

TEFL as a Driver of Workforce Development and Skills Training in Benin.

Abstract

This study examines the role of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in promoting workforce development and skills training in Benin. As the country's economy expands, the demand for workers with English proficiency continues to grow, yet the educational system faces challenges in providing effective English instruction. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through questionnaires administered to 864 participants, interviews with eight EFL experts, and six classroom observations. The study assesses the current state of TEFL in Benin, identifies workforce development needs, and explores ways to align English language teaching with labor market demands. The findings reveal gaps between English instruction and the communicative and professional skills required in the workplace. Strengthening TEFL could therefore enhance workforce readiness and support economic development. The study recommends improving TEFL programs, strengthening teacher training, and fostering partnerships between educational institutions and industry.

Keywords : TEFL, workforce development, skills training, Benin, English proficiency, economy, education policy

Résumé

Cette étude examine le rôle de l'Enseignement de l'Anglais Langue Etrangère (TEFL) dans la promotion du développement de la main-d'œuvre et de la formation professionnelle au Bénin. Au fur et à mesure que l'économie du pays se développe, la demande de travailleurs maîtrisant l'anglais ne cesse d'augmenter. Cependant, le système éducatif du pays est confronté à des défis pour fournir une instruction adéquate en anglais, ce qui entrave le développement d'une main-d'œuvre compétente. À l'aide d'une approche méthodologique mixte, les données ont été recueillies au moyen de questionnaires administrés à 864 participants, d'entretiens avec huit experts en enseignement de l'Anglais Langue Etrangère et de six visites de classes. L'étude évalue l'état actuel de l'enseignement de l'anglais au Bénin, identifie les besoins en matière de développement de la main-d'œuvre et explore des moyens d'aligner l'enseignement de l'anglais sur les exigences du marché du travail. Les résultats révèlent des écarts entre l'enseignement de l'anglais et les compétences communicationnelles et professionnelles requises sur les lieux de travail. Le renforcement de l'enseignement de l'anglais pourrait ainsi améliorer la préparation de la main-d'œuvre et soutenir le développement économique. L'étude recommande d'améliorer les programmes d'enseignement de l'anglais, de renforcer la formation des enseignants et de favoriser les partenariats entre les établissements d'enseignement et le monde du travail.

Mots-clés : TEFL, développement, main-d'œuvre, formation professionnelle, Bénin, maîtrise de l'anglais, économie, politique éducative

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) plays a crucial role in expanding educational and economic opportunities in Benin. In an increasingly globalized world, proficiency in English enables access to higher education, international communication, and employment opportunities in global markets. TEFL programs therefore contribute significantly to

44 improving the quality of language instruction and equipping learners with the skills necessary
45 to participate effectively in the global economy.

46 For educators, TEFL certification provides modern pedagogical methods for teaching English
47 to non-native speakers, moving beyond traditional and often ineffective approaches toward
48 competency-based and communicative teaching practices. By strengthening teachers'
49 professional skills, TEFL helps improve classroom instruction and better prepares students to
50 meet the linguistic demands of academic and professional environments.

51 English language proficiency provides Beninese students with access to international news,
52 academic research, and digital resources, all of which are essential in today's interconnected
53 world. It also enhances employability, particularly in sectors such as multinational business,
54 tourism, international trade, and diplomacy. In major urban centers such as Cotonou, English
55 fluency can significantly improve employment prospects and career advancement.

56 Moreover, English proficiency promotes cultural exchange and interaction with diverse
57 communities worldwide, fostering greater intercultural understanding and social integration.

58 For teachers, TEFL certification offers several professional advantages. First, it equips
59 educators with effective teaching strategies tailored to diverse classrooms where English is
60 learned as a foreign language. Second, professional certification enhances teachers' career
61 prospects by increasing their value to employers and opening opportunities for leadership
62 roles and higher-paying positions. Finally, the growing demand for English language
63 instruction in Benin requires well-trained teachers capable of delivering high-quality
64 instruction.

65 At the national level, English proficiency contributes to economic development by attracting
66 foreign investment, facilitating international trade, and strengthening the service sector. As
67 Benin seeks to modernize its education system, TEFL can support ongoing educational
68 reforms that emphasize competency-based learning and practical communication skills.
69 Improved English proficiency can also strengthen diplomatic, academic, and commercial
70 relations with English-speaking countries.

71 Workforce development and skills training are critical drivers of economic growth in Benin.
72 By addressing existing skills gaps, improving productivity, and preparing young people for
73 emerging industries, skills development initiatives can contribute to sustainable economic
74 transformation. This is particularly important given Benin's large youth population entering a
75 rapidly evolving labor market that increasingly requires technical and digital skills.

76 Effective training programs can enhance youth employability and facilitate the transition from
77 informal employment to more stable and productive sectors of the economy. Aligning

78 education and training programs with labor market demands also helps promote innovation
79 and support the development of higher-value industries.

80 Skills development programs address shortages in key sectors such as construction,
81 mechanics, and technology, where employers often struggle to find qualified workers. Closing
82 these gaps can reduce underemployment and improve economic efficiency.

83 A skilled workforce enhances productivity and economic output. Countries with well-trained
84 workers are also more attractive to foreign investors and international businesses.

85 Workforce development supports the diversification of Benin's economy beyond traditional
86 sectors, including activities linked to the Port of Cotonou, by preparing workers for emerging
87 industries.

88 Given the country's significant youth population, skills training plays an essential role in
89 helping young people enter the labor market and reducing the number of individuals classified
90 as NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

91 Skills development encourages the transition from the informal to the formal economy and
92 enables workers to adopt new technologies, develop innovative products, and contribute to
93 economic modernization.

94 The government of Benin has implemented several initiatives to strengthen workforce
95 development and human capital.

96 Benin has increased investment in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)
97 programs to equip learners with practical skills required by the labor market.

98 Programs such as FORCE (Vocational Education for the Labour Market), supported by
99 international partners including the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, link
100 training institutions with local businesses to ensure that curricula respond to labor market
101 needs.

102 Vocational training institutions in cities such as Ouidah and Djougou have benefited from
103 infrastructure upgrades and teacher training programs supported by development partners
104 such as the OPEC Fund for International Development.

105 Entrepreneurship education has also been integrated into training programs to encourage
106 innovation and job creation, with support from organizations such as the World Bank.

107 Together, these initiatives aim to build a resilient workforce capable of supporting Benin's
108 long-term economic development.

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111 **1.1 Research Problem**

112 Despite the growing importance of English language proficiency in the global economy,
113 TEFL programs in Benin face several challenges in effectively supporting workforce
114 development and skills training. These challenges include limited educational resources,
115 insufficient teacher training, and inadequate infrastructure. As a result, many graduates lack
116 the language and professional skills required by the labor market.

117 **1.2 Problem Statement**

118 TEFL programs in Benin are not yet fully effective in promoting workforce development and
119 skills training. This situation has created a mismatch between the skills possessed by
120 graduates and the competencies required by employers, thereby limiting employment
121 opportunities and hindering the country's economic development.

122 Previous studies have highlighted these challenges, particularly the lack of resources,
123 inadequate teacher preparation, and infrastructural constraints affecting English language
124 instruction (Adeyemi & Ojo, 2019 ; Ojo & Adeyemi, 2020).

125 **1.3 Research Objectives**

126 **1.3.1 Main Objective**

127 The main objective of this study is to investigate the role of Teaching English as a Foreign
128 Language (TEFL) in promoting workforce development and skills training in Benin.

129 **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

- 130 ▪ To examine the current state of TEFL programs in Benin and their relevance to
131 workforce development.
- 132 ▪ To identify the skills and competencies that TEFL programs should emphasize to
133 support workforce development.
- 134 ▪ To assess the effectiveness of TEFL programs in promoting employability and skills
135 training.
- 136 ▪ To identify the challenges facing TEFL programs in Benin and propose strategies for
137 improvement.

138 **1.4 Research Question**

139 How can TEFL contribute to workforce development and skills training in Benin?

140 **1.5 Research Hypothesis**

141 TEFL can enhance workforce development in Benin by equipping learners with essential
142 English language skills required for global employment opportunities. By bridging the gap
143 between general English proficiency and job-specific language skills, integrating educational
144 technology, and strengthening teacher professional development, TEFL programs can
145 significantly improve learners' communication, problem-solving, and digital competencies

146 needed for success in the global economy. TEFL programs should emphasize English for
147 Specific Purposes (ESP), focusing on professional communication in sectors such as tourism,
148 banking, technology, and international trade.

149 Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) tools, mobile applications, and multimedia
150 resources can enhance accessibility and create interactive learning environments.

151 Continuous professional development (CPD), peer observation, and mentoring programs can
152 help teachers adopt innovative teaching practices and improve instructional quality.

153 TEFL can also promote transferable skills such as teamwork, critical thinking, digital literacy,
154 and problem-solving, which are essential for the modern workplace.

155 Several challenges must be addressed to ensure the success of TEFL programs in Benin,
156 including limited technological infrastructure, varying levels of digital literacy among
157 teachers, and the need for stronger institutional support and policy frameworks.

158 By addressing these challenges and implementing innovative strategies, TEFL can contribute
159 significantly to workforce development in Benin by producing graduates with the linguistic
160 and professional competencies required in both local and international labor markets.

161 **2. LITERATURE REVIEW.**

162 **2.1 Overview of TEFL in Benin : Current State and Challenges.**

163 Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in Benin is a relatively recent but rapidly
164 developing field. The increasing importance of English in international communication,
165 education, and trade has generated a growing demand for English language instruction across
166 the country. However, despite this demand, the TEFL sector in Benin faces numerous
167 structural and pedagogical challenges.

168 According to Clement (2018, p. 12), TEFL in Benin is characterized by a shortage of qualified
169 teachers, limited instructional resources, and restricted access to technological tools that could
170 enhance language learning. These constraints significantly affect the quality and effectiveness
171 of English language instruction in many schools.

172 One major challenge is the limited level of government support for TEFL programs. Although
173 English is recognized as an important international language, public investment in English
174 language education remains relatively modest. As noted by Dossou (2022, p. 5), insufficient
175 funding and limited policy prioritization have hindered the development of well-structured
176 English language programs in the country.

177 Another critical issue concerns teacher preparation and professional training. Many English
178 language teachers in Benin have not received formal training in TEFL methodology. Ojo and

179 Adeyemi (2020, p. 10) emphasize that the lack of professional preparation often leads to
180 ineffective teaching practices and unsatisfactory learning outcomes.

181 **2.2 The Impact of Untrained English Language Teachers.**

182 The shortage of formally trained English language teachers constitutes a major obstacle to
183 effective language instruction in Benin. Teachers who lack specialized training in TEFL
184 frequently rely on traditional and teacher-centered instructional approaches that are not
185 always conducive to effective language acquisition.

186 According to Kumar (2020, p. 15), untrained teachers often depend on conventional methods
187 such as rote memorization, grammar-translation techniques, and lecture-based instruction.
188 While these approaches may provide some theoretical knowledge of the language, they rarely
189 promote communicative competence or active student engagement.

190 Furthermore, inadequate training often affects lesson planning and instructional design.
191 Adeyemi and Ojo (2019, p. 20) argue that teachers without professional preparation may
192 struggle to develop coherent lesson plans that support progressive language development. As
193 a result, students may experience confusion and frustration during the learning process.

194 Another important concern relates to assessment practices. Ojo and Adeyemi (2020, p. 10)
195 note that untrained teachers may lack the skills required to design appropriate evaluation tools
196 and provide constructive feedback to learners. Without effective assessment mechanisms, it
197 becomes difficult to monitor student progress and identify learning difficulties.

198 **2.3 Consequences for Student Outcomes.**

199 The presence of untrained teachers in English language classrooms has significant
200 implications for student performance and long-term opportunities. Students may experience
201 difficulties in developing adequate proficiency in the four core language skills: reading,
202 writing, listening, and speaking (Kumar, 2020, p. 15).

203 In addition, ineffective teaching strategies and poorly structured lessons can negatively affect
204 student motivation and engagement. Adeyemi and Ojo (2019, p. 20) observe that such
205 conditions may lead to reduced participation, lower academic achievement, and in some cases
206 increased dropout rates.

207 The consequences extend beyond the classroom. In a globalized economy, English
208 proficiency is increasingly associated with employability and career advancement. Students
209 who fail to acquire sufficient language skills may face significant disadvantages in the labor
210 market (International Labour Organization, 2020, p. 10).

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213 **2.4 Structural Challenges Affecting TEFL Programs.**

214 Beyond issues related to teacher training, several structural factors continue to affect the
215 effectiveness of TEFL programs in Benin.

216 One major challenge is the **lack of educational resources**. Many schools do not have
217 sufficient textbooks, audio materials, or pedagogical tools to support effective language
218 learning (Adeyemi & Ojo, 2019, p. 20). This shortage limits teachers' ability to implement
219 interactive and communicative teaching methods.

220 In addition, overcrowded classrooms are common in many schools. Large class sizes make it
221 difficult for teachers to provide individualized attention and meaningful language practice for
222 students (Kumar, 2020, p. 15).

223 Another constraint concerns infrastructure limitations. According to the Ministry of Education
224 (Bénin, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2020, p. 15), many schools lack adequate classrooms,
225 libraries, and other basic facilities necessary for effective learning environments.

226 **2.5 The Urban–Rural Divide in English Language Instruction.**

227 An additional challenge facing English language education in Benin is the unequal
228 distribution of educational opportunities between urban and rural areas. English language
229 programs tend to be concentrated in major urban centers, while rural communities often have
230 limited access to quality English instruction (Dossou, 2022, p. 5).

231 This urban–rural disparity creates significant inequalities in language learning opportunities.
232 Rural students frequently have fewer chances to develop English proficiency, resulting in a
233 widening gap between urban and rural learners (Kumar, 2020, p. 15).

234 Limited English proficiency may also restrict access to global information resources,
235 including academic publications, digital content, and international educational opportunities
236 (Adeyemi & Ojo, 2019, p. 20). Consequently, rural students may experience reduced
237 academic and professional prospects.

238 Moreover, the lack of educational opportunities in rural areas may contribute to internal
239 migration, as young people move to urban centers in search of better educational and
240 employment prospects (Dossou, 2022, p. 5).

241 **2.6 Government Initiatives to Promote English Language Education.**

242 Despite these challenges, the government of Benin has introduced several initiatives aimed at
243 strengthening English language education. One important policy measure has been the
244 introduction of English as a compulsory subject in secondary schools (Bénin, Ministère de
245 l'Éducation, 2020, p. 15).

246 This initiative reflects the government's recognition of the strategic importance of English in a
247 globalized world. By integrating English into the national curriculum, policymakers aim to
248 provide students with essential linguistic skills that can enhance their academic and
249 professional opportunities.

250 The inclusion of English as a compulsory subject is expected to produce several benefits.
251 First, it can improve students' language proficiency and enable them to communicate more
252 effectively in international contexts (Kumar, 2020, p. 15). Second, English proficiency can
253 broaden access to higher education opportunities both domestically and abroad (Adeyemi &
254 Ojo, 2019, p. 20). Finally, strong English language skills can increase graduates'
255 competitiveness in the global labor market (International Labour Organization, 2020, p. 10).
256 Nevertheless, the success of this initiative depends largely on effective implementation. Key
257 requirements include adequate teacher training, sufficient educational resources, and effective
258 monitoring and evaluation systems.

259 **2.7 The Technology Gap in TEFL Programs.**

260 Another important challenge affecting TEFL programs in Benin is the limited integration of
261 technology in language instruction. Many schools lack access to computers, internet
262 connectivity, and multimedia resources that could enhance language learning (International
263 Labour Organization, 2020, p. 10).

264 The absence of technological resources restricts teachers' ability to adopt innovative teaching
265 approaches such as Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Without these tools,
266 classroom instruction may remain heavily dependent on traditional teaching methods.

267 Limited access to technology also affects student engagement and motivation. Interactive
268 digital tools can provide opportunities for listening practice, pronunciation training, and
269 authentic communication with speakers of English. When such resources are unavailable,
270 students may have fewer opportunities to practice and develop their language skills.

271 Addressing the technology gap therefore requires investment in digital infrastructure, teacher
272 training in educational technology, and the development of locally relevant digital learning
273 materials.

274 **2.8 Importance of English Language Skills in the Global Economy.**

275 The growing importance of English in the global economy further highlights the need for
276 effective TEFL programs. English functions as the primary language of international
277 communication in areas such as business, science, technology, and diplomacy (Adams, 2020,
278 p. 15). Proficiency in English facilitates international trade, investment, and cross-border

279 collaboration. Businesses increasingly require employees who can communicate effectively
280 with international partners and clients (Ojo & Adeyemi, 2020, p. 20).

281 For individuals, strong English language skills can significantly enhance employment
282 prospects and income potential. Dossou (2022, p. 10) notes that graduates with advanced
283 English proficiency often have access to a wider range of career opportunities, particularly in
284 multinational companies and international organizations.

285 Moreover, English proficiency enables access to a vast amount of global knowledge,
286 including academic research, professional training materials, and digital information resources
287 (Kumar, 2020, p. 18).

288 **2.9 Workforce Development and Skills Training in Benin.**

289 In recent years, Benin has implemented several initiatives aimed at strengthening workforce
290 development and improving employability, particularly among young people. One major
291 focus has been the expansion of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

292 Programs such as the Azoli initiative provide training and employment support to vulnerable
293 youth aged 15–30, including the development of digital, entrepreneurial, and soft skills.
294 Similarly, the National Technical and Vocational Education and Training Strategy (2019–
295 2025) aims to significantly expand vocational education, establish new training institutions,
296 and improve teacher training.

297 Additional initiatives include the establishment of Community Digital Centers, which provide
298 training in digital literacy, entrepreneurship, and professional skills. International partners
299 such as the World Bank and GIZ have also supported projects aimed at strengthening
300 vocational education and promoting youth inclusion in the labor market.

301 Despite these efforts, several challenges remain. A significant **skills mismatch** persists
302 between training programs and labor market demands. Completion rates in vocational
303 programs remain relatively low, and many young people continue to work in informal or
304 precarious employment.

305 According to Nouatin (2021) and World Bank reports (2020; 2024), the main challenges
306 include weak alignment between training programs and private sector needs, limited job
307 creation in the formal sector, and the need to improve training quality and standards.

308 Overall, while Benin has made significant progress in reforming its education and training
309 systems, further efforts are required to ensure that educational initiatives translate into stable
310 and meaningful employment opportunities for the country's growing youth population.

311 **3. METHODOLOGY**

312 To investigate the role of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in workforce
313 development in Benin, this study adopts a mixed-methods research design combining both
314 qualitative and quantitative approaches. The mixed-methods approach allows the researcher to
315 obtain both statistical evidence and in-depth insights into the experiences, needs, and
316 challenges of TEFL stakeholders.

317 The quantitative component provides measurable data on general trends, teaching practices,
318 and perceptions regarding TEFL programs. The qualitative component allows for a deeper
319 understanding of participants' experiences, opinions, and contextual factors influencing
320 English language education. By combining these two approaches, the study seeks to provide
321 comprehensive answers to both "how many" questions (quantitative) and "why" questions
322 (qualitative) regarding the TEFL landscape in Benin.

323 The study targets three main groups of participants :TEFL teachers, students, and employers.
324 These stakeholders provide valuable perspectives on the effectiveness of TEFL programs, the
325 skills required for workforce development, and the challenges affecting English language
326 instruction.

327 **3.1 Research Design : Mixed Methods (Qualitative and Quantitative).**

328 This study employs a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and
329 qualitative data collection and analysis.

330 The quantitative approach is used to identify general patterns, measure perceptions, and
331 analyze the prevalence of teaching practices and challenges affecting TEFL programs. It also
332 helps assess levels of satisfaction with current TEFL practices and their relevance to
333 workforce development.

334 The qualitative approach, on the other hand, provides deeper insights into participants'
335 experiences and perceptions. It allows the researcher to explore the reasons behind specific
336 challenges and to better understand the contextual realities of English language teaching in
337 Benin. By combining these two approaches, the study benefits from the strengths of both
338 methods and provides a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

339 **3.2 Data Collection Methods.**

340 Data for this study are collected through **surveys, interviews, and classroom observations.**

341 **3.2.1 Surveys (Quantitative)**

342 The quantitative data are collected using **structured questionnaires** administered either
343 online or in paper format. The questionnaires include Likert-scale items, multiple-choice
344 questions, and a few open-ended questions.

345 **3.2.2 Target Participants**

346 The surveys are administered to three categories of participants :

- 347 • EFL Teachers
- 348 • EFL Students
- 349 • Employers

350 **3.2.3 Purpose**

351 The surveys aim to :

- 352 • collect demographic information about participants
- 353 • identify the frequency of teaching practices in TEFL programs
- 354 • examine perceived challenges and needs (e.g., class size, resources, teacher training)
- 355 • assess the perceived effectiveness of TEFL programs in supporting workforce
- 356 development.

357 **3.3 Questionnaire Items.**

358 The questionnaire is divided into three main sections.

359 **Section 1: Demographic Information.**

360 This section collects background information about the participants.

361 Participants are asked to indicate:

362 **1. Current occupation.**

- 363 a) Teacher
- 364 b) Student
- 365 c) Administrator
- 366 d) Other (please specify)

367 **2. Level of education or instruction.**

- 368 a) Secondary education
- 369 b) Bachelor's degree
- 370 c) Master's degree
- 371 d) Doctorate

372 **Section 2 : TEFL and Workforce Development.**

373 This section explores participants' perceptions of the relationship between TEFL programs
374 and workforce development.

375 Participants respond to the following statement:

376 **1. TEFL programs in Benin promote workforce development.**

- 377 a) Strongly agree
- 378 b) Agree

- 379 c) Neutral
- 380 d) Disagree
- 381 e) Strongly disagree

382 Participants are also asked to identify the skills they consider most important for workforce
383 development in Benin, including:

- 384 a) Communication
- 385 b) Problem-solving
- 386 c) Teamwork
- 387 d) Leadership
- 388 e) Other (please specify)

389 **Section 3 : TEFL and Skills Training.**

390 This section examines the perceived effectiveness of TEFL programs in developing
391 professional skills.

392 Participants evaluate the following statement:

393 **1. TEFL programs are effective in providing skills training for employees in Benin.**

- 394 a) Very effective
- 395 b) Somewhat effective
- 396 c) Neutral
- 397 d) Somewhat ineffective
- 398 e) Very ineffective

399 Participants are also asked to identify the **major challenges affecting TEFL programs**,
400 including:

- 401 a) Limited resources
- 402 b) Inadequate teacher training
- 403 c) Poor infrastructure
- 404 d) Limited access to technology
- 405 e) Other (please specify)

406 **3.3 Interviews (Qualitative)**

407 To complement the survey data, **semi-structured interviews** are conducted with selected
408 participants. The interviews allow for a deeper exploration of participants' perspectives on
409 TEFL programs and their role in workforce development.

410 **3.3.1 Interview Questions.**

411 The interview questions focus on the following themes:

412 1.Participants' views on the **most significant benefits of TEFL programs** for workforce
413 development in Benin.

414 2.Suggestions on **how TEFL programs can be improved** to better support workforce
415 development.

416 3.Identification and explanation of the **major challenges facing TEFL programs** in
417 providing skills training for employees.

418 4.Description of successful TEFL initiatives or programs in Benin and the factors that
419 contributed to their success.

420 5.Recommendations to policymakers and educational stakeholders on how TEFL programs
421 can better support workforce development and skills training.

422

423 **3.4 Classroom Observation**

424 Classroom observations are conducted to examine how TEFL practices are implemented in
425 real teaching contexts. An **observation grid** is used to systematically record classroom
426 practices.

427 **3.4.1 Observation Criteria.**

428 The following elements are evaluated using a four-point scale:

- 429 • Excellent
- 430 • Good
- 431 • Fair
- 432 • Needs improvement

433 **3.4.2 Observation Elements.**

434 The observation grid focuses on the following aspects:

- 435 • Teacher's use of technology
- 436 • Quality of teaching materials
- 437 • Student engagement and participation
- 438 • Opportunities for skills training
- 439 • Relevance of lesson content to workforce development

440 Observation notes are recorded for each of these elements in order to provide qualitative
441 insights into classroom practices.

442 **4. Results Presentation and Analysis.**

443 The data collected from surveys, interviews, and classroom observations are analyzed using
444 both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data are summarized using descriptive

445 statistics, while qualitative data from interviews and observations are analyzed thematically in
 446 order to identify recurring patterns and key insights related to TEFL and workforce
 447 development in Benin.

448 **Table 1: Questionnaire Result N°1 (864 participants- 100%)**

Statement (Demographic Information)	Frequency	Percentage
1. Participant current occupation		
a) EFL Educator	33	3.82%
b) Student	798	92.36%
c) Administrator	11	1.27%
d) Other (specified)	22	2.55%
2. Participant Level of Education		
a) Secondary	508	58.80%
b) Bachelor's	250	28.94%
c) Master's	74	8.56%
d) Doctorate	32	3.70%
Total	864	100%

449 *Source* : Field of Investigations, December, 2025

450
 451
 452 Table 1 displays that Participants current occupations are EFL Educators-33 (3.82%),
 453 Students-798 (92.36%), Administrators-11 (1.27%), Others (specified)-22 (2.55%). As far as
 454 Participant Level of Education is concerned, Secondary-508 (58.80%), Bachelor's-250
 455 (28.94%), Master's-74 (8.56%), Doctorate-32 (3.70%).

456
 457 **Table 2: Questionnaire Result N°2 (864 participants- 100%)**

Statement (TEFL and Workforce Development)	Frequency	Percentage
1. The extent to which participants agree that TEFL programs in Benin promote workforce		
a) Strongly Agree	00	00%
b) Agree	10	1.16%
c) Neutral	190	21.99%
d) Disagree	500	57.87%
e) Strongly Disagree	164	18.98%

2. Skills thought to be most important for workforce development in Benin

a) Communication	170	19.68%
b) Problem-solving	190	21.99%
c) Teamwork	190	21.99%
d) Leadership	170	19.68%
e) Other (specified)	144	16.67%
Total	864	100%

458 *Source* : Field of Investigations, December, 2025

459

460 Table 2 shows on the one hand, the extent to which participants agree that TEFL programs in
 461 Benin promote workforce, as nobody strongly agreed-00 (00%), 10 respondents agreed
 462 (1.16%), 190 respondents were neutral(21.99%), 500 among them disagreed (57.87%), 164
 463 participants strongly disagreed (18.98%). On the other hand, for skills thought to be most
 464 important for workforce development in Benin, 170 respondents rated communication
 465 (19.68%), 190 of them rated problem-solving (21.99%), 190 among them considered
 466 teamwork (21.99%), 170 participants rated leadership (19.68%), and 144 praised Others
 467 (specified) (16.67%).

468

469 **Table 3: Questionnaire Result N°3 (864 participants- 100%)**

Statement (TEFL and Skills' Training)	Frequency	Percentage
1. Effectiveness of TEFL programs in providing skills' training for employees in Benin		
a) Very Effective	45	5.22%
b) Somewhat Effective	100	11.57%
c) Neutral	600	69.44%
d) Somewhat Ineffective	100	11.57%
e) Very Ineffective	19	02.20%
Total	864	100%

470 *Source* : Field of Investigations, December, 2025

471 Table 3 displays that Effectiveness of TEFL programs in providing skills' training for
 472 employees in Benin, it is noticed: Very Effective, 45 participants (5.22%), Somewhat
 473 Effective, 100 respondents (11.57%), Neutral, 600 participants (69.44%), Somewhat
 474 Ineffective, 100 respondents (11.57%), Very Ineffective, 19 respondents (02.20%).

475 **Table 4: Questionnaire Result N°4 (864 participants- 100%)**

Statement (TEFL and Skills' Training)	Frequency	Percentage
2. The most significant challenges facing TEFL programs in providing skills' training for employees in Benin		
a) Limited resources	171	19.79%
b) Inadequate teacher training	171	19.79%
c) Poor infrastructure	171	19.79%
d) Limited access to technology	211	24.42%
e) Other (specified)	140	16.21%
Total	864	100%

476 *Source : Field of Investigations, December, 2025*

477

478 Table 4 shows that the most significant challenges facing TEFL programs in providing skills'
 479 training for employees in Benin are limited resources-171 (19.79%), inadequate teacher
 480 training-171 (19.79%), poor infrastructure-171 (19.79%), limited access to technology-211
 481 (24.42%), Other (specified)-140 (16.21%).

482

483 **Table 5 :Interview Results (8 Respondents-100%)**

Interviewees' Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Benefits of TEFL programs for workforce	8	100%
TEFL programs improvement	8	100%
Providing skills' training for employees	8	100%
Workforce development improment	8	100%
Interviewees' recommendations	8	100%
Total	998	908

484 *Source : Field of Investigations, December, 2025*

485

486 Table 5 has shown that the eight/8 Interviewees (100%) have demonstrated the most
 487 significant benefits of TEFL programs for workforce development in Benin. They also
 488 explained the way TEFL programs can be improved to better support workforce development
 489 in Benin. These respondents have identified some challenges facing TEFL programs in
 490 providing skills' training for employees in Benin, and the way these challenges can be
 491 addressed. They all succeeded in described a successful TEFL program in Benin that has

492 promoted workforce development and skills' training and what made it successful. Finally,
 493 they have formulated recommendations to policymakers and stakeholders to improve TEFL
 494 programs for workforce development and skills' training in Benin.

495

496 **Table 6 :Observation Results N°1 (6 classes observed-100%)**

Elements/Criteria	Excellent/ Percentage	Good/Percentage
Teacher's use of technology	00-00%	00-00%
Quality of teaching materials	00-00%	00-00%
Student engagement and participation	00-00%	00-00%
Student engagement and participation	00-00%	00-00%
Relevance of content to workforce development	00-00%	00-00%
Total	00.00%	6

497 *Source : Field of Investigations, December, 2025*

498

499 Table 6 displays that none of the elements can be considered neither excellent nor good:
 500 Teacher's use of technology, 00-00%, quality of teaching materials, 00-00%, student
 501 engagement and participation, 00-00%, opportunities for skills' training, 00-00%, relevance of
 502 content to workforce development 00-00%.

503

504 **Table 7 :Observation Results N°2 (6 classes observed-100%)**

Elements/Criteria	Fair/ Percentage	Needs Improvement /Percentage
Teacher's use of technology	00.00%	2-33.33%
Quality of teaching materials	00.00%	1-16.67%
Student engagement and participation	00.00%	1-16.67%
Student engagement and participation	00.00%	1-16.67%
Relevance of content to workforce development	00.00%	1-16.67%
Total	00.00%	6

505 *Source : Field of Investigations, December, 2025*

506

507 Table 7 shows that all of the elements need improvement: teacher's use of technology 2;
 508 33.33%, quality of teaching materials 1; 16.67%, student engagement and participation 1;

509 16.67%, opportunities for skills' training 1; 16.67%, relevance of content to workforce
510 development 1; 16.67%.

511 **5. Discussion.**

512 **5.1 TEFL in Benin : Opportunities and Workforce Development.**

513 The findings reveal a promising yet uneven TEFL landscape in Benin. Most participants
514 (92.36%) are students, indicating a future workforce potentially equipped through English
515 language skills. However, only 3.82% are educators, highlighting a shortage of qualified
516 teachers—a critical barrier to effective instruction and workforce development. Similarly,
517 administrators account for just 1.27% of participants, suggesting gaps in leadership capacity
518 that may limit program management and policy implementation.

519 Educational attainment among participants varied, with 58.8% holding secondary education,
520 28.94% bachelor's, 8.56% master's, and 3.7% doctoral degrees. These data indicate the need
521 for TEFL programs to target learners across educational levels and offer advanced skills
522 training to support professional development and economic participation.

523 **5.2 Challenges and the TEFL Paradox.**

524 Despite the recognized potential, perceptions of TEFL's effectiveness are largely negative.
525 Over 76% of respondents disagreed that TEFL programs promote workforce development,
526 and only 1.16% affirmed their effectiveness. This disconnect underscores the need for urgent
527 reform, emphasizing skills acquisition aligned with labor market demands. Participants
528 identified communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership as essential
529 competencies, suggesting that TEFL curricula should integrate interactive and collaborative
530 pedagogies to foster these skills.

531 Effectiveness ratings of existing skills training were low, with only 16.79% of participants
532 viewing programs positively. Neutral responses (69.44%) indicate widespread uncertainty and
533 lack of confidence in program outcomes, further highlighting the need for evidence-based
534 curriculum reforms and capacity-building initiatives.

535 **5.3 Structural and Pedagogical Constraints.**

536 Key challenges include limited resources, inadequate teacher training, poor infrastructure, and
537 restricted access to technology. Notably, 24.42% of participants identified lack of technology
538 as the most significant obstacle. Classroom observations corroborate these findings:
539 technology use, quality of materials, student engagement, and opportunities for skills training
540 were consistently rated unsatisfactory.

541 Addressing these constraints requires coordinated efforts: investing in teacher training,
542 integrating technology, developing industry-relevant curricula, and fostering learner-centered

543 approaches. Such interventions can enhance instructional quality, improve workforce-relevant
544 outcomes, and align TEFL programs with global labor market needs.

545 **5.3 Implications and Recommendations.**

546 TEFL programs in Benin must be reoriented to prioritize workforce development and skills
547 training. Key recommendations include:

- 548 • Teacher training and capacity-building to improve instructional quality.
- 549 • Technology integration to support interactive and digital learning.
- 550 • Curriculum reform emphasizing industry-relevant skills, soft skills, and advanced
551 professional competencies.
- 552 • Learner-centered pedagogies to increase engagement and promote active learning.
- 553 • Industry partnerships to provide practical exposure, mentorship, and employment
554 pathways.

555 By implementing these strategies, TEFL programs can unlock their potential as catalysts for
556 workforce development, economic growth, and sustainable development in Benin.

557 **6. Conclusion**

558 This study highlights TEFL's transformative potential for workforce development in Benin,
559 while revealing critical gaps in teacher training, infrastructure, and technology. The results of
560 the study have also revealed that the employees are convinced that English language skills are
561 crucial in the hunting of a job and the effective performance of their responsibilities.
562 Irrespective of the technical skills an employee possesses, he needs to possess EFL language
563 for live communication through emails, group discussions, presentations, etc.

564 Strategic reforms focusing on skills development, pedagogy, and labor market alignment are
565 essential. With coordinated action from policymakers, educators, and stakeholders, TEFL can
566 equip learners with the competencies required for global employability, driving both
567 economic growth and sustainable development. In addition, the necessity of imparting in-
568 house language skills and subskills' training programs rather than online training mode is the
569 preference of the participants.

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