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## **Public Governance and the Development of Human Capital in Morocco: An Analysis of Public Policies and Their Impact on Performance**

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### **Abstract**

This article analyses the relationship between public governance and the development of human capital in Morocco, emphasising the decisive role of public policies in strategic s such as education, health and employment. It adopts an analytical approach based on a review of the academic literature and available institutional data, with a view to understanding the mechanisms through which governance influences the quality, performance and development of human capital.

The study shows that, over recent decades, Morocco has undertaken structural reforms aimed at modernising public administration, improving the efficiency of social services and strengthening human capital. These efforts are gradually yielding significant progress, particularly in terms of expanding access to education, improving healthcare infrastructure and promoting active labour market policies.

The findings highlight that public governance plays a central role in enhancing human capital by promoting better resource

allocation and continuous improvement in the quality of public services. Thus, strengthening institutional frameworks and consolidating public policies contribute to improving skills, employability and the overall performance of human capital, thereby supporting a path of sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development in Morocco.

**Keywords:** Public governance – Human capital – Public policies – Education – Health – Employment.

### **Introduction**

Public governance occupies a central place in debates on economic and social development, particularly in developing countries. It refers to the capacity of public institutions to design, implement and evaluate policies that are effective, transparent and geared towards meeting citizens' needs. In this context, human capital has become a fundamental element, as it constitutes a key driver of growth, competitiveness and sustainable development.

In Morocco, the development of human capital represents a major strategic focus of public policy, notably through

reforms undertaken in the education, health and employment sectors. These sectors play a decisive role in improving the skills, productivity and socio-economic integration of the population.

Thus, the relationship between public governance and human capital raises an important question: **how have the public governance reforms implemented in Morocco contributed to the development of human capital through education, health and employment policies?** This question enables an analysis of the impact of institutional reforms on human capital performance and on the country's socio-economic development.

In this context, analysing the relationship between public governance and human capital performance is of particular importance. Indeed, the quality of governance largely determines the effectiveness of public policies and their ability to produce tangible results in the areas of education, health and employment. Examining this relationship thus provides a better understanding of the institutional factors likely to promote the development of human capital and helps to identify the mechanisms through which public policies contribute to socio-economic development. The aim of this article is therefore to examine the role of public governance in the development of human capital in Morocco, through an analysis of the main public policies implemented and their effects on human capital performance.

In order to analyse the relationship between public governance and the development of human capital in Morocco, this study is based on two main hypotheses. The first assumes that an improvement in public governance promotes the development of human capital by enhancing the effectiveness, transparency and quality of public policies. The second posits that public policies implemented in the fields of education, health and employment act as a transmission mechanism between public governance and human capital performance. In other words, the impact of governance on human capital development is exerted primarily through the capacity of public institutions to design, implement and evaluate sectoral policies tailored to the needs of the population.

### **Research hypotheses:**

H1: Improved public governance promotes the development of human capital.

H2: Public policies on education, health and employment act as transmission mechanisms between public governance and human capital performance.

To address this issue and test the hypotheses put forward, the article first draws on a conceptual and theoretical framework relating to public governance and human capital. It then outlines the methodology adopted before analysing the main Moroccan public policies on education, health and employment, as well as their effects on the development of human capital. Finally, the results obtained are discussed in the light of the existing literature.

## **1. Theoretical framework**

### **1.1. The concept of public governance**

Public governance has become a central concept in the analysis of public policy and socio-economic development. Emerging in the 1980s and 1990s, it refers to the set of mechanisms, processes and institutions through which public, private and civil society actors participate in the management of public affairs and collective decision-making.

According to the World Bank (1992)<sup>1</sup>, governance refers to 'the way in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources with a view to its development'. This definition emphasises the effectiveness, transparency and accountability of public institutions in the conduct of public policy.

For Rhodes<sup>2</sup> (1996), governance refers to new forms of coordination between public and private actors, moving beyond the traditional model of government based exclusively on state authority. In this sense, public governance is based on cooperation, networks of actors and partnership in the management of public policies.

### **1.2. The fundamental principles of public governance**

The literature identifies several fundamental principles of good governance:

- **Transparency:** access to information and clarity in decision-making processes.
- **Accountability:** the obligation for public decision-makers to be accountable for their actions.
- **Participation:** the involvement of citizens and stakeholders in decision-making processes.

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank. (1992). *Governance and Development*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

<sup>2</sup> Rhodes, R. A. W. (1996). *The New Governance: Governing without Government*. *Political Studies*, 44(4), 652-667.

- Effectiveness and efficiency: the ability to achieve public objectives through the optimal use of resources.
- Equity: equal access to public services and the reduction of inequalities.
- The rule of law: respect for legal rules and the protection of fundamental rights.

These principles are considered essential for improving the quality of public policies and strengthening citizens' trust in institutions.

### 1.3. Theoretical approaches to public governance

#### 1.3.1. Agency theory

Agency theory, developed by Jensen and Meckling (1976)<sup>3</sup>, analyses the relationship between a principal and an agent in a context where the interests of the two parties may diverge. In public governance, this theory regards citizens as the principals and public officials as the agents responsible for implementing public policies. The existence of information asymmetries can lead to opportunistic behaviour and reduce the effectiveness of public action. From this perspective, mechanisms for transparency, oversight, accountability and performance evaluation appear to be essential tools for ensuring the effective management of public resources and better utilisation of human capital.

#### 1.3.2. New Public Management (NPM)

New Public Management (NPM) emerged in the 1980s as a response to the limitations of the traditional bureaucratic model. This approach advocates the adoption, within the public sector, of methods inspired by the private sector in order to improve the efficiency, performance and quality of public services. According to Hood<sup>4</sup> (1991), NPM is based in particular on management by objectives, performance evaluation, the accountability of public managers and the optimisation of resource use. In the field of human capital, this approach promotes a better allocation of resources in the education, health and employment sectors, thereby contributing to improved socio-economic performance.

<sup>3</sup> Jensen, M. C., & Meckling, W. H. (1976). \*Theory of the Firm: Managerial Behaviour, Agency Costs and Ownership Structure\*. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 3(4), 305–360.

<sup>4</sup> Hood, C. (1991). \*A Public Management for All Seasons?\*. *Public Administration*, 69(1), 3–19.

#### 1.3.3. Collaborative (or multi-stakeholder) governance

Collaborative governance is based on the idea that public policies are more effective when they are developed and implemented through cooperation between public and private actors and civil society organisations. According to Ansell and Gash<sup>5</sup> (2008), this approach promotes dialogue, consultation and the participation of various stakeholders in decision-making processes. It thus makes it possible to mobilise a diverse range of resources and skills to address complex development challenges. In the context of human capital development, collaborative governance helps to strengthen coordination between educational, health, economic and social institutions, thereby improving the effectiveness of public policies and their impact on human development.

### 1.4. The concept of human capital

The concept of human capital occupies a central place in modern economic theory and in development analyses. It refers to the totality of knowledge, skills, qualifications, aptitudes and experience acquired by individuals, which contribute to increasing their productivity and their capacity to generate economic and social value. Unlike physical capital, human capital is embodied in individuals and can be developed through education, training, health and work experience.

According to Becker (1964), human capital results from investments in education, training and health, which are regarded as essential factors in improving individual productivity and economic growth. The author emphasises that these investments enable individuals to acquire skills and knowledge that enhance their performance in the labour market and their contribution to economic development.

For his part, Schultz (1961) considers education to be a fundamental driver of economic growth. He argues that expenditure on education, training and health should be viewed as genuine investments rather than mere consumer spending. According to this approach, the accumulation of human capital fosters innovation, improves labour productivity and strengthens the competitiveness of economies.

<sup>5</sup> Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2008). \*Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice\*. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(4), 543–571.

From this perspective, human capital emerges as a strategic resource for socio-economic development. Its enhancement depends largely on the effectiveness of public policies implemented in the fields of education, health and employment, which underlines the importance of public governance in its development and enhancement.

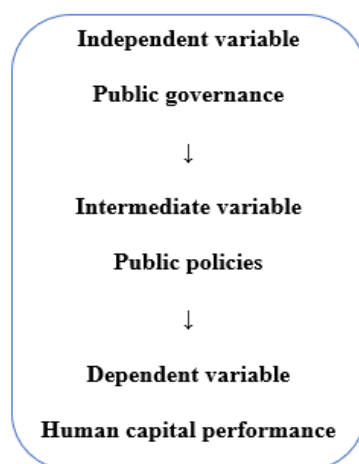
### 1.5. Public governance and human capital

Public governance plays a decisive role in the development of human capital. Effective institutions enable better design and implementation of education, health and employment policies. According to the human capital approach developed by Becker (1964), investment in education, health and training are essential factors for productivity and economic growth. The quality of governance therefore directly influences a country's ability to develop and enhance its human capital.

In the case of Morocco, improving public governance appears to be a strategic factor in enhancing the effectiveness of social policies and supporting sustainable development.

### 1.6. Conceptual model of the research

Building on the theoretical foundations presented above, this study proposes a conceptual model designed to analyse the influence of public governance on the development of human capital in Morocco. The model is based on the hypothesis that the quality of public governance, through its dimensions of transparency, accountability, effectiveness and participation, has a positive influence on human capital performance. This influence is exerted primarily through public policies implemented in the education, health and employment sectors, which constitute the main drivers of human capital development.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual model of the influence of public governance on human capital performance in Morocco

## 2. Methodology

This article adopts a qualitative approach with an analytical focus, based on a review of the academic literature and the analysis of secondary data from official institutional sources.

The methodological approach relies primarily on a documentary analysis of reports published by national and international institutions, notably the Ministry of National Education, Pre-school Education and Sport, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the High Commission for Planning (HCP), as well as international organisations such as the World Bank and the World Health Organisation.

The analysis is descriptive and interpretative in nature. It aims to examine the evolution of public policies in the education, health and employment sectors, as well as their effects on human capital performance in Morocco. The selected indicators are analysed comparatively across different time periods in order to identify key trends and structural changes.

This approach enables an understanding of the mechanisms through which public governance influences the development of human capital, without resorting to advanced econometric or quantitative methods.

## 3. Analysis

### 3.1. The education sector:

Morocco has undertaken several educational reforms aimed at improving the quality of teaching, enhancing equity of access to education and reducing school drop-out rates. These reforms form part of a strategic vision for human capital development, which regards education as a key driver of economic growth and competitiveness.

**Table 1.** Key educational reforms in Morocco and their objectives

Reform	Period	Main objectives
National Charter for Education and Training	1999–2009	Expansion of education and improvement of educational quality
Emergency Programme	2009–2012	Reducing school drop-out rates and modernising the education system
Strategic Vision for Reform 2015–2030	2015–2030	Equity, quality and the promotion of Moroccan schools
Framework Law No. 51.17 on education, training and scientific research	Since 2019	Implementation of the Strategic Vision and strengthening of educational governance
Roadmap 2022–2026	Since 2022	Improving basic learning outcomes and reducing educational inequalities

Source: Prepared by the author based on the strategic frameworks of the Ministry of National Education, *Early Childhood Education and Sport (2022)*, notably the *Strategic Vision 2015–2030*, *Framework Law No. 51.17* and the *2022–2026 Roadmap*.

An analysis of these reforms demonstrates the public authorities’ ongoing commitment to making education a central pillar of human capital development. The efforts undertaken have led to a gradual improvement in access to education and a strengthening of educational infrastructure. The implementation of the Strategic Vision 2015–2030 and the Roadmap 2022–2026 reflects, in particular, the importance attached to the quality of learning, to improving the governance of the education system and to developing the skills required by the labour market. Thus, education policies are a key instrument for enhancing human capital, by contributing to the improvement of the population’s qualifications, employability and productivity.

**Table 2.** Results of educational reforms and human capital development in Morocco

Indicator	2018	2023–2024	Change
Pre-school enrolment rate for children aged 4 to 5 (%)	45.4	78.7	+33.3 percentage points
Number of children enrolled in pre-school	699,265	951,596	+36.1%
Primary school enrolment rate (%)	99.1	100.0	Universal enrolment achieved
Total number of pupils (state and private)	-	8,003,806	Continuous increase
Number of pupils in state schools	-	7,392,050	+1.1% compared with 2022–2023
Number of pupils who left the school system	334,664 (2021–2022)	294,458 (2022–2023)	-12%

Source: Compiled by the author using data from the Ministry of National Education, *Pre-school Education and Sport (MENPS, 2024)*, *Statistical Review of Education 2023–2024*; Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research (CSEFRS).

The data presented in the table show that the various educational reforms undertaken in Morocco have yielded significant results in terms of the development and enhancement of human capital. The most notable change concerns pre-school education, where the enrolment rate rose from 45.4 per cent in 2018 to 78.7 per cent in 2023–2024. This increase reflects the efforts made under the National Programme for the Universalisation and Development of Pre-school, which is regarded as a key driver for improving future learning outcomes and reducing educational inequalities from a very early age.

Furthermore, the near-universal provision of primary education, with an enrolment rate of 100 per cent, demonstrates the progress made in access to education. The steady increase in the number of pupils enrolled in the education system, together with the strengthening of school infrastructure, reflects the government's commitment to educational inclusion.

Results are also evident in the fight against school drop-out rates. The decrease in the number of pupils leaving the education system – from 334,664 to 294,458 in one year – illustrates the relative effectiveness of social support programmes such as Tayssir, school canteens and school transport, particularly in rural areas.

These advances demonstrate that public education policies are gradually contributing to the development of human capital by improving access to education, retaining pupils in the school system and ensuring the acquisition of basic skills.

### 3.2. The health sector:

Health is an essential pillar of human capital development, insofar as it contributes directly to improving the well-being, productivity and quality of life of the population. Recognising this challenge, Morocco has undertaken several reforms aimed at strengthening access to care, improving the quality of health services and extending universal health coverage.

**Table 3.** Key reforms in the health sector in Morocco and their objectives

Reform	Period	Main objectives
Basic Medical Cover (AMO) Code	2002	Introduction of Compulsory Health Insurance
Medical Assistance Scheme (RAMED)	2012	Facilitating access to healthcare for vulnerable groups
Health Plan 2025	2018–2025	Modernising the healthcare system and improving the quality of care
Universal social protection	Since 2021	Extension of medical cover to the entire population
Reform of the national healthcare system (Framework Law No. 06.22)	Since 2022	Strengthening of governance, regionalisation of healthcare provision and improvement of the health system's performance

*Source: Compiled by the author based on the Basic Medical Cover Code (Law No. 65-00), the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the social protection reform (2021) and Framework Law No. 06.22 on the national health system.*

An analysis of public policies in the health sector demonstrates Morocco's growing commitment to strengthening human capital. The reforms undertaken have led to a gradual improvement in access to healthcare, an expansion of health coverage and the modernisation of medical infrastructure. The universalisation of social protection and the reform of the national health system represent major steps forward aimed at ensuring better quality healthcare services and reducing inequalities in access to care. By improving the population's health, these policies contribute directly to the development of human capital, increased productivity and the strengthening of the country's socio-economic development.

**Table 4.** Results of health sector reforms and human capital development in Morocco

Indicator	Baseline situation	Current situation	Trend
Proportion of the population with health cover	Approximately 34% (2010)	Over 90% (2024)	Significant expansion of healthcare coverage
Recipients of Compulsory Health Insurance (AMO)	Coverage limited to employees	Over 24 million beneficiaries (2024)	Gradual roll-out of the AMO
Life expectancy at birth	74.8 years (2010)	Approximately 77 years (2024)	Improvement in general health
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	112 (2010)	72.6 (2020)	Significant decrease
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	30.4 (2011)	18 (2023)	Substantial reduction
Public healthcare facilities	Gradual expansion since 2018	Development of regional and university hospital infrastructure	Improvement in healthcare provision

*Source: Compiled by the author using data from the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (2024), the World Bank and the High Commission for Planning (HCP).*

The results show that the reforms undertaken in the health sector have contributed significantly to the strengthening of human capital in Morocco. The gradual roll-out of universal healthcare coverage is one of the most significant advances of recent years. Thanks to the royal initiative to extend social protection, launched in 2021, the majority of the population now benefits from health cover, thereby reducing the financial barriers to accessing healthcare.

Furthermore, health indicators reveal a gradual improvement in the population’s health conditions. Life expectancy at birth has increased, whilst maternal and infant mortality rates have fallen significantly. These developments reflect the progress made in medical care, prevention and the improvement of healthcare infrastructure.

The reform of the national health system introduced by Framework Law No. 06.22 also aims to strengthen governance in the sector, improve the efficiency of healthcare facilities and reduce regional disparities in access to medical services. By improving the health of the population, these policies promote human capacity development, increase labour productivity and strengthen the country’s socio-economic development.

### 3.3. The labour market

The labour market is a central pillar of human capital development, in that it enables skills and qualifications to be transformed into productive activity and the creation of economic value. In Morocco, public employment policies are primarily aimed at improving the integration of young people into the labour market, reducing unemployment and better aligning training with the needs of the labour market.

**Table 5.** Key labour market policies and programmes in Morocco

Curriculum / Reform	Period	Main objectives
ANAPEC Programme <sup>6</sup>	Since 2001	Improving the matching of labour supply and demand
Idmaj Programme	2006	Facilitating the integration of young graduates into the workplace
Tahfiz Programme	2016	Encouraging recruitment through tax incentives
Forsa Programme <sup>7</sup>	2022	Support for entrepreneurship and self-employment
National Employment Strategy	Ongoing	Promotion of decent work and reduction of youth unemployment

*Source: Compiled by the author based on reports from ANAPEC, the Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills, and official documents from the Forsa programme (2024).*

An analysis of these policies reveals a gradual commitment on the part of the public authorities to revitalise the labour market and promote the economic integration of young graduates. Programmes aimed at integration and encouraging entrepreneurship reflect a shift towards active labour market policies, designed to enhance employability and stimulate job creation.

From this perspective, labour market governance plays a decisive role in enhancing human capital by promoting a better match between training and employment, improving intermediation mechanisms and supporting entrepreneurial initiatives. These policies thus help to reduce unemployment and boost economic participation, which is a key driver of sustainable socio-economic development in Morocco.

<sup>6</sup> National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills (2024). Activity Report.

**Table 6.** Key public employment policies and their contributions to the development of human capital in Morocco

Indicator	Observed results
Development of ANAPEC services	Strengthening support for jobseekers and improving labour market intermediation
Idmaj Programme	Placement of thousands of young graduates in Moroccan companies
Tahfiz Programme	Encouraging recruitment through incentives for employers
Forsa Programme	Funding and support for several thousand entrepreneurial projects since 2022
Promotion of self-employment	Strengthening an entrepreneurial culture amongst young people and supporting business start-ups
Development of skills-based training	Improving employability and gradually adapting skills to the needs of the labour market

*Source: Compiled by the author based on reports from ANAPEC, the Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills, and the Forsa programme.*

The public policies implemented in the field of employment reflect the government's commitment to enhancing human capital and promoting the economic inclusion of young people. Various vocational integration programmes, notably Idmaj and Tahfiz, have helped to improve graduates' employability and facilitate their integration into the national labour market.

The launch of the Forsa programme in 2022 marks a significant shift in employment policies towards the promotion of entrepreneurship and self-employment. This scheme has enabled to support and fund several projects led by young entrepreneurs, thereby contributing to the creation of economic activity and the revitalisation of the labour market.

<sup>7</sup> Forsa Programme (2024). Forsa Programme Review.

The strengthening of ANAPEC's services, together with the development of skills-based training programmes, also reflects a gradual improvement in the mechanisms for matching available skills with the needs of businesses. These measures help to better mobilise human capital and promote increased productivity and the creation of economic value.

Overall, the reforms undertaken in the employment sector are helping to enhance employability, entrepreneurial spirit and the economic participation of the working population. They thus constitute a key lever for developing human capital and supporting Morocco's sustainable socio-economic development.

#### **4. Discussion**

The findings of this study confirm the strategic role of public governance in enhancing human capital in Morocco. Analysis of the education, health and employment sectors highlights significant progress in terms of access to basic social services, reflecting the State's ongoing efforts to strengthen human capacity.

In the education sector, public policies have enabled the gradual expansion of school enrolment and improvements to infrastructure, thereby strengthening the foundations of human capital. These findings are consistent with the World Bank's analysis (2024), which states that an increase in school enrolment rates is a key factor in reducing social inequalities in developing countries. In the Moroccan context, this development is part of a gradual process of enhancing human capital, helping to reinforce its positive effects on economic and social development.

In the health sector, the expansion of healthcare coverage and institutional reforms have helped to improve public health indicators, which are essential for economic productivity and social well-being. These results are consistent with the findings of the WHO's '8' (2024), which show that universal health coverage contributes significantly to improvements in life expectancy and economic productivity. In the case of Morocco, the reforms undertaken in the health sector are part of a positive trend aimed at gradually improving access to care and strengthening the overall performance of the health system.

With regard to the labour market, active policies to promote integration and entrepreneurship have fostered the economic integration of young people and encouraged the development

of self-employment. These findings are consistent with the analyses of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), according to which active labour market policies, particularly integration and self-employment programmes, play an important role in improving young people's access to the labour market. In the case of Morocco, these measures form part of a gradual process aimed at strengthening the labour market integration of young graduates and improving the alignment between training and the needs of the labour market.

From this perspective, public governance appears to be a key determinant of human capital performance. Indeed, the quality of public institutions, the transparency of decision-making processes and the effectiveness of public policy implementation directly influence outcomes in the fields of education, health and employment. Effective governance promotes better resource allocation, strengthens coherence between different sectoral policies and improves citizens' access to essential public services. Conversely, institutional failings, a lack of coordination and inadequate monitoring mechanisms can limit the impact of public investment on human development

#### **Conclusion**

This study analysed the relationship between public governance and the development of human capital in Morocco, by examining the public policies implemented in the education, health and employment sectors. The aim was to understand the extent to which institutional reforms contribute to improving human capital performance and supporting the country's socio-economic development.

The results show that Morocco has undertaken significant reforms aimed at modernising its governance system and enhancing the effectiveness of public social policies. In the education sector, the efforts undertaken have led to a marked improvement in access to school enrolment, particularly at pre-school and primary levels. In the health sector, the gradual roll-out of universal healthcare coverage and the modernisation of the healthcare system have contributed to improvements in public health indicators. With regard to the labour market, active policies to promote integration and entrepreneurship have facilitated the economic integration of some young people and supported the growth of new businesses.

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<sup>8</sup> World Health Organisation (WHO). (2024). Report on Universal Health Coverage and Sustainable Health Systems. Geneva: WHO.

The sustainable development of human capital in Morocco depends on several complementary levers that operate in an interdependent manner. It relies first and foremost on the continuity of the reforms already underway, in order to ensure the stability of public policies and guarantee their effective implementation over the long term. It also requires strengthened cross-sectoral coordination between the various institutional stakeholders, particularly in the education, vocational training, employment and health sectors, in order to ensure greater coherence in public interventions and avoid policy fragmentation.

Improving mechanisms for evaluating public policies is a key element, as it enables the effectiveness of the programmes implemented to be measured, any shortcomings to be identified, and actions to be adjusted in line with the results achieved. Finally, the consolidation of results-oriented governance appears to be an essential prerequisite, as it promotes transparency, accountability and the effectiveness of public action, whilst strengthening the impact of policies on human capital development and the country's overall socio-economic performance.

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