship Between Education Systems and Professional Integration

Effective professional integration depends on alignment between education and labour market needs. In the UK, Sector Skills Councils collaborate with educational institutions to develop competency-based curricula that reflect industry standards (Keep, 2010, p.246). Graduates are therefore more employable and quickly integrated into the workforce.

In Benin, however, curricula often focus on outdated trades or lack modern technological content. For example, while the digital sector grows, many TVET programmes still emphasise sewing or artisanal crafts (Atolah and Djibril, 2021, p.59). Employers report dissatisfaction with the relevance of skills acquired by TVET learners, leading to underemployment or informal work. As Okafor states, "integration relies as much on social legitimacy as on technical competence" (Okafor112).

3. Research Findings

3.1. Overview of TVET in the UK Policy Framework

3.1.1. Policy and Institutional Framework

The UK's TVET system operates under a national policy framework guided by the Department for Education and various sectoral bodies. It emphasises regulated qualifications such as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and modern apprenticeships, which are co-designed with industries. This structure reflects strong

investment in vocational human capital and demonstrates how policy coherence supports skill development and labor market entry (DfE 10).

3.1.2. Curriculum and Labour Market Alignment

Curricula are competency-based and strongly linked to labour market needs. Apprenticeship programmes include both classroom theory and paid practical training within companies. This dual model aligns perfectly with Human Capital Theory, translating formal training into productivity and economic returns (Keep, 2016, p.245).

3.1.3. Social Perception and Stakeholder Roles

Through public campaigns (e.g., National Apprenticeship Week), TVET has gained social legitimacy. Employers play an active role in designing and implementing programmes, which strengthens the social value placed on vocational skills (Spours and Hodgson, 2010, p.179). Although some academic elitism persists, vocational routes are increasingly accepted as respectable pathways.

3.2. Overview of TVET in Benin Policy Framework

3.2.1. Policy Structure and Constraints

Benin has officially adopted a National TVET Policy, but implementation remains inconsistent due to insufficient financial means and weak governance. Most TVET provision occurs in informal apprenticeships, lacking standardised curricula and formal certification (Adomou and Hounkpe, 2019, p.112). This requires the accumulation of certified human capital, leading to reduced employability.

3.2.2. Curriculum and Resources

Curricula are often outdated and heavily oriented toward traditional trades such as sewing and carpentry. Limited incorporation of new technologies means that graduates may not possess skills needed in modern sectors. This represents a gap

between training and market needs, resulting in a lower return on educational investment (World Bank, 2022, p.22).

3.2.3. Cultural Perception and Informality

Social perception of TVET in Benin remains largely negative. Many see it as a “second-choice” pathway for students who perform poorly in academic education (Zinsou, 2020, p.129). The informal sector continues to dominate, with over 70% of vocational learning taking place outside formal institutions, and without certification or standardised assessment. This severely limits how vocational training can enhance human capital.

3.2.4. Comparative Analysis

Under the Comparative Education Approach, the UK system displays strong institutionalisation with national standards and employer participation, whereas Benin’s system is fragmented and relies heavily on informal structures.

Under the Comparative Education Approach, the UK system displays strong institutionalization with national standards and employer participation, whereas Benin’s system is fragmented and relies heavily on informal structures. The UK utilizes TVET strategically for workforce planning and national productivity (Human Capital Theory), while Benin lacks a structured mechanism to convert skills into certified labor market value.

In terms of professional integration, UK graduates enter the labor market more easily due to nationally recognized qualifications and employer trust. Beninese graduates face barriers, often engaging in informal or precarious employment with limited upward mobility.

As for Cultural values, they shape how TVET is perceived and financed. In the UK, growing recognition of vocational skills improves investment and societal acceptance. In Benin, cultural stigma reduces the perceived value of TVET, which

discourages both policymakers and parents from investing in it, confirming that human capital development is not only economic but also sociocultural.

4. Comments on the Findings

4.1. Interpreting Findings through Comparative Education Approach

The comparative analysis between the UK and Benin demonstrates how different socio-economic contexts and policy environments influence the effectiveness of TVET systems. According to the Comparative Education Approach, analysing two systems side by side reveals that structural and cultural variations significantly shape educational outcomes (Bray, 2012, p.15). The UK system benefits from policy coherence, institutional financing and strong employer partnerships, while Benin lacks consistent implementation and relies heavily on informal structures. These findings support the idea that educational reforms cannot simply be transferred from one context to another without consideration of cultural and institutional realities.

4.2. Human Capital Theory and Economic Relevance

From a Human Capital perspective, the UK's investment in competency-based education and certification generates measurable employment and productivity outcomes (Becker 17). In contrast, Benin's limited investment in infrastructure and formal certification results in weaker returns on vocational training. Graduates often enter the informal economy, where their skills are not rewarded or enhanced, reducing the economic value of their training. This confirms the central idea of human capital theory: that the payoff of education depends on the quality and recognition of the training received.

4.3. Strengths and Weaknesses of Both Systems

The UK model demonstrates strong institutional strengths: clear qualifications, public-private collaboration, and labour market alignment. However, some social stigma persists around vocational tracks compared to university degrees, suggesting cultural perception remains a challenge despite policy success. Benin's system has

strengths in flexibility and local skill transmission through apprenticeships, but suffers from lack of certification, inadequate investment, and cultural undervaluation of technical skills.

4.4. Lessons and Transferable Practices

Benin could adapt aspects of the UK model such as structured qualifications and employer-led curriculum design while tailoring them to local cultural needs. According to the Comparative Education Approach, successful transfer of policy practices requires contextualisation. Integrating apprenticeship programs under formal certification, improving teacher training, and creating incentives for private sector participation could enhance Benin's human capital.

4.5. The Role of Perception and Policy

Both theories show that perception and policy are inseparable. Without public confidence and societal respect, investment in TVET will remain insufficient to produce real human capital development. The UK's moderate success in rebranding vocational education through apprenticeships and national campaigns provides a model of how perception can shift when policy is strong. In Benin, changing societal attitudes through campaigns and community involvement would be essential to increase the perceived value of vocational skills.

5. Recommendations

5.1. Policy Recommendations Based on Human Capital Theory

5.1.1. Increase Investment in TVET Infrastructure

The Beninese government should allocate more financial resources to upgrade training centers, purchase modern equipment, and train instructors. This investment would enhance the value of vocational human capital, as demonstrated in the UK case where state investment led to greater employability and economic returns (Becker, 1993, p.17).

5.1.2.Formalising Informal Apprenticeships

By integrating informal apprenticeships into a nationally recognised certification system, Benin can convert existing skills into formal human capital that is recognisable by employers. This conversion could increase income opportunities and mobility for many youth currently in the informal sector.

5.2. Recommendations from Comparative Education Perspective

5.2.1. Adapt the UK Competency-Based Curriculum to Local Contexts

Benin should not copy the UK system directly, but adapt key principles such as skills standards, competency-based modules, and industry participation to fit local economic needs. The Comparative Education Approach suggests policy transfer is effective only when contextualized (Bray 20).

5.2.2. Strengthen Employer Partnerships,Cultural and Societal Recommendations

Encourage employers in Benin to participate in curriculum design, internship programs, and competency assessment, similar to how Sector Skills Councils operate in the UK. This collaboration would improve relevance and increase graduates' chances of employment.National Awareness Campaigns to Change Perception Launch national campaigns to redefine vocational education as a prestigious and productive pathway, similar to campaigns conducted in the UK (Spours and Hodgson, 2018, p.179). Highlight success stories of TVET graduates and involve influencers, community leaders, and media.

Incentives for Parents and Students.

Provide scholarships or subsidies for TVET students to attract talented youth and incentivies families to support technical training. Recognizing the social value of TVET will encourage greater enrollment and reduce stigma over time.

5.2.3. Institutional Collaboration and International Partnership

Create Cooperation Programs with UK Institutions Establish exchange programmes, technical partnerships, and joint curriculum development initiatives with UK TVET institutions. This comparative partnership will help Benin build capacity while customising external models to its own socio-economic context.

5.2.4.Monitoring and Evaluation Units

Introduce units dedicated to monitoring training outcomes, employment rates, and employer satisfaction to ensure policy effectiveness. This data-driven feedback system, used extensively in UK vocational agencies, will help Benin refine its programmes continuously.

These recommendations align theory with action: Human Capital Theory: emphasises investment and returns —> investment, certification, labor-market relevance.

Comparative Education Approach: emphasises transfer + adaptation —> partnership, contextualization, comparative learning.

Conclusion

This comparative study has examined the role of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in professional integration in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Benin using two major approaches: the Comparative Education Approach and Human Capital Theory. The findings show that although both countries recognise the importance of TVET, the outcomes vary significantly due to differences in policy implementation, cultural perceptions, and investment in human capital. From a Comparative Education perspective, the structured and regulated system in the UK, supported by national qualifications, employer partnerships, and strong institutional frameworks, represents a successful model where vocational training is closely aligned with labour market demands. By contrast, Benin’s TVET

system is fragmented, dominated by informal apprenticeships, and suffers from inconsistent policy execution, leading to poor professional integration outcomes. Through the adoption of Human Capital Theory, the UK illustrates how investment in vocational education results in measurable returns, including enhanced employability and national productivity. Meanwhile, Benin's limited investment in certified training programmes restricts the economic value of the skills acquired by learners, thereby diminishing TVET's contribution to the country's human capital. The UK's system reflects a successful conversion of TVET into recognized and economically valuable human capital. Benin presents basic skill acquisition but lacks the institutional support needed to turn those skills into certified and economically valued competencies. Cultural perceptions and social legitimacy play a crucial role in determining whether societies invest in vocational training and whether individuals perceive it as a valuable pathway. The study concludes that Benin can benefit from adopting selected practices from the UK such as competency-based curricula, formal certification processes, and employer partnerships. However, any policy transfer must be context-sensitive, taking into account local socio-economic conditions and cultural values.

Ultimately, revisiting TVET in both contexts fosters the need for continuous investment in human capital and adaptive comparative learning between countries. Only by combining policy reform, social revaluation, and economic alignment can TVET become a true engine of professional integration and national development.

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