

Working Conditions of Parents' Teachers and Quality Education: the Case of Public Primary Schools in Adamaoua-Cameroon

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Abstract:- In the context of improving the living conditions of parents' teachers, the work in its context is to examine whether quality education derives from the working conditions of parents' teachers, whose numbers are also constantly increasing. It has been concluded that the socio-professional and pedagogical environment, continuing education, vocational training, and self-training influence the working conditions of parents' teachers in the public primary schools of Adamaoua.

Keywords:- Learning, Working Conditions, Parents, Teachers, Quality Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

➤ Background Study

The theme of the quality of education is one of the most developed in educational research. It emerges that the quality of education seems to be a major concern of national and international educational policies, mainly because of its importance in developing children and individuals. Education researchers do work on the quality of education and point out the importance of promoting better activities. Quality is, therefore, at the heart of education. It influences what students learn, how they learn, and the benefits they derive from their education. Finding ways to ensure that students achieve decent learning outcomes and develop values and skills that help them play a positive role in their societies is an issue on the policy agenda of almost all countries (United Nations Fund for Education, Science and Culture, 2004). Similarly, around the world, the process of ensuring quality education is a concern for institutions and public authorities. The quality of educational services is a major concern for many researchers, particularly because of its involvement in child development (Bouchard et al., 2006).

Most of these researchers conclude that education is of quality if and only if it takes into account several parameters. Quality education encompasses factors related to teaching, socio-economic factors, information and communication technologies, infrastructures and pedagogical approaches.

Beyond the factors mentioned above, ensuring the quality of education requires other aspects, namely: curriculum reform, schooling in national languages and the enhancement of the teacher profession. Research also shows that the quality of education has internal characteristics as well; that it can be up or down. Thus, Frederick Erikson (2008) believes that the quality of education is changing. It evolves over time. The promotion and evaluation of quality is becoming a major issue increasingly.

The emphasis on the quality of education has led many international bodies to intervene in the field of education. This is the case for the United Nations Children's Organization (UNICEF), the World Bank (WB), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

The World Bank advocates a more substantial financial contribution in the field of basic education compared to other levels of education. It proposes recognizing the efforts of countries that have demonstrated a real political commitment to allocating additional financial resources to the sector. It encourages specific measures such as increased resources for financing the sector, training, teacher training and the construction of training centers, the improvement of children's access to school through the construction of classrooms and the concerted development of reforms to curricula, curricula and the national evaluation system. Finally, it supports educational decentralization by participating in personnel and financial management (Cohn-Bendit, 2001).

Cameroon has undertaken significant actions and proactive policies to achieve universal education. On the other hand, low investment in the quality of teachers and learning, a high rate of losses, repetition and a fall in the level of more and more students. It is found that students in schools until the end of the primary cycle do not know how to read or write. This problem is due to a rapid increase in the number of pupils, which is the consequence of the rapidly increasing population. Indeed, the Cameroonian government cannot meet all the needs of all schools in the Republic because of its limited resources (PASEC 2020).

As a result of the 1990 financial crisis in Cameroon, teacher training schools were closed in 1991 to 1995, and the increase in the number of teachers was hampered. The recruitment of civil servants teachers was not carried out even after the reopening of primary schools. The education system was supported by teachers hired by the Parents Teachers Association des (JICA, 2021). To overcome these difficulties and try to fill this void left by the state, the communities, through the Parents Teachers Association (PTA), have been recruiting and remunerating local literate or unemployed graduates for several years, generally with no professional qualifications required and with varying levels of education.

Despite the actions of the government and the effort of the PTA, one cannot help but note the continuous deterioration of the quality of education with more and more levels of learners, the rate of loss more worrying, high failure rates and declining success rates. This problem is observed much more in the Priority Education Area (ZEP), among which figure prominently the region of Adamaoua, where the number of parents' teachers amounts to 384 against 309 holders with a ratio of 153 teachers; and the borough is in need estimated at 357 (Report of the Departmental Delegation of Education the Adamaoua, the year 2020-2021). Hence our interest in addressing the question of the degradation of this quality of education in basic education which, in our opinion, would be related to the working conditions of parents' teachers in the public primary schools of Adamaoua.

➤ *Research Problem*

As noted above, the issue of quality education occupies a prominent place in educational research. To explore the increase or decrease in this quality of education, the researchers put forward several factors, namely: the financing of education, teacher training, pedagogical approaches, educational policies, teaching programs, ICT integration, socio-economic factors and infrastructure conditions.

In this perspective, the writer-teacher Jiatsa Albert insists more on the training of teachers and precisely the quality of candidates and the products to put on the ground in Cameroon.

The aforementioned author indicates that in Cameroon, ENIEG is the most important training institution for primary and nursery school teachers in our country, where the teaching given there has been shamefully sacrificed under the altar of weakness and fraud. It gave me an opportunity to understand why basic education was so bad. It is even the main cause of the drop in educational level not only in this cycle, but also in the rest of the pupils' school curriculum. This is due to the quality of education of the student teachers recruited; most go there to look for the number. However, they do not know that certain conditions must be met to claim a teacher, a magister: the first condition is the love of the thing; to love what one does is motivation much more reassuring than the search for the number at all costs; the second is the condition that takes root in the affective states

of consciousness such as love; the last condition is competence that involves knowledge, skill and ability (Jiatsa, 2021).

➤ *The same author states:*

That in Cameroon, competitions are held according to diplomas. But which diplomas are they? These types of diplomas abound at ENIEG, they are fake diplomas, manufactured without authenticated, belonging even to the dead, resurrected thanks to the god of corruption and fraud. Everyone knows that in the North, the BEPC and the Chadian BAC are obtained like hotcakes, while some incumbents do not manage to write their own names, conjugate articles and nouns like verbs, ignore the difference between a past participle and a verb in the past. (...) And you would like it to shape what kind of child for a Cameroon emerges on the horizon... (ibid., p25-26).

In the same vein of the promotion of quality education, emphasis is also placed on Information and Communication Technology. Education is at the heart of economic development and is a prerequisite for technology development. In fact, mastering ICTs not only improves the quality of education, but also the socio-economic development of a continent. It brings about changes in the student-teacher ratio. The integration of ICT into educational practice gives more liveliness to interactions between students and teachers and allows students to explore new avenues of research and knowledge themselves. It provides the teacher with experience in content development (Barry, 2009).

Beyond these factors, we can also question the working conditions of a particular category of teachers, namely parents' teachers, which to our knowledge has not been sufficiently explored. In these difficult situations, it could be difficult for the Cameroonian government to opt for quality education. Otherwise, much work remains to be done at the level of quality education. This means that the quality of education at primary level is still far from 100% achieved. In the school guidance law, it is stipulated that the state is the guarantor of the provision of education to its citizens and that the PTAs constitute the members of the Educational Community and contribute to the provision of education. In reality, this means that the EPAs should be supporting partners here alongside the state in relation to the provision of education. However, this is far from being the case in Cameroon.

The PTAs (Parents Teachers Association) through the parents' masters recruit, participate largely in the education offered so much advocated by the Cameroonian government. The concern would be in terms of their professional qualifications and their pay. This situation is more visible in public primary schools in remote areas (bush schools). This situation is a fact in the Adamaoua region and we are specifically interested in the case of the Adamaoua public primary schools. It is for this reason that we have titled the subject of this research: Working conditions of parents' teachers and quality of education in the public primary schools of Adamaoua.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

It was a question for us to explain the problem of this research from which we have asked ourselves a number of research questions. In this section, we focus on detailed theoretical conceptual considerations. For, as the popular saying goes, "knowledge of the past allows us to understand the present in order to prepare for the future". On this basis, we examine the various works that have been conducted on explaining the quality of primary education.

Durkheim recommends the definition of words in a search so as not to expose oneself to the most serious confusions. The keywords allow the understanding of this topic will be defined later.

➤ *Learning*

According to (Longhi 2009), learning is the development of skills and knowledge that a person uses in resurgences for various subsequent situations. Learning proceeds from the acquired while requiring sensory-motor and neuropsychic and innate skills. It is then a process of changing behaviour through quality education.

It is the acquisition of a new behavior, following training. This term refers to situations as diverse as the acquisition of new skills and competences. Learning is an adaptive change in the behaviour of the body through interaction with the environment (Sillamy 2019).

Skinner defines learning as a relationship between an externally induced event and an adequate response from the subject that causes a persistent, measurable and specific change in behaviour. It allows the individual to formulate a new mental construct or revisit a previous mental construct. Pre-construction is the acquisition or modification of a representation of an environment to allow for effective interaction with it.

In the same view as (Correll 2023) Learning is an experience leading to the discovery of conditioning. In a nutshell, learning is a set of mechanisms leading to the acquisition of know-how or knowledge that enable the individual to flourish and his social integration.

➤ *Working condition*

Generally speaking, the working condition is the environment in which employees or workers carry out their work. She understands the potential and risks of working in this environment. It is a set of parameters that influence the satisfaction found on a daily basis with this activity, as well as the forms and degree of fatigue and over time, which have consequences that can be described as repercussions (Encyclopedia libre, 2022). This is all that comes into a person's working environment, whether it is his hourly ability, the ergonomics of his workplace, the general atmosphere or social benefits (Terrien 2019).

Working conditions therefore cover working conditions, that is to say the characteristics of the workplace, the physical and human environment, the content of work

organisation, loading projects (changing the layout of buildings, scheduling, introducing new technologies, restructuring tasks, etc.). The conditions are grouped into four families which are: the organisation of means and the working environment, wage requirements, the working environment and industrial relations (Tissot).

In short, the working condition at our level refers to the framework or environment and the realities in which the teacher exercises his profession. These include the infrastructure framework, wage allowances, workplace safety, compensation, documentation and professional relationships.

➤ *Quality of education*

Coombs writes that the quality of education is defined by the performance of students in traditional terms of programs and standards. The quality of education also depends on the relevance of what is taught and learned. How this meets the current and future needs of learners. The quality of education also refers to significant changes in education systems, the nature of its contributions, its objectives, educational technologies, programs, and its socio-economic, cultural and political environment."

The World Bank defines the quality of education in its "Education Priorities and Strategies" report as "the issue that deals with educational policies, student outcomes, the nature of the educational experience helping to produce the outcomes and the learning environment."

In short, the quality of education refers to the quality of the training provided and its real capacity effects. According to Piore (1975), this quality focuses on the cognitive content of learning outcomes, learner productivity and the quality of diplomas obtained. It is based on two principles: the ability of the system to ensure the cognitive development of the student and his ability to promote values and behaviors of responsible citizens and to encourage creative and emotional development.

➤ *Master of parents*

It is a person in whom the association of parents of students places its confidence by the knowledge and the skills it holds in order to follow and accompany the students. His remuneration and the compensation they would receive from the imperative duty of said association since it is the contract of employment. According to the SNESUP (National Union of Higher Education Teachers), all the personalities chosen because of their competence in the scientific, cultural or professional fields who carry out the activity in charge of teaching.

It is then a person who is supposed to have competence and knowledge convincing the Association of Parents of Pupils and Teachers (PTA) to entrust the charge of the education of their children in order to solve the problems of lack of teachers. Many researchers have focused on the question of the quality of education.

As the child's first teachers, the parents' teachers are at the heart of the educational process. Indeed, they participate in the construction of young children by awakening them to the discovery of social life and by teaching them to open themselves to the transmission of knowledge. As members of the entire educational community, the parents' teachers accompany the children to school, helping them to acquire hygiene and passing on to them the rules that are the foundation of a whole life together. They participate in the life of the school directly and through their representatives on the school boards and have a right of information on the behaviour of the children they supervise at all times of the day.

This argument allows the present study to understand that the teachers of the parents of pupils play a great role in the management of the educational supply therefore it constitutes one of the relevant factors of the study of pupils.

III. EXPLANATORY THEORIES OF THE SUBJECT

In this study, we used two theories of motivation: Frederick Herzberg's (1971) theory of two factors or bi-factorial theory and that of expectations or theory VIE (Valence-Instrumentality-Experience).

➤ *Frederick Herzberg's theory of two factors or two factors (1971)*

Following a broad qualitative approach, Herzberg and his collaborators propose in 1959 to distinguish the factors likely to generate job satisfaction from those which, at best, can lead to the absence of dissatisfaction at work. Previously, factors were ranked on a single axis ranging from dissatisfaction to satisfaction. Herzberg therefore distinguishes between: factors on the axis of satisfaction and factors on the axis of dissatisfaction.

Factors on the axis of satisfaction are also called motivations. We find achievements and their knowledge, work in itself, responsibilities, personal development...

The factors located on the axis of dissatisfaction, Herzberg calls them the factors of hygiene or atmosphere. We list the remuneration, the working conditions, the relations in the company (superior, colleagues). According to Herzberg, if we want to motivate people at work, we have to play on satisfaction factors (motivating factors). These are work-related factors: success, consideration, autonomy, responsibility and advancement. He therefore proposes the concept of work enrichment with a double intervention on the content of work: the horizontal enlargement of work. It consists in entrusting more of the task to the individual but also in making it more varied. Versatility, qualitative flexibility, teamwork or project group work are appropriate responses. This theory finds its letter of nobility in the explanation of the scientific relevance of this subject. Between the Employer, which is the Association of Pupil Parents and Teachers, and the Employees who are the masters of the parents, there is a contract of employment. Between the two, therefore, fundamentally human

relationships are developed in the context of work or management.

➤ *The theory of expectations or the VIE theory of Vroom (1964)*

Elaborated by Vroom in 1964, the theory of expectations stipulates that the behaviors of individuals are the result of a conscious and reasoned choice, a kind of cost/benefit analysis in the strict sense of the term. According to him, motivational strength depends on the sequence of three types of perceptions: Expectation, Instrumentality and Valencia.

With regard to expectations, he alludes to the belief that the individual will be able to increase his work performance through increased efforts. Expectation means that the individual has expectations about the likelihood of achieving a performance objective based on a certain level of effort in their work.

For Instrumentality, it shows that it is the estimation of the probability that the expected performance, foreseen by the individual, results in consequences and results as well as rewards or sanctions. This is also about waiting, this time about the benefits and penalties that would result from achieving or not achieving a performance goal. All this, to enable these parents' teachers to facilitate tasks in order to promote quality education in the public primary schools of Adamaoua. Hence the theoretical explanation of the relevance of our general hypothesis, namely: the material and human environment, the content of the work organisation, the organisation of working hours, the low remuneration, the limited or non-existent access to documentation, are the logics that underlie and influence the working conditions of parents' teachers in the public primary schools of Adamaoua.

➤ *Hypothesis*

- **Research hypothesis 1:** the socio-professional and pedagogical environment are the elements that impact the quality of the education of parents' teachers in the public primary schools of Ngaoundere 1st in Adamaoua.
- **Research hypothesis 2:** insubordination, demotivation, are the consequences that impact the quality of the education of parents' teachers in the public primary schools of Ngaoundere 1st in Adamaoua.
- **Research hypothesis 3:** continuing education, professional internships, self-training are the expectations related to a quality education of parents' teachers in the public primary schools of Ngaoundéré 1st in Adamaoua.

IV. METHODOLOGY

It was a question of assessing the views of the various researchers on the question of the quality of education, defining the key concepts of the subject and presenting the explanations. It is apparent from the views of these researchers that there are several factors that determine the quality of education. From the analyses of the ANOVA test, it appears that all the research hypotheses that have been

issued have a considerable impact on the dependent variable. Concretely, it concerns the socio-professional and pedagogical environment; insubordination and demotivation; continuing education, professional training and self-training of parents' teachers which have a considerable impact on quality. These factors constitute the unfavourable or inadequate conditions of teachers in general and that of parents' teachers in particular. The aim is to focus on the methodological elements that gave us the following elements of the table:

Table 1 Description of the population

Types of Schools	Names of Targeted Schools	Effectifs
School of Application	1- EPA IIIB	4
	2- EPA IA	4
	3- EPA IIB	3
	4- EPA IB	4
	5- EPA IVB	3
Publics school	1- Public school of Bamyanga	8
	2- Public school of Marza	7
	3- Public school of Beka hosseré	6
	4- Public school of Socaresse	8
	5- Public school of Burkina	6
	6- Public school of Djabbole	5
	7- Public school of Hama djangui	6
	8- Public school of Mbideng	5
	9- Public school of National gendarmerie	7
Total	14 Schools76 parents teachers	

From this summary table of the study population, it can be seen that in schools with 5 Targeted Applications, There are 18 parents' teachers as opposed to their peers who practice in 9 public primary schools and there are 58 of them. This means that our study population consists of the masters of parents who teach in the schools of Applications and those who teach in the public primary schools of Adamaoua and 14 principals of schools.

It appears in the above table that for a work force of 76 masters of parents interviewed in 14 primary schools in Adamaoua, there are fewer masters of parents in the Primary Schools of Application (EPA IIIB, EPA IA, EPA IIB, EPA IB, EPA IVB) unlike other public primary schools in Ngaoundere Bamyanga Public School; Marza Public School; Beka Hosseré Public School; Socaresse Public School; Burkina Public School; Djabbole Public School; Hama Djangui Public School; Mbideng Public School; Public School of the National Gendarmerie with a staff of 8, 8, 7, 7, 6 and 6 parents' teachers respectively. We note above

all that, whether in the Schools of Application or in public schools, we note the support of parents' teachers in the public primary schools of Adamaoua. As mentioned above, the reason for the high number of parents' teachers would be related to the insufficient number of primary teachers affected by the state and the creation of new public primary schools in view of the educational needs of the growing populations to be enrolled.

We have targeted this entire sample which is composed of the masters of parents and the principals of public primary schools of Adamaoua in order to gather their views regarding the working conditions of the masters of parents and quality of education in this borough.

V. DISCUSSION

It therefore appears that the recruitment of teachers of Community parents presents itself as Community participation in the face of the strong social demand for education in public primary schools faced with the problem of shortage of teachers in order to facilitate access Education for All Children. However, teachers recruited by the community do not always succeed in promoting quality education because of their working conditions, which are explained by the factors linked to their socio-professional and pedagogical environment; insubordination and unmotivated; continuing education, vocational training and self-training.

As regards the socio-professional and pedagogical environment, they are explained by the way these teachers are treated, for the most part have no career profile. In relation to insubordinate and unmotivated, they find it difficult to behave towards their colleagues because they always feel belittled towards their colleagues. As part of the demotivation of these teachers, not only do they have low pay, the survey states that they are not favorably supported. As for the continuing training, the professional internships, the self-training which are the expectations of the parents' teachers in the public primary schools of Adamaoua, we notice that these parents' masters do not have all the textbooks to prepare the lessons because the library is not at their disposal and never uses ICT to prepare and deliver the courses. And in this perspective, they find it difficult to give all the lessons planned by the schedule. When the dependent variable is the quality of education, the expected results do not always satisfy the Adamaoua. Whether it be exam and competition rates, school dropouts, repetitions or students' written and oral skills, there is still much to be done to improve this quality of education in the public primary schools of Adamaoua. As a result, the material and human environment, the content of the work organisation, the organisation of working hours, low pay, limited or non-existent access to documentation, are the logics that underlietend and impact the working conditions of parents' teachers in the public primary schools of Adamaoua.

The originality of these teachers is the strengthening of the links between the school and the basic community. Indeed, the latter through the PTAs, have had real success

(recruitment) where the state has not been able to ensure the right to education. The process of the agents of the state is an undeniable mark of recognition by the state, to ensure the creation of libraries, centers of information and communication technologies. Ensuring that this particular category of teachers is remunerated in the same way as full-time teachers is a means of developing the quality of education. However, the crucial question of the effectiveness of teaching by parents' teachers can be resolved through initial and continuing training for parents. Consideration of other parameters is also necessary to ensure the quality of education.

This study on the working conditions of parents' teachers and quality education in Adamaoua has just lifted the veil on the socio-professional and pedagogical environment, insubordinate and unmotivated, on continuing education, professional internships and self-study in order to situate ourselves more on the profession of community teachers and quality education.

The suggestions are proposals for hope for improvement. Concerning the working conditions of parents' teachers, the suggestions we make to the government are aimed at the training and mass recruitment of teachers, the recruitment of competent parents' teachers, continuing education and self training, the creation of libraries, allowing them to have access to multimedia resources without forgetting the setting of rules for better management of PTA resources.

As guarantor of national education and the promotion of quality education for all, we suggest to the state to recruit above all and massively the teachers newly released from the schools of formation and also the masters of the most competent parents while ensuring their support that is-in other words, their remuneration so that this category of teachers, whose parents' teachers live in conditions that can allow them to exercise their function normally and stimulate their motivation. We also suggest and above all to the state a regular payment and other forms of motivation, because, the salary allows the teachers to ensure the basic needs to appear before its students.

The government must ensure that the masters of the parents receive a treatment comparable to that of the titular masters. The recruitment of parents' teachers must be done on the basis of a selection to draw those who can better teach in this case privilege those who are trained in the training schools, that is to say professionals from ENIEG. More motivational strategies should be developed for teachers who are affected far from their home regions in order to address the teacher shortage and the recruitment of teachers from untrained parents.

The state must take care of the continuing training by organizing the seminars and especially the professional placements in order to overcome the practical and ethical difficulties so that these masters of parents are more competent and effective in their professional circles. To provide them with documentation and research grants in

order to facilitate their self-training and the availability of manuals and teaching materials.

According to Frederickson (1999), the professional development of teachers is a fundamental guarantee of quality education and must be associated with all stages of teacher training and pedagogical research. The state must ensure that teachers receive good initial and continuing training.

The state must set rules for the recruitment of parents' teachers and the methods of payment so that the EPA and the principals of schools take serious measures in order to recruit the teachers of the parents, who are trained, lay down detailed rules for the management of the EPA fund and for the operation of the association.

The EPA is the recruiter. To this end, it must put more emphasis on the motivation of the recruiters, which is the salary. Pay them regularly, well motivated and that influences school results, because motivation is an essential element in teaching. It was found that most of the parents' masters in the public primary schools of Ngaoundere have a wage rate that is between 0 and 15,000 CFA. This is not enough to cover all the charges. The PTA must ensure the ongoing training of parents' teachers, their regular pedagogical follow-up so that they can improve their skills in the field and for all the duties of parents' teachers so that they can carry out their work in the best conditions. In this context, sound management of costs is necessary. That the PTA must recruit parents' teachers only who have undergone initial training because, the teacher trained and endowed with a competence, an ability to solve problems related to learning, he mastered the methods and techniques of teaching reading and speaking which is a problem in the public primary schools of Adamaoua.

It is not only the PTA and the state that promote primary education in Cameroon, but also the Municipalities that are now decentralized Local Authorities to which the State delegates the powers of development, including that of education. Through this research, our interpellations go to the place in order to improve the working conditions of teachers.

The municipalities are nowadays called the decentralized Local Authorities to which the state to transfer or bequeathed all the powers of development included that of education. As a promoter of education, in our research we advocate for the improvement of the working conditions of this category of teachers called masters of parents who themselves are the catalysts of the provision of education despite their working conditions.

The 1998 Education Guidance Act, its Article 32, recognizes decentralized local authorities as members of the educational community. They are natural and legal persons who contribute to the functioning, development and influence of a school.

The municipalities have to finance a large part of the parents' teachers and the massive recruitment of teachers. However, the survey carried out in primary schools shows that there are very few communal teachers. The majority of community teachers are covered by the EPA and the municipalities have very little involvement in recruiting and supporting teachers.

In short, the working conditions of parents' teachers guarantee the quality of education in public primary schools. To ensure the best working conditions of this type of teacher, the State, the Associations of Pupil Parents and Teachers and the municipalities must ensure their continuing training, their recruitment and documentation to ensure quality education.

VI. CONCLUSION

The profession of community teachers, born in the 1990s, is a response to a lack of supply by the Cameroonian State of teaching staff in public primary schools. This situation prompted the Associations of Masters of Pupil Parents to recruit teachers to fill the void. It therefore appears that the recruitment of community parents' teachers presents itself as community participation in the face of the strong demand for education. However, this particular category of teachers is not on the same footing as full-time teachers, both at the level of working conditions and at the level of remuneration. This worrying situation was the subject of research on «Working conditions of parents' teachers and quality education: case of the Adamaoua».

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