



Digital Transformation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET): Case Studies from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Taiwan

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ABSTRACT

Digital transformation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has become a strategic priority in many countries. This article aims to conduct a comparative analysis of digital transformation in TVET in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Taiwan. The research employs a comparative literature review approach with a qualitative descriptive design, drawing on journal articles, conference proceedings, and relevant review studies. The findings indicate that Indonesia focuses its TVET transformation on strengthening the “link and match 8+i”. Malaysia stands out through national digital policy support such as MyDIGITAL, the strengthening of digital talent, and the integration of technology into vocational education. Taiwan demonstrates a more established model because TVET has long been linked to economic development strategies and close partnerships between educational institutions and industry. Although the three countries have different approaches, all demonstrate that the success of TVET’s digital transformation depends not only on technology adoption but also on the synergy between policy, curriculum, educators, and industry collaboration. Thus, TVET’s digital transformation must be understood as a systemic change to produce graduates who are adaptable, competent, and relevant to the demands of today’s and tomorrow’s digital economy.

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has become one of the key drivers reshaping the direction of educational development in various countries, including in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). In this context, digitalization is no longer understood merely as the use of technological devices in the learning process, but as a transformation that influences how educational institutions design curricula, deliver instruction, manage their operations, and build connections with the world of work. UNESCO emphasizes that digital transformation touches every aspect of the TVET system, ranging from the development of new digital skills to changes in the organization of learning and the relationships between TVET institutions and the industrial ecosystem as well as society (McGrath, 2020).

These changes place TVET in a strategic position to prepare human resources relevant to the needs of the digital economy. Whereas in the past TVET was more focused on mastering manual and procedural technical skills, in the digital era TVET is required to produce graduates who simultaneously master technical, digital, adaptive, and collaborative competencies. Digital transformation in TVET is driven by layered factors stemming from technological developments, labor market demands, policy dynamics, and shifting societal needs (Parua & Yang, 2024). Thus, digital transformation in TVET must be understood as a systemic process that more closely links education, technology, and workforce development.

In terms of curriculum, digital transformation has driven a shift from static curricula toward more dynamic ones that are responsive to industry needs. Various studies indicate that TVET needs to integrate competencies such as artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), data analytics, energy efficiency, sustainable practices, and digital entrepreneurship into its program structure. (Mustaffa et al., 2024) emphasize the importance of strengthening digital entrepreneurship in TVET so that graduates are prepared not only as operators or technicians, but also as innovators and creators of job opportunities. In line with this, (Zeng et al., 2024) and (Hadi et al., 2025) indicate that curriculum updates must be designed to bridge theory and practice and address the needs of 21st-century jobs and green jobs, which are increasingly linked to digital technology.

Digital transformation is also reshaping pedagogy and learning design in TVET. Learning no longer relies solely on classroom lectures and manual practice in workshops but is evolving toward more flexible models through blended learning, flipped classrooms, virtual simulations, game-based learning, LMS, and the use of AR/VR. (X. Chen & Chan, 2024) demonstrate that digital pedagogy can enrich the TVET learning experience by enabling more personalized, flexible, and effective learning. At the same time, (Yang & Wu, 2024) emphasize that digital technology enables simulations, gamification, and variations in both synchronous and asynchronous learning that can create a safer and more relevant learning environment aligned with workplace practices. This indicates that digital transformation in TVET is closely tied to changes in how professional competencies are developed, not merely a shift in learning media.

Although it offers many opportunities, digital transformation in TVET also presents significant challenges. The integration of ICT in TVET still faces weaknesses in the areas of evaluation, career guidance, assessment, and teacher training (Hassan et al., 2021). TVET faculty and instructors still require stronger support in effectively designing technology-based learning (Holler et al., 2023). Furthermore, (Niwamanya et al., 2025) highlight that the digital infrastructure gap and limited access to technology remain significant barriers, particularly in developing countries. Thus, the success of digital transformation is determined not only by the availability of technology but also by the readiness of educators, institutional capacity, and equitable support within the education system.

Various studies also indicate that partnerships with industry are a key element in TVET design in the digital age. Digital transformation opens opportunities for forming new partnerships through technology centers, fab labs, and makerspaces that connect TVET institutions with businesses, communities, and local innovation (Yang & Wu, 2024). Digital learning is supported by the readiness of instructors, faculty, and infrastructure (Razak et al., 2022), while (Niwamanya et al., 2025) emphasize that partnerships between TVET providers and industry can bridge the digital divide while strengthening graduates' readiness for the digital economy. In this context, teachers no longer function merely as content deliverers but as designers of digital learning ecosystems aligned with the needs of the workforce.

Given these developments, research on digital transformation in TVET is crucial to conduct through a comparative cross-national perspective. Malaysia demonstrates the advancement of digital transformation through national policies, the development of digital talent, and the integration of technology into vocational education (Farhana, 2026; Krishnan, 2025; Li et al., 2026). Taiwan has adopted strategies emphasizing curriculum alignment with industry, enhancing educators' digital competencies, and strengthening education-industry partnerships (Liao et al., 2025; Lin & Pang, 2024; Sulaeman, 2026). In this context, Indonesia serves as a critical case for discussion with these two countries, as all face the demand to adapt TVET to the digital economy, yet with differing levels of readiness, challenges, and strategies. Therefore, this article discusses digital transformation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) through case studies of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Taiwan to understand the direction of changes in TVET design while identifying strategic lessons for strengthening vocational education in the digital era.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a comparative literature review approach with a qualitative descriptive design to analyze digital transformation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Taiwan. This approach was chosen because the article aims to compare policy directions, instructional design, industry engagement, and implementation challenges of TVET digital transformation across these three countries with distinct characteristics. Conceptually, the analysis is grounded in the perspective that digital transformation in TVET is not merely about the use of technology but also

encompasses changes in curriculum, pedagogy, institutional governance, and the relationship between vocational education and the industrial ecosystem as well as workforce development.

Research data sources consist of secondary references selected purposefully based on their relevance to the research theme. These references include international journal articles, national journal articles, conference proceedings, policy documents, institutional reports, as well as review studies such as narrative literature reviews and systematic literature reviews. For the Indonesian context, data were collected from various articles and documents discussing the revitalization of vocational high schools (SMK) and TVET, the 8+i link-and-match policy, competency certification, teaching factories, field work placements, and the strengthening of partnerships between vocational education and the business and industrial sectors. For the Malaysian context, the primary materials were drawn from a narrative literature review synthesizing scholarly articles on national digital policies, the digital economy, Industry 4.0, and technology-based TVET strengthening. The Taiwanese context was constructed through research based on a systematic literature review, as well as studies explaining the historical relationship between TVET and economic development strategies, industrial needs, and national workforce development.

Data collection was conducted through the identification, selection, classification, and documentation of reference content, followed by analysis using comparative thematic analysis. Each source was read in depth and grouped into main themes, namely policy orientation, curriculum, digital learning models, industry partnerships, educator competencies, infrastructure, and implementation challenges. Subsequently, findings from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Taiwan were compared to identify similarities, differences, and strategic lessons from each country. The analysis results are presented in the form of descriptive narratives, comparative tables, and narrative syntheses to provide a comprehensive overview of the direction of digital transformation in TVET across the three countries.

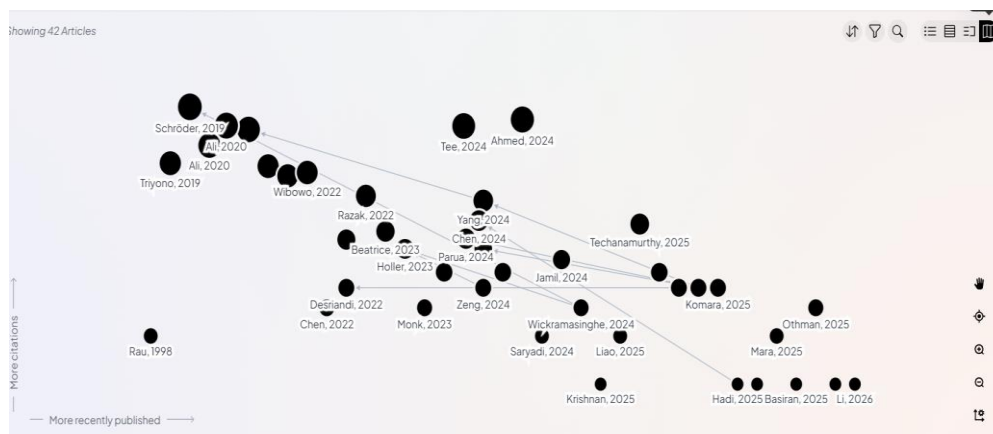


Figure 1. Literature Map

Figure 1 shows that 42 articles form several interconnected thematic clusters. On the left side are relatively earlier reference groups such as Schröder (2019), Triyono (2019), Ali (2020), and Wibowo (2022), which can be interpreted as the foundational framework for issues related to TVET, employment, and the alignment of education with industrial needs. In the center, a denser cluster emerges, including Razak (2022), Holler (2023), Parua (2024), Chen (2024), Yang (2024), Zeng (2024), and Jamil (2024), indicating the development of themes such as digital pedagogy, TVET transformation, and technology-based learning design. On the right side are more recent articles such as Techanamurthy (2025), Komara (2025), Othman (2025), Mara (2025), Hadi (2025), and Li (2026), which address issues of digital readiness, workforce competencies, digital transformation policies, and the integration of advanced technologies such as VR. Overall, this map indicates that research on TVET digital transformation is evolving from foundational issues of vocational relevance toward more specific topics such as digital pedagogy, digital competencies, national policies, and alignment with industry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digital Transformation in TVET as a Systemic Change

Digital transformation in TVET essentially marks a shift from static, procedural, and teacher-centered learning toward more flexible, adaptive, and learner-centered learning. In the old model, learning success was often measured by the ability to follow work steps and correctly complete practical procedures. However, in the digital era, TVET is required to create more dynamic learning experiences through blended learning, simulations, game-based learning, the flipped classroom, and precision teaching. Digital pedagogy in TVET enriches the learning experience by enabling greater personalization, flexibility, and effectiveness. In line with this, UNESCO-UNEVOC (2023) emphasizes that digital transformation impacts the entire TVET delivery process, from teaching and learning methods to how institutions design more individualized and open learning pathways.

These changes are further amplified by the emergence of e-learning, LMS, AR/VR, and virtual laboratories, which enable practice to be conducted more safely, repeatedly, and without being entirely dependent on physical workshop

spaces. These technologies are particularly crucial for competencies that are high-risk, costly, or difficult to replicate if conducted solely through conventional practice. (Li et al., 2026) demonstrate that the integration of multimodal virtual reality in TVET can enhance industry-based simulation learning, while (Hadi et al., 2025) emphasize that the integration of digital pedagogy and educational technology improves flexibility, relevance, and mastery of green skills. Thus, digital transformation not only expands access to learning but also transforms the nature of TVET learning to be more contextual, safe, efficient, and aligned with the demands of 21st-century work.

However, the shift toward a flexible learning ecosystem does not occur automatically. Various studies indicate that the primary barriers lie in system readiness. (Hassan et al., 2021) note that the integration of ICT in TVET remains weak in the areas of evaluation, assessment, career guidance, and teacher training. (Othman et al., 2025) also highlight that the challenges of TVET digitalization include curriculum alignment, educators’ digital competencies, and the uneven distribution of resources. In this context, teachers and instructors can no longer merely act as content deliverers but must become designers of digital learning experiences capable of integrating technology, pedagogy, and student needs. This means that the digital transformation of TVET demands both epistemological and institutional changes, not merely the procurement of technological devices.

Furthermore, the most important characteristic of the digital transformation of TVET is the shift in learning from a system isolated in classrooms or workshops toward a learning ecosystem strongly connected to industry. UNESCO-UNEVOC (2023) emphasizes that TVET institutions now need to build digital partnerships with local organizations, communities, and the business sector through technology centers, fab-labs, and makerspaces. The partnerships between TVET providers and industry can bridge the digital divide, update facilities, and strengthen graduates’ readiness for the digital economy (Niwamanya et al., 2025). Thus, the digital transformation of TVET should ideally not stop at the digitization of learning, but evolve into a flexible, industry-based ecosystem capable of producing graduates with technical, digital, and adaptive competencies relevant to the needs of the workforce.

Table 1. The Transformation of TVET in Indonesia and the “Link and Match 8+i” Initiative

No.	Aspect	Research Findings	Implications
1.	Directions for TVET Transformation	Indonesia’s TVET system is aimed at reducing the skills mismatch and graduate unemployment through revitalization, certification, competency standards, and multi-stakeholder partnerships.	Vocational education is shifting its focus from access to the quality and relevance of graduates.

No.	Aspect	Research Findings	Implications
2.	Key Issues	There remains a gap between graduates' competencies and industry needs, particularly regarding the quality of teaching staff, facilities, and infrastructure.	There is a need to strengthen the capacity of instructors, improve facilities and infrastructure, and renew the vocational work culture.
3.	Core Policies	"Link and Match 8+i" is the primary strategy for building a new vocational ecosystem that is more closely aligned with industry.	TVET is no longer a standalone system but is designed in collaboration with industry.
4.	8+i Implementation Components	Joint curriculum with industry, real-world industry projects, industry guest lecturers, one-semester internships, industry certification, teacher competency upgrades, strengthening applied bachelor's programs, recruitment commitments, and scholarships/service bonds.	Learning has become more contextual, practical, and oriented toward workplace needs.
5.	Impact of Implementation	Collaborative curricula, project-based learning, structured internships, and technology adaptation foster a healthier learning ecosystem between schools and industry.	Enhancing work readiness and strengthening institutional ties with industry.
6.	Impact on Graduates	Effective implementation reduces industry training costs and increases graduate employment rates.	Link and match benefits both educational institutions and industry.
7.	Ongoing Challenges	Implementation remains uneven; some partnerships risk being merely ceremonial and are not yet fully sustainable.	Monitoring, evaluation, and standardization of cross-institutional implementation are required.

Malaysia: A More Integrated Approach to Digital Policy

Digital transformation in Malaysia follows a relatively systematic pattern, supported by long-term national policies, the strengthening of the digital economy, and the alignment of education and TVET with industry needs. Malaysia is portrayed as a country driving digital transformation through the Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint (MyDIGITAL), Industry 4.0 policies, and the strengthening of technology-based education to support national competitiveness (Farhana, 2026; Tee et al., 2024). This direction is also consistent with findings (Krishnan, 2025) that position digital technology as the primary driver of Malaysia's economic agenda, as well as (Edrak et al., 2022; Mustaffa et al., 2024), which indicate that Malaysia's digital policies from the 1990s through the MyDIGITAL era have evolved into a more integrated economic transformation framework. Thus, the research findings indicate that the primary drivers of Malaysia's digital transformation do not stand alone but emerge from a combination of policies, digital investments, and a national talent development orientation.

In the context of TVET, Malaysia's digital transformation is aimed at strengthening digital literacy, technology-based learning, and aligning curricula with the needs of the digital industry. Vocational education in Malaysia is positioned as a key instrument for preparing a workforce with digital competencies relevant to technology-based sectors (Farhana, 2026). This is reinforced by (Razak et al., 2022), who emphasize the need for a digital learning framework in TVET at Malaysian public universities, as well as (Jamil et al., 2024), who highlight the importance of inclusive digital pedagogy in tertiary TVET. (Ahmed et al., 2024; Basiran & Lasi, 2025; Li et al., 2026) also indicate that the integration of virtual reality and LMS in TVET can support simulated learning that better aligns with industry needs. Overall, the research findings indicate that the transformation of TVET in Malaysia is shifting from conventional learning toward digital learning that is more flexible, structured, and responsive to the demands of the digital economy.

Nevertheless, the research findings also indicate that Malaysia's digital transformation still faces serious challenges regarding infrastructure equity, workforce competencies, and reskilling/upskilling needs. (Chong et al., 2025) show that Malaysia made progress in digital connectivity and infrastructure during the 2017–2021 period, but issues of affordability and digital literacy remain obstacles. Findings (Abiddin et al., 2025; Techanamurthy et al., 2025) even indicate that regarding Industry 4.0 readiness among Malaysian SMEs, the workforce competency dimension received the lowest score, at 0.35, far below leadership and strategic alignment, which reached 0.81. Furthermore, (Techanamurthy et al., 2025) emphasize the importance of a digital economy competency framework to bridge the digital divide, while (Tee et al., 2024) highlight the persistent digital skills gap between industry needs and graduate competencies. Thus, the results of this study confirm that Malaysia's digital transformation has a strong policy foundation, but its success remains highly dependent on the strengthening of equitable infrastructure, curriculum updates, and the systematic development of digital talent.

Table 2. Malaysia's Digital Transformation

No.	Aspect	Research Findings	Implications
1	Drivers of national policy	Malaysia's digital transformation is driven by MyDIGITAL, Industry 4.0 policies, and a long-term digital economy development framework. There is an integrated policy direction spanning the digital economy, infrastructure, and talent development.	Digital transformation is being implemented as a national agenda, not as a separate sectoral initiative.
2.	Strengthening the digital economy and industry	AI, IoT, big data, automation, and Industry 4.0 technologies are positioned as drivers of increased productivity and industrial competitiveness.	TVET must align its curriculum with the needs of the digital industry.
3.	The role of TVET	TVET is focused on building digital competencies, technology-based learning, and an industry-ready workforce. This includes a digital learning framework, inclusive digital pedagogy, and industry simulations using VR/LMS.	Vocational education is the primary instrument for developing the nation's digital talent.
4.	Infrastructure and the digital divide	Connectivity is improving, but affordability and access in certain regions remain issues. Other studies also highlight the digital divide between groups and across regions.	Digital investment must focus on equitable access, particularly in vulnerable and rural areas.
5.	Workforce competencies	Workforce competency is the weakest dimension of Industry 4.0 readiness, with a score of 0.35. There is a digital skills gap between graduates and industry needs.	Malaysia needs to strengthen reskilling, upskilling, and the alignment of graduates with actual job market needs.
6.	Digital competency framework	A digital economy competency framework is needed to integrate digital literacy into education and TVET.	Education and TVET reforms must be based on clear national digital competencies.
7.	Key challenges	Key barriers include infrastructure gaps, variations in digital competencies, and the need for curriculum updates in education.	The success of the transformation requires close collaboration among the government, industry, and

No.	Aspect	Research Findings	Implications
			educational institutions.

Taiwan: A Robust Digital TVET Model Based on Industry Partnerships

In the context of Taiwan, the institutional link between TVET and economic development is evident in the orientation of its policies and learning practices. The documents you have attached indicate that for over six decades, TVET in Taiwan has directly contributed to the economic transition from a labor-intensive base to a high-tech and service-based economy (Lawal & Isah, 2025; Schröder & Schröder, 2019). TVET is also viewed as a key pillar in talent provision to support national industrial and technological upgrading. Therefore, the Taiwan Ministry of Education, through the Department of Technological and Vocational Education, strengthens campus-industry collaboration by involving industry experts in curriculum design, collaborative teaching, and funding support to enhance the quality of TVET (Gu & Wu, 2026; Wickramasinghe & Wickramasinghe, 2025). This approach demonstrates that the relevance of the curriculum and industry-based learning experiences serve as the primary foundation for ensuring that graduates’ competencies align with Taiwan’s economic development needs.

Research findings also indicate that the strength of Taiwan’s TVET lies not only in formal ties with industry but in the genuine integration of learning, field experience, and workforce development strategies (Gu & Wu, 2026). The dual-teacher system, industry visits, and joint curriculum development are examples of practices that make learning more contextual and closely aligned with the workplace. (J. L. Chen, 2022) indicates that collaborative teaching with industry experts and company visits influence student learning outcomes, while the analysis in the Taiwanese document you uploaded emphasizes that satisfaction with learning and internship experiences influences work readiness and interest in remaining in the industrial sector. These findings reinforce that the Taiwanese model not only serves to prepare graduates for the workforce but also to sustain the supply of skilled labor for priority economic sectors.

Overall, the research findings confirm that TVET in Taiwan serves as a strategic instrument for national economic and workforce development, and this policy legacy forms a strong foundation for the current digital transformation (Dar-Chin, 1998; Schröder, 2019). As digital transformation demands curriculum alignment with industrial advancements, enhanced digital competencies among educators, and strengthened education-industry partnerships, Taiwan already possesses a relatively well-established institutional foundation to adapt. Therefore, the Taiwan case offers a crucial lesson: the success of TVET’s digital transformation will be more robust if built upon long-term relationships between vocational education, industrial policy, and national development strategies.

Table 3. Taiwan's TVET and Economic Development

No.	Aspek	Praktik/Temuan di Taiwan	Implikasi
1.	The Role of TVET in Development	TVET serves as the primary mechanism for supplying skilled workers for infrastructure development, industrialization, and the transition to a high-tech and service-based economy.	TVET serves as a strategic instrument for economic development, not merely an alternative educational pathway.
2.	Policy Orientation	The Taiwanese government and the Ministry of Education provide institutional support to improve the quality of TVET and align graduates with industry needs.	TVET is aligned with the national workforce development strategy.
3.	Direct Link to Industry	This includes the involvement of industry experts in curriculum development and collaborative teaching, as well as industry visits and work-based learning.	Graduates' competencies are more relevant to the actual needs of industry.
4.	Learning Practices	The dual-teacher system, enterprise visits, industry-based learning, and internship experiences influence learning outcomes and work readiness.	Learning becomes more contextual, practical, and work-oriented.
5.	Economic Contribution	TVET supports national technological upgrading, productivity, employment, and economic competitiveness.	TVET serves as a crucial foundation for knowledge-based and digital economic development.
6.	Relevance to Digital Transformation	The historical foundation of industry-education collaboration strengthens Taiwan's readiness to adapt TVET to the demands of digitalization.	Digital transformation proceeds more smoothly because it is supported by a strong institutional foundation.

Comparative Analysis

Comparatively, the digital transformation of TVET in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Taiwan is moving in the same direction: shifting vocational education from a procedural, teacher-centered model toward a more flexible, adaptive, technology-based approach that is aligned with industry needs. However, the three countries demonstrate varying levels of maturity. Indonesia prioritizes TVET transformation primarily to reduce skill mismatches and graduate unemployment through revitalization, certification, competency standards, and multi-stakeholder partnerships, with the key “Link and Match 8+i” policy emphasizing industry-aligned curricula, internships, certification, and recruitment commitments. This indicates that Indonesia is shifting from an access-oriented approach toward a focus on graduate quality and relevance; however, implementation remains uneven and, in some areas, risks becoming merely ceremonial, thus requiring stronger monitoring, evaluation, and standardization.

Meanwhile, Malaysia demonstrates a more integrated transformation pattern at the national policy level, supported by MyDIGITAL, the Industry 4.0 agenda, digital economy investments, and long-term talent development. In the context of TVET, Malaysia stands out in strengthening digital literacy, digital learning frameworks, inclusive pedagogy, and the use of technologies such as LMS and VR to support industrial simulations. Compared to Indonesia, Malaysia appears more systematic in building the foundation of digital policy, but still faces serious challenges regarding infrastructure equity, accessibility, and especially workforce competencies – an area even cited as the weakest dimension in Industry 4.0 readiness. This implies that Malaysia’s success no longer hinges on policy direction but on its ability to bridge the digital skills gap between graduates and labor market demands.

Unlike Indonesia and Malaysia, Taiwan demonstrates the most mature model because its TVET transformation is built on a strong historical foundation linking vocational education, economic development, and industry partnerships. TVET in Taiwan has long served as a strategic instrument for providing the workforce for industrialization, the transition to a high-tech economy, and the enhancement of national competitiveness. Taiwan’s strength lies not only in formal collaboration with industry but in the tangible integration of curriculum, collaborative teaching with practitioners, a dual-teacher system, industrial visits, and internship experiences that directly shape students’ work readiness. Thus, while Indonesia remains in the stage of strengthening policy implementation and Malaysia in the stage of consolidating its national digital ecosystem, Taiwan has already demonstrated a more established stage of institutionalization, where the education–industry relationship has become the primary foundation for preparing TVET for digitalization.

Overall, this comparison confirms that Indonesia excels in the drive for collaborative policy-based reforms, Malaysia excels in integrating the national digital agenda with TVET reforms, while Taiwan excels in institutional strength and the continuity of industry–education relationships. A key implication is that the success of TVET digital transformation requires more than just the

introduction of learning technologies; it must be supported by three key elements: consistent policies, readiness in human resources and infrastructure, and tangible, sustainable industry partnerships. Within this framework, Taiwan can be viewed as a model of maturity, Malaysia as a model of digital policy integration, and Indonesia as a promising model of transformation that still requires strengthened implementation to ensure its impact is more equitable and sustainable.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the digital transformation of TVET in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Taiwan all demonstrate a shift toward more flexible, technology-based vocational education that is aligned with industry needs, but each is at a different stage of maturity: Indonesia stands out for its reform efforts through the Link and Match 8+i policy but still faces challenges in ensuring equitable implementation; Malaysia is stronger in integrating national digital policies and developing a digital economy ecosystem, although it remains constrained by infrastructure gaps and workforce competency issues; whereas Taiwan demonstrates the most established model because its TVET transformation is built upon a strong historical foundation linking education, industry, and national development strategies. Thus, this study confirms that the success of TVET digital transformation requires more than just technology adoption; it must be supported by policy consistency, human resource readiness, equitable infrastructure, and sustainable industry partnerships to produce graduates who are relevant, adaptable, and prepared to meet the demands of the digital economy.

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