

The Effectiveness of School Management Boards: An Appraisal from the Perspective of Public Secondary Grammar Schools in Fako Division

Haddassah Limunga Mbake

B.A. (Hons) History and DIPLEG / History, M.Ed. (Hons), PhD in View,
University of Buea, Buea, SWR Cameroon, Central Africa

ABSTRACT

This paper sought to examine the extent to which School Management Boards (S.M.Bs) are effective in performing their functions as stated in Decree No. 2001/041 of 19th February 2001. In addition, it sought to investigate problems encountered by SMB as well as strategies that can be put in place to improve on its effectiveness. This was done from the perspective of secondary school teachers and administrators in selected schools in Fako Division of the South West Region. The survey research design was used and data were collected through the use of questionnaires for administrators and teachers. A total of 138 administrators and 291 teachers responded to the questionnaires. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques (frequencies, means and percentages) and revealed that to a greater extent the S.M.Bs are perceived by the respondents to ensure that financial resources are effectively managed in schools. Based on the findings, it was revealed that S.M.Bs in Public Secondary Grammar Schools, could manage financial resources effectively and efficiently to a greater extent than they could manage these very resources ineffectively. As such the following recommendations have been made: Educational authorities (Regional Delegates, Divisional Delegates and Pedagogic inspectors) should regularly visit and monitor the activities of the SMB to ensure that they are adequately respecting the terms of Decree No 19/02/2001 which spells out the duties of members. Training workshops should be organised for the members of the SMB on the proper management of school resources.

KEYWORDS: Effectiveness, School Management Boards, Appraisal, Perspective, Public, Secondary, Grammar, Fako Division

INTRODUCTION

Education is widely recognized as the foundation for sustainable development in all parts of the world. The World Bank (2009) describes education as “a priority of priorities” for all governments all over the world. In its Law No. 98/004 of April 14 1998, the government of Cameroon considers education as a priority of the state. The provision of quality education requires proper management of financial, human and material resources. To this end, the government of Cameroon is increasingly decentralizing the management of educational institutions as an acknowledgement of the importance of getting other stakeholders involved. It is for this reason that the government of Cameroon thought it wise to create the School Management Board (S.M.B) to assist in the management and administration of public schools at the level of basic and secondary education. The School Management Board was created by the Ministerial Decree No. 2001/041 of 19th February 2001. The involvement of various stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, administrators, politicians, policy makers, employers, non-governmental organizations, local councils, traditional leaders, international organizations, religious bodies) in education is in line with greater calls for good governance and decentralization. School management as such, is done through a coalition of interest working together, but

performing different functions, all aimed at enabling schools to operate and to achieve their aims and objectives.

The School Management Board was created twelve years ago (2001) and charged with specific supervisory responsibilities. The aim of this study is to investigate the extent to which it is fulfilling these responsibilities. This will be done from the perspectives of members of the School Management Board, specifically school administrators and teachers. In effect, the study seeks to find out the extent to which the S.M.B. is effectively carrying out its formally assigned responsibilities. The answer to this question has the potential to provide baseline data that can inform decision making and practice aimed at strengthening good governance in schools.

After the introduction to the study, chapter one states the background, problem, purpose and research questions. Thereafter, it provides the significance of the study, operationally defines key concepts or terms as well as the delimitation of scope. Chapter two is devoted to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks as well as review of related literature by objectives. Chapter three presents the research methodology, chapter four the findings and chapter

How to cite this paper: Haddassah Limunga Mbake "The Effectiveness of School Management Boards: An Appraisal from the Perspective of Public Secondary Grammar Schools in Fako Division" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-3 | Issue-6, October 2019, pp.1084-1097, URL: <https://www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd29325.pdf>



IJTSRD29325

Copyright © 2019 by author(s) and International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development Journal. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)



five discusses the findings and makes relevant recommendations.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The issue of a quality management of our educational system is a worldwide concern which affects not only Africa as a continent but Cameroon also as a nation. This challenge has at its center the teaching and learning process. Since the creation of the S.M.B in public secondary schools in Cameroon by Decree No 2001/041 of 19th February 2001, much is not known about its functioning. It was created to achieve clearly defined objectives. The problem which led to this study can be stated in the form of a question as follows: Are the school management boards effectively doing what they were created to do? To the best of this researchers experience and knowledge, not much is known about the effectiveness of the board. This confirms the acknowledgement by the Draft Report of the Sector-Wide Approach that the Cameroon education system lacks regular monitoring and evaluation. In fact, little or insignificant research has been carried out to monitor this governance structure. This is not in line with calls for good governance. If education is described as a "priority" of this country, (Cameroon) then all parts of it must be regularly monitored, and if necessary, appropriate actions taken to improve on the existing situation. It is as a result of the absence of monitoring of school boards that the researcher decided to carry out this investigation.

This paper therefore intends to investigate whether the school management board is ensuring that financial resources are effectively managed in schools.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

School Boards in Cameroon were created in 2001. Not much has been written about the functioning of school boards. As a consequence, the researcher had to rely heavily on literature from other contexts, especially from the United States of America (USA) experience. According to Land (2002), local public-school boards have been the distinctive hallmark of American education for more than one hundred and fifty years. She further explains that, the root of school boards in school governance dates back more than two hundred years to Massachusetts' representative system of local governance by selected men. This therefore indicates that the management of public secondary schools by school boards originated from the United States.

Before the advent of Western education, various communities in Cameroon had practical systems of education which were designed to satisfy the biological needs of individuals and the social needs of the community (Fonkeng, 2003:31). The Cameroon indigenous system of education produced its own artists, craftsmen, farmers, poets, traders, religious priests and political thinkers. In fact, this system had relatively developed the potentials of men as well as placed into their hands a means of livelihood which was also very useful to their community. A key goal was to produce honest, respectable, skilled and co-operative individuals who would conform to the norms of the community.

The traditional system of education was closely followed by the introduction of formal schooling by the Baptist Missionaries in the first half of the nineteenth century

(1844). Remarkable about the introduction of formal education in Cameroon was the pioneer initiative by Joseph Merrick, a West Indian of African descent. Reverend Joseph Merrick opened the first primary school in Bimbia. Joseph Merrick was assisted by Alfred Saker and Horton Johnson who proceeded to open a school at Akwa town, the first in Douala. The pre-colonial period from 1844 – 1884 was characterized by active citizen participation in different forms such as payment of fees, payment of taxes (households paid a certain tax for education) and other services rendered to the school. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. Basic quality education was one of the rights. Article 26 section (4) states that "parents have the prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children." This implied that parents had the right to guide children through their well-informed choices on the type of education they should undertake. Since kids, pupils and students are for the most part minors, parents have the right to decide on their behalf the type of education they should pursue within the context of the community participation in education.

Since 1948, throughout the colonial and post-colonial periods, (1960 to present day) the Cameroon government as well as governments of other countries have realized the benefits of involving other stakeholders into the educational system. However, owing to limited resources to increase access to basic education, other stakeholders had to step in. For example, the Parent Teachers Association (P.T.A) was created in 1979 by Ordinance No. G.370/477/MINEDUC of 1979. This marked the formal involvement of citizens in the management of schools. However, prior to the creation of the P.T.A, citizens had been involved in formal education although their involvement was limited to the provision of basic inputs to their children, payment of fees and sometimes taking care of some of the needs of teachers. The duties or functions of the P.T.A are spelled out in a Ministerial Circular Letter No. 23/J1/25 of 14th May 1990. These functions include: the provision of human and material resources; ensuring the prevalence of healthy relationships between various stakeholders, notably school administrators, teachers and students; contributing to the management of schools; contributing to the sound academic, moral, social, cultural and physical progress of the children vis-à-vis the school; constructing classrooms and ensuring the maintenance of existing structures; as well as ensuring healthy-school community relationships. It is important to note that both governance bodies (P.T.A and S.M.B.) share some common functions in the management of schools.

Within a context of limited resources and greater calls for good governance, characterized by principles such as accountability, responsiveness, equity, transparency, participation, devolution and decentralization, among others, the School Management Board was created by Decree No. 2001/041 of 19th February 2001. It is charged with: the adoption of a budget for the school and supervising its execution; the adoption and management of administrative accounts; approving the organigramme of the institution; approving the needs of the institution in relation to staff, construction, equipment and didactic materials; involvement in the process of admissions of students and recruitment of part time staff; regularly evaluating the performance of all aspects of the school; and ensuring that its voice is heard on all aspects and questions related to the life of the establishment.

It is important to note that the School Management Board (S.M.B.) owes its existence to the recommendations of the National Forum on Education held in 1995 in the nation's capital Yaounde. According to the report of the National Forum, one of the basic principles underlying this new management orientation was the promotion of partnership and sponsorship in the organization, functioning and funding of education. School Management Boards were therefore created to assist with the management of schools. The composition of the S.M.B., as laid down by the instrument of creation, are as follows: the school head or principal (1), elected representatives of teaching staff (3) and students (2), representatives of the school administration (11), representatives of parents (4), representative of local communities and the business sector (7) and representative of teachers' trade union (2). The board has a total of 28 members made up of 12 ex-officio members and 16 elected members by their associations or departments.

The final report on the National Forum on Education (1995) which led to the creation of the S.M.B. was followed three years later by the Law of Orientation for Basic and Secondary Education and later by Law No. 98/004 of 14th April 1998 to Lay Down Guidelines for Education in Cameroon. The focus of this law was to lay down guidelines for basic and secondary education in the country. The Law also reinforced the need to involve citizens in the management of schools at the basic and secondary levels. For example, Section 2, article 1 of this Law states that:-

1. The educational community shall comprise all individuals and corporate bodies that contribute towards the functioning, development and prestige of a school.
2. It shall comprise the following members: the authorities, the administrative and support staff, teachers, parents, students, persons from socio-professional circles as well as regional and local authorities.

Section 33, article 5 of the same law further states that the members of the education community, mentioned above, shall be involved, through their representatives, in the consultative and management bodies set up at the level of education, as well as a level of decentralized territorial authorities or of the National Education set up.

Once more, the S.M.B. was created in accordance with Decree No.2001/041 of 19th February 2001, organizing public schools and colleges, and defining the attributions of school officials in Cameroon, and went operational in June 2001. More than (11) years have gone by since its creation. Good practice requires that it is more than time to evaluate its performance in order to determine the extent to which it is fulfilling the important functions attributed to it.

This study is generally based on organizational theory and more specifically the open system theory, the stakeholder theory and the theory of organizational effectiveness.

This theory is one of the most useful theories in understanding how organizations work. It was the Austrian biologist Ludwig Von Bertalanffy who developed the idea of the general system theory (G.S.T). The GST is a disciplinary approach of system analysis. Ludwig Bertalanffy's main concept in system theory is centred on the "open system"

and the "closed system." The open system is one which is related to and makes exchanges with its environment while a closed system is one which is not related to and does not make exchanges with its environment. The school as an organization constitutes a typical example of an open social system. The open social system can be viewed as a human being with many parts that are interrelated. These parts work in a division of labour relationship to keep the human body healthy and an injury on one part affects the whole.

Applied to educational organizations it brings out the need to view schools as being made up of parts (administrators, teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders). These parts or stakeholders must work together as a team to ensure that schools are effective. From a management perspective, the S.M.B. must be able to perform its functions as expected at superior levels in order to ensure the effectiveness of schools and pave the way for the sustainable development of the country. If it does not, then it can be argued that the purpose for which it was created is not being met. As a consequence, appropriate actions need to be taken to ensure that it is functional. System theory is not only valuable in bringing out the fact that an organization is made up of interrelated parts. Systems thinking can be used in many ways, among them defining and solving problems within organizations. If the S.M.B. is not performing its duties as expected, systems thinking can be employed to come up with explanations.

According to Law No. 98/004 of 14th April 1998 to lay down guidelines of Education in Cameroon, Section 4 of this law states that: the goal of education is "to train children for their intellectual, physical, civic and moral development and smooth integration into the society, bearing in mind the prevailing economic, social, cultural, political and moral factors." Quality education at all levels is seen by many Cameroonians as a prerequisite for sustainable development. In Cameroon there are three broad levels of education, basic, secondary and tertiary. Since this study deals with the secondary level, the others will not be mentioned much.

As regards the organization of secondary education in Cameroon, it comprises mainly grammar, commercial, technical/vocational schools and teacher training colleges. According to Law No. 98/004 of 14th April 1998 (section 15), the educational system is organized into two sub-systems: the English-speaking and French-speaking sub-systems. Secondary education is structured for 7 years in both sub-systems.

In most African countries, Cameroon included, secondary education is facing many problems, among them inadequate infrastructure or reception facilities, inadequate basic material and human resource inputs, problems of quality assurance, equity and access, relevance, and wastage. In spite of these problems, demand for secondary education continues to increase, partly because of international education initiatives such as Education For All (EFA) and high birth rates as well as the need to increase access to groups which have been traditionally neglected (for example, girls and those with various forms of disabilities). Secondary education remains a crucial link between primary schooling, tertiary education and the labour market.

The Cameroon government in 1995 organized a national forum on education in Yaounde from 22nd to 27th of May. The meeting was chaired by the then Minister of National Education, Robert Mbella Mbappe. The rationale of the forum was to find ways of ameliorating basic and secondary education. The deliberations of the forum focused on three main areas: a new orientation for Cameroon's education system, administration and management, and cost and financing of education. Among its many resolutions was "the call for good governance characterized by decentralization, accountability, effective management, shared decision making, transparency, democracy and pedagogic reforms in the educational sector. Many of the recommendations of the National Forum became the substance of the Law of orientation for basic and secondary education final copy of national forum on education.

Sector 2 (I) of Law No. 98/004 of April 14th 1998 stipulates that the state shall formulate and implement educational policy with assistance of regional and local authorities, families, public as well as private institutions. This law appeals for collegiality and participative governance of the educational system through shared decision making between its educational administrators and stakeholders. The S.M.B. resulted from the recommendations of the law. Shared decision making, budgeting, fighting corruption are functions of the S.M.B which if harnessed will make the S.M.B a unique reformatory organ in the management of schools. The creation of the S.M.B. was a paradigm shift in secondary school administration in Cameroon. Before its creation, the P.T.A. was the only recognized body involved in the management of schools at the secondary level.

The recommendation to create the S.M.B. was adopted at the National Forum on Education which was held from the 22nd to the 27th of May in Yaoundé, Cameroon. Later, by the Decree of the Prime Minister No. 96/016/PM of 13th February 1996, this committee was created and conditions for its implementation were put in place by various texts of the ministers of National Education, Economy and Finance such as Arête No. 20/B1/1464/MINEDUC/CAB of 13th May 1996.

The modalities for executing the operational budget were laid down in a circular No. 044/A/135/MINEDUC/SG/GRF/DSAPPS and concretized in a ministerial instruction No. 046/B1/1464/MINEDUC/GFPF of 16th September 1996, defining precisely the practical modalities and modalities for the functioning of the S.M.B.

Article 2 of Decree No. 96/016/TM of 13th February 1996, defines a School Management Board as a board set up in every government school, charged with the responsibility of supervising the management of resources and disbursement operations. Article 3 stipulates that in the discharge of its duties, the board shall be charged among other things with:

- Adopting the project of the institution.
- Adopting the budget of the institution and controlling its execution.
- Adopting administrative accounts and its management.
- Adopting the organigram of the establishment.
- Approving the needs of the institution in relation to staff, construction equipment and didactic materials.
- Ensuring good usage of infrastructure, human, financial and material resources.

- Catering for norms related to structure and enrolment.
- Partaking in the recruitment of students as well as of part time permanent staff.
- Evaluating the performance of the institution.
- Voicing out its point of view on all questions related to the life of the establishment.

These functions of the S.M.B. have been classified for purpose of understanding into three major categories: functions in Financial Resource Management, Human Resource Management and Material Resource Management.

Law No. 98/004 of 14 April 1998, to lay down Guidelines of Education in Cameroon, in its Section 1 states that education shall be the top priority of the state. This implies that the state is bound by legislation to provide education to its citizens with equal opportunities irrespective of sex, race, status or religion. The law also calls for partnership between educational administrators and the community in order to implement policies of education within the school system so as to achieve the goals of education in Cameroon. It further describes teachers as chief guarantors of the child's education. By implication it is the legal right of the teacher to train the child to develop physically, morally, intellectually, culturally, psychologically and emotionally to face the challenges of the society.

This study is situated within an economic context of limited economic resources (financial, human, and material). Education is an important determinant of the economic as well as political and social well-being of any nation. It is for this reason that resources geared towards this endeavour must be judiciously managed as to achieve the main goal of school effectiveness. The attainment of educational goals must be a collaborative work of internal (school administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff and student) and external (parents, NGO's, councils, etc) partners of education. If resources are scarce as is always the case, then they should be better managed. This is also situated within the context of a clarion call for good governance and its attitude of accountability, the rule of law, participatory decision making, transparency, effectiveness and efficiency, consensus oriented, responsiveness, equity and inclusiveness, strategic vision. Therefore S.M.B is expected to ensure that these elements are characteristics of schools.

Are School Management Boards effective in doing what they were created to do?

The S.M.B is an instrument used to ensure good governance in schools such as ensuring effective government policies and administration in schools. It is a planning structure geared towards school improvement. It is worth noting that, the perennial challenge facing school systems worldwide, is how to improve student-learning outcomes, Cameroon not being an exception. In the pursuit of improvements, educators introduce various innovations. Today, most of these innovations are being introduced in the fields of educational administration to encourage decentralization and implementation of collaborative school governance (Anderson, 1998; Chan & Chui, 1997; Walker & Dimmock, 2000). The usual manifestation of this worldwide trend for decentralization and devolution of authority to the school level can be referred to as the school based-management (SBM) phenomenon. SBM involves the formal change in the structures of school governance that leads to more

participation and administrative approach in which planning and decision making are devolved to the individual schools (Doran, 1999). This governance structure features school councils composed of representatives from various stakeholder groups (school administrators, teachers, NGOs students and parents etc).

Furthermore within Cameroon, there are increased calls for quality assurance, accountability, transparency, participatory decision process and devolution (Cameroon: The way forward for good governance, 2005). The Draft Document of the Sector Wide Approach (2005) aimed at revitalizing education at all levels in Cameroon, asserts that one of the problems of the educational sector is “**the lack of monitoring and evaluation**”. Assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of the S.M.B. is therefore in line with the government’s good governance policy as well as the need to create and nurture a culture of regularly monitoring and taking stock of what is happening in schools

Problems of Secondary Education in Cameroon

The Secondary education sector in Cameroon faces a great number of problems which need to be addressed in order to make it more effective. These problems are mentioned because of their implications for members of the S.M.B. These are problems they will be wrestling with. These problems, which have been well documented in the literature, (for example The Report of the National Education Forum of 1995 and The Draft Report of the Sector-Wide Approach to Education of 2005) include the following:

- Managerial Problems
- Problems of Academic programmes
- Unavailability of textbooks and pedagogic materials
- The problem of qualification of teachers
- Poor working conditions of teachers
- Poor health conditions in schools
- Problems of cost and financing of the educational system

Managerial Problems

- The over populated nature of secondary schools as a result of the introduction of Education for All initiative and the implementation of free primary education for pupils attending government primary schools. The increase in the enrolment rate of primary pupils has led to increase demand for secondary education, thus leading to over population of the students in their various classes.
- Unacceptable high rates of repetition and dropout of school by students. In fact many indicators known as internal efficiency coefficients (IEC) enable the evaluation of waste in the management of public credits as a result of a high number of repeaters and drop outs from schools. Following the Draft Document of the Sector Wide Approach/Education, the general IEC for the entire Cameroon educational system is 71.4%. This means that about 30% of the resources allocated for the educational system are wasted. This is because it is used to pay for the years of repeating as well as to pay individuals who will not be in the cycles that correspond to the unit of education rights to it end. Comparatively, at the primary, the IEC is established at 63.3% and 65% at the secondary. At the first cycle of the secondary the IEC is 77% and 60% at the second cycle of the secondary.

- Inadequate didactic material/teaching aids equally constitute a serious problem. Teaching aids are aimed to facilitate the teaching and learning process and in situations where these are not found or are very limited, teaching and learning becomes more difficult for all parties concerned.
- With the increasing intake of students at the level of secondary schools, they are increasingly facing problems of shortage of trained personnel to adequately meet the individual needs of the students. As such, one teacher is entitled to many students above the stated capacity by the government.
- Moreover there is an acute shortage of teachers for particular subjects such as French, mathematics, English language, physics, computer science and information communication and technology (ICT).
- Lack of sufficient school equipments like furnished libraries or well equipped laboratories. The non-availability of these vital resource inputs is a cause for concern in schools.

Problems of Academic Programmes

Apart from the programmes for the primary level, which have been elaborated following a competent approach, the rest of the Cameroon educational system is suffering from inadequacy between the teaching programme and the needs of a productive system on the one hand, and on the other hand from its maladjustment to scientific and technological evolutions. Schools are not enough and sometimes what is taught does not reflect the countries need for development.

Unavailability of Textbooks and Pedagogic Materials

Giving their prices or their unavailability, textbooks and other pedagogic materials are out of the reach of students and teachers. The implementation of minimum packages, which was a decision by the authorities to support free education, gave rise to mitigated results because of its lateness, its approximate quality and its insufficient quantity. Generally, the rate of buying textbooks by students is low: with the exception of textbooks for French language and Mathematics, owned by 7 students out of 19 and 6 students out of 10 respectively, the other textbooks are owned only by 3 students out of 10. For textbooks other than those mentioned above, most students go in for second hand textbooks. The analysis of the disparity within regions reveals that in the Anglophone regions, the level of ownership of language text books is higher because of the preference for second hand textbooks.

As concerns teachers, the level of non-ownership of textbooks is high: one teacher out of 2 owns a textbook in French language, 3 out of 10 have a textbook in Mathematics, and 1 out of 10 in sciences.

The absence of a national policy on academic text books and didactic material has resulted to a monopoly in the publishing and distribution of these books, which has led to a disorder in the selection of textbooks, high cost and shortage of specialized textbooks.

The Problem of Qualification of Teachers

At every level the Cameroonian educational system is suffering from shortage of qualified teachers. This has led to the employment of unqualified persons, a situation which prevails more in the private sector.

At the primary and secondary level, there are three categories of teachers: civil servants, part-time teachers and parent teachers. If the first two categories have undergone adequate training, the last category is mostly recruited amongst holders of secondary school certificates (BEPC, Probatoire, BAC, O/L, A/L) who have no pedagogic training and who mostly earn a monthly remuneration of 30.000frs. The situation at the secondary level is worsened by the instability of personnel.

Poor Working Conditions of Teachers

Cameroonian teachers are not motivated and feel dissatisfied with a profession that no longer guarantees an image-enhancing social status. Teachers suffer from low salaries, poor working conditions (lack of offices, secretariat material and documentation.) These adverse conditions discourage young talented persons from postulating for a teaching career. A good number of teachers are obliged by the poor working conditions to embark on other strategies, for family and personal survival, which are less profitable for the school. The search for external lucrative activities reduces teachers' viability, of which pupils and students complain.

Poor Health Conditions in Schools

Given the absence of a coherent policy and adequate structures, the Cameroonian educational system is unable to assume its double calling, which on the other hand is to promote health through education and on the other hand to ensure a better health for its members of the educational community: health conditions in most training centers are poor (lack of sickbays, inefficient health insurance mechanisms for teachers and students). Moreover, major endemics such as HIV/AIDS and malaria have an impact on the educational system. They reduce the supply and the quality of services and increase needs. The rate of zero-prevalence is higher among the educated population from which most teachers are recruited.

Problems of Cost and Financing of the Educational System

The educational system, up to this date, has been unable to obtain the necessary financial resources to sustain the cost of good quality education. The contribution of the State in financing the educational system is low (15% on public expenditure in 2005) whereas that of parents is very high. In 2002, 30% of teachers in public primary school were "those paid by parents". If to these, we add teachers paid by users in private primary schools (23% of pupils in the primary are in private schools, which are poorly subsidized), then we will discover that almost 40% of pupils have teachers remunerated by parents. The investigations in homes (ECAM, 2001) reveal that private expenditure from families is 44% of the total expenditure engaged for primary schools. The total budget for the entire system in 2001 was 415 billion francs CFA; 182 billion for the state, that is 43.85% and 233 billion for homes, that is 57.15%. From the above, it can be concluded that:

The budget allocated for education (15%) is far below what is allocated for education in other countries with the same level of development as Cameroon, and where such budget is situated around 20%, the partition of public expenditure on education by level is as follows:

- Nursery or pre-nursery: 4%

- Primary: 37%
 - Secondary: 44%
 - Tertiary: 15%
- Inadequate monitoring and evaluation. The Draft Report of the Sector-Wide Report of Education in Cameroon (2005) has also mentioned inadequate monitoring and evaluation as one of the acute problems faced at varying levels by the Cameroon educational system.
 - Poor governance has also repeatedly appeared in the literature as a pertinent problem (for example, The African Union's Second Draft Plan of Action in Education, 2006-2015).
 - Inadequate attention to issues of equity, especially the education of girls and those with various disabilities. This is a very serious problem which raises concerns of social justice and equality of opportunity. Every Cameroonian, as stipulated in the Constitution of 1996 and other Laws of orientation of Basic and Secondary Education, notably Law No. 98/004 of 14th April 1998, lay emphasis on the fact that quality basic and secondary education constitutes a right.

Good Governance (School Governance)

According to Edwards (2000), governance is not so much what organizations do but how they do it: governance is about how an organization steers itself and the processes and structures used to attain its goals and objectives. Governance according to the Macmillan Dictionary is defined as the exercise of control or authority and rule. It comprises those mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interest, exercise their legal rights (the right to receive adequate education), meet their obligations and mediate their differences.

Broadly speaking, school governance can be defined as the manner in which schools are being governed. It includes all the principles, models and practices that enable a school through various organs like the P.T.A. or S.M.B to effectively direct the working of the school within its boundaries. Parents are rightfully concerned through organs like the P.T.A. about the direction and operation of the schools where their children attend. Good School Governments focus their governance on some main school aspects like defining the vision and strategic objectives of the school and the community with actual implementation of those strategies with the available resources.

Governance has a lot to do with power, legitimacy and authority to exercise control over resources within a school's environment. The most important aspect of school governance is all about stakeholder involvement, voice in planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring of school activities and programmes.

The concept of "governance" is not new. Simply put "governance" means: the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Governance can be used in several contexts such as school governance, corporate governance and local governance. School governance involves making decisions on:

- Objectives on how things should be done (the dos and don'ts)
- Policies, laws, plans and budgets

- Accountability, information sharing
- Power relations in the running of the school.
- Allocation, utilization and generation of resources.
- Determination and enforcement of rules, guidelines.

Attributes of Good School Governance

The concept of good governance is of interest to educational organizations such as schools because, good governance is likely to make schools more effective, accountable, and responsive and achieve the objectives stated in the Law of Orientation for basic and secondary education (Law No. 98/004 of April 14th, 1998). Good governance comprises the following attributes:

Participation: Participation by parents, teachers, community members [both men and women] and students is a key cornerstone of good school governance. Participation could be either direct or through representatives. Participatory decision-making processes ensure that decisions are not only of the highest possible quality but are implemented as desired to achieve desired goals.

Rule of law: Good school governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially. It also requires promotion or protection of human rights. The rule of law requires that all actors respect the relevant laws and that everybody is subject to the stated laws. It also requires collaboration between administrators, teachers and students. In some schools there is no unity or team work. Some principals are too domineering and have excess power over finances. It is for this reason that the School Management Board was created to manage the financial aspect of the school alongside the principals.

Transparency: Transparency means that decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations of the educational system. It also means that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement e.g. parents, teachers, students and sponsors. It also means that enough information is provided and that it is provided in easily understandable forms and media.

Responsiveness: Good school governance requires that school organs and processes try to serve all stakeholders, especially parents, teachers and pupils within a reasonable timeframe. Responsiveness requires that an organization, public or private functions in ways that meet the needs of the people. Schools are deliberately created to serve certain functions that are prerequisite for the sustainable development of the country. They will be considered responsive if they do so.

Consensus oriented: Good school governance requires mediation of the different interests in school to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the whole school community and how this can be achieved.

Equity and inclusiveness: Ensuring that all members of the school community feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream. This requires all groups, but particularly the most vulnerable, to have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.

Effectiveness and efficiency: This means producing results that meet the needs of the school community while making the best use of resources at their disposal. The concept of efficiency in the context of good school governance also covers the sustainable use of resources and the protection of the environment.

Accountability: In general, an organization or an institution is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law.

Good governance has been acknowledged as a prerequisite for the sustainable development of nations in general and institutions in particular. The School Management Board can be described as a good governance structure created by the government to ensure that good governance practices characterize schools. The effectiveness of a School Management Board will be determined by its ability to do this and in its ability to achieve its specific objectives.

S.M.B.'s Functions in Financial Resource Management

Schools have human, financial and material resources which are often very scarce or not always available as needed. As a consequence, one of the challenges faced by schools is how to use available and limited resources, to achieve stated objectives. Resources constitute vital inputs into schools. They must be effectively and efficiently managed.

All parties involved in the functioning of financial resource management in schools are accountable to learners and their parents as well as the community and National Education Department for the school funds they manage (Campher, Du Reez, Grobber, Lock and Shaba, 2003:2).

As a result of the delegation of powers to the S.M.B. which involves the management of funds from parents and the state, it is important that the S.M.B. possess financial management skills. Davidoff and Lazarus, (1997:107) indicate that members of the school community need to be equipped to analyse budgets and financial statement. Nyambi (2004:10) expands this further in suggesting that S.M.B.'s should have the capacity not only to manage the finances well, but also to translate these financial resources into physical resources that will most cost effectively promote quality education.

Heller (1997)) holds that, finances as the life wire of every organization, remain a very sensitive and problematic area which demands shrewd and transparent management in order to achieve goals and objectives. The S.M.B. is supposed to ensure good financial management in such areas as budgeting, income generation and expenditure. Mbua (2002) defines financial management as "the effective acquisition and use of money" or "the effective utilization of the financial resources of an organization to enable it achieve maximum benefits." Hoy and Miskel (1991) think that, financial management, "involves the solution of major decisions", like investments and financial decisions. These definitions point to the fact that S.M.B.s have to acquire financial resources and effectively manage them for the purpose of attaining organizational objectives as an integral part of their functions. The S.M.B.s have to publish accounts of their use of public funds and to conduct audits as the regulations specify.

One of the major financial functions of the S.M.B. is to draw up the annual budget of a school. A budget is a financial plan/statement which identifies sources of revenue and allocates expenditures to the various sectors within the school. Plans and budgets help to ensure that resources available from the community, parents and government are equitably allocated. According to Segun (1990), a school budget, in its broadest sense means, a plan for financing a school system for a given period while to Rukanda et. al., (2000) budgeting is a process of preparing a statement of the anticipated income and proposed expenditure. In other words, it is a process for preparing a summary of the program of the school reflecting the expected revenue and expenditure. Members of the S.M.B. are expected to have some knowledge and experience of preparing and managing a budget. However, the appointment of its members does not often take this into consideration.

Budgeting provisions offer a simple guide to assisting the rate of expenditure in any given activity. If the budget is suitably designed, it will readily provide data on three elements to assist in the control and evaluation function. These elements are the rate of expenditure, output, and cost. The budget should be so devised as to highlight the truly operational characteristics both physical and financial of any given programmes. The school budget is a forecast of future events showing the anticipated revenue expenses and financial position of the school. More specifically, the purposes of budgeting are:

1. To evaluate the financial performance of the school and to use the school budget to control the operations, revenues, cost and persons responsible for the operations and related revenue and expenditure. A school's budget is a yard stick against which financial performance may be compared.
2. To show what the results will be if the present financial plan are put into effect. In other words, the purpose is to disclose areas that require attention and action.

Under these circumstances, Mbua (2002) holds that, "the budget can be and should be a fairly accurate statement of what is to be done during the year and of the resources that are to be used." It is therefore important that it should be prepared carefully.

According to Segun (1990) efficiency, transparency and accountability should guide the execution of an organizational budget so that goals should be achieved. He notes that there are three major plans involved in the preparation of the school budget which include:

1. The educational plan which defines the policies of the school, its programmes and activities as well as other educational services to be carried out.
2. The expenditure plan which translates each educational program or service into costs.
3. The financial plan which sets out the means of meeting the cost of the educational programmes and services

According to Bruce and Shower (1990) formal training in budgetary and accounting procedures will make school administrators to be better managers in areas such as costing, funding and allocation of resources through the zero-based budgeting by serially ordering of expenditure in terms of priorities and annual review of programmes. Managing the school budget includes the management of its

implementation. Once approved, the budget becomes the basis for financial decisions in the school. James et. al., (1988), agree that, financial management, amongst other things, involves recognizing and respecting authorities, regulations and practices governing the receiving, keeping and spending of funds. A basic framework of financial management will include keeping accurate financial information (See Appendix II).

Problems and Criticisms of School Management Boards

School management boards are not only a characteristic of the Cameroonian education system. Other countries also have this structure. The S.M.B. is one of the most recent innovations in the school management system in Cameroon but its existence is fraught with problems. The main ones, according to Morfaw (1999) are the following:

1. Conflict of authority and competence between the president of S.M.B. and P.T.A. despite clear definitions of functions by the texts in place. According to P.T.A. sources, S.M.Bs has not only replaced them but have usurped their powers especially in the management of their funds. With the distinct definitions and functions both are partners in the development of schools and P.T.A.s should not be afraid of its funds or materials being mismanaged.
2. There is lack of trust and confidence in the S.M.B. and its leadership that is merely appointed not elected. Many wonder how an appointed president of S.M.B. can lord over an elected president of the P.T.A. Arête No. 20/B1/1464/MINEFI/MINEDUC/CAB of 13th May 1996, article 4 had given the S.M.B.s precedence to the councils of the various areas which was a wise decision because all council leaders (mayors) were democratically elected. Many argued that this article was modified simply because some council are run by opposition political parties and the Government did not cherish their leadership role in the S.M.B. On the contrary, school fees and P.T.A. levies collected coupled with subsidies paid by the government are called public funds and as such, the state has the right to know who is competent in directing its financial management. This is why "he that pays the piper dictates the tune".
3. Some presidents are at daggers drawn with vote controllers (Principals) because they want to gain contracts or want real cash for being appointed presidents. Some of them want kick-backs and profits. Others threaten and boast that they are militants of a particular political party and it is because of their loyalty and support that they were appointed presidents. Therefore, Vote Controllers or school principals who do not satisfy their demands are often threaten.
4. Inter-ministerial circular No. 242/L/729/MINEDUC/MJS of 25th October, 1979 and Decree No.95/010 of 1st July, 1995 stipulates that both the P.T.A. and the S.M.B. respectively, are directly implicated in the financial management of secondary schools as a matter of law and policy in Cameroon. But some untrained principals lacking in school financial law and skills always want to contravene this which always leads to conflicts with this school legal bodies. This remains a potential area of disagreement with principals when school management boards come marching in schools. Mbua (2003), cautions, that fiscal fraud by principals is a punishable

offence. In cases of well-established serious management or embezzlement in the school, the school management board is expected to inform the Good Governance Observatory and the Ministries of Secondary Education.

5. Some secondary schools do not have S.M.B.s. Some presidents declined/resigned their appointments. This gave the Vote Controllers or principals the opportunity of managing school funds with little or no accountability and sometimes in total violation of ministerial circular No.042/B1/1464/MINEDUC/SG/DRFP of 9th August, 1996 on the collection and keeping of compulsory levies in schools. This legal instrument forbids any expenditure of the recurrent budget before the setting-up of any Financial Management Boards.

Wyk (2003), reports that a common problem experienced by many governing bodies (school boards) is the lack of or inadequate expertise of its members. Those serving on governing structures lack adequate expertise in the field of education. As a consequence, they often avoid, ignore or neglect issues related to teaching and learning. To Land (2002), many school boards lack the training and consequently the capacity to develop productive, positive and long-term relationships with administrators within schools' systems or at institutional levels.

Furthermore, the effective functioning of School Management Boards may be constrained by time. Decentralized governance, though very desirable, is a time-consuming enterprise, placing enormous demands on the scarce time available to principals and other school administrators (Wyk, 2003; Weeds, 2008).

Lack of representativeness has also been mentioned as a weakness of School Boards in other parts of the world (Sadker et. al., 2000; Wyk, 2003). According to Sadker et. al., (2000) school boards represent social interest groups more than their local communities. Elections to the school board receive little public support. There is growing evidence that governing bodies are not as representative as desired.

Strategies to Improve on the Effectiveness of School Boards

This section reviews some of the strategies that can be used to maximize the effectiveness of school management boards.

Continuing education and training of board members

It has been recommended that more resources be devoted to the training of school board members. Board members need to be conversant with position papers on important educational issues and best practice research. They further need special briefing sessions on key issues that are relevant for teaching and learning. According to Wyk (2003), professional knowledge is indispensable to the effective functioning of adults occupying various positions in schools. If lay persons on institutional or system governing bodies are to fulfil the tasks with which they are charged, they need to acquire relevant competence in the domains of knowledge, skills and attitudes, otherwise bureaucratic professionals will not only retain their power but also extent it. Many school board members are of the opinion that relevant training and continuing development is needed to enhance their effectiveness (Land, 2002). As a logical

consequence, some state and schools board associations have mandated that school board members obtain regular training and development. According to the EPLC (2004) the work of school boards can be strengthened if all board members are required to participate periodically in professional development. The requirements of periodic continuing professional development activities for all members should focus on attributes of effective board members, education governance, finance, school-community relations, and standards for assessment and accountability.

Adoption of a code of conduct for board members

Some school systems have adopted practices that require the development and implementation of codes of conduct for all board members as a strategy to enhance the effectiveness of board members (Bangtson, 1997). According to Bangtson, adopting a formal code of conduct can be a good additional strategy to keep board members on track and to ensure that they are functional. This will among other things require board members to agree on conditions that would help them work together better.

Building and Nurturing Trust

Building and nurturing trust has been identified as one of the strategies that can be used to ensure that school boards are more effective. According to Bangtson (1997), a board team effectiveness workshop can be used to help board members fulfil their roles. Communication problems are often at the root of ineffective school board. Some members come to meetings unprepared while others surprise each other for example, making inappropriate public statements.

Adopting Healthy Conflict Management Approaches

Conflicts are bound to characterize relations between members of a school board. How they are managed has implications for effectiveness. Bangtson says that when conflict inevitably arises, the principal should avoid getting visibly angry and not argue with the board in public. Board members must be open to mistakes and diversity in all its manifestations. This is important because nobody is perfect and because mistakes are commonplace in life and everybody makes them. The key is to recognize them, apologize for them, and move on. It is very important to avoid putting board members on the defensive.

METHODOLOGY

This paper has adopted the survey research design in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analysing data from only a few people or item considered to be representative of the entire group (Nworgu, 1990).

The study was carried out in selected public secondary grammar schools from the four sub-divisions that make up Fako division of the South West Region namely: Buea, Limbe (I, II, III), Muyuka, and Tiko. To be more precise, the specific schools from which data were collected consisted of B.G.S. Molyko, G.B.H.S. MUEA, G.H.S. Bokwango-Buea, G.H.S. Bonjongo, G.B.H.S. Limbe, G.H.S. Limbe, G.S.S. Bonadikombo, G.S.S. Mbongjo, G.B.H.S. Muyuka, G.H.S. Ekona, G.B.H.S. Tiko and G.B.H.S. Mutengene. It gives a total of twelve schools. The populations of the various sub-groups (number of students, teachers, administrators, and year of creation) was taken into consideration to better describe the area of study.

Table 1: Distribution of schools, indicating the number of students, teachers, administrators and year of creation

Sub-Division	Public Schools	Population of Students	Population of Teachers	Population of School Administrators	Year of Creation
Buea	B.G.S. Molyko	3368	127	32	1963
	G.H.S. Buea	1766	73	17	1987
	G.B.H.S Muea	1606	83	21	1992
	G.H.S Bojongo	862	34	07	1992
Limbe	G.B.H.S Limbe	2502	89	17	1982
	G.H.S Limbe	2215	75	12	1975
	G.S.S Bonadikombo	644	21	06	2007
	G.S.S Mbonjo	750	15	03	2007
Muyuka	G.B.H.S Muyuka	2205	72	11	1983
	G.H.S Ekona	922	44	11	1996
Tiko	G.B.H.S Tiko	2034	79	18	1982
	G.B.H.S Mutengene	1455	63	14	1998
Total	12	20329	775	169	

Source: Divisional Delegation of Secondary Education, Fako Division

The target population of this study is made up of all school administrators (Principals, Vice Principals, Senior Discipline Masters / Mistresses (SDM), Bursars and Guidance Counsellors) and teachers of public secondary grammar schools in Fako Division of the South West Region. It is made up of 26 public secondary grammar schools with a student population of 28,662, 1,078 teachers and 231 administrators, following statistical reports from the Regional Delegation of Secondary Education. The table below presents the total number of secondary schools, school administrators, teachers, and students of all public secondary grammar schools in Fako Division of the South West Region from which the sample was selected.

Table 2: The distribution of schools, students, teachers and school administrators in each Sub-Division in Fako Division

Sub- Division	Nº of Schools	Nº of Students	Nº of Teachers	Nº of Administrators
Buea	11	10972	487	100
Limbe	06	8155	249	64
Muyuka	05	4917	148	31
Tiko	04	4648	178	36
Total	26	28662	1078	231

Source: Based on the end of year 2011/2012 statistics reports from the Regional service of school mapping.

For reasons of proximity, accessibility, limited financial resources and time constraints, the South West Region was chosen for the study. Out of the six divisions of the South West Region, Fako was selected because it accommodates more than 50% of secondary and high schools and is thought to be sufficiently representing the Region. Moreover, this division has a complete range of learning institutions amongst them public, denominational and lay private institutions. Secondary grammar schools were chosen for this study because information related to them are sufficiently documented.

Purposive sampling technique was used to select schools because evaluating the effectiveness of public secondary grammars schools chosen for the study seems to be a common issue in all the schools. The specific population which consisted of teachers and administrators was chosen because the sample size as well as administrators and teachers have been equally documented. The purposive sampling technique was used to select administrators and teachers which constituted the sampling size. The purposive sampling ensures that only those elements that are relevant to the research are included. It is from this backdrop that administrators and teachers who know more about the functioning of the S.M.B were selected.

K.V. Krejcie and D.W Morgan's (1970) table was used to determine an appropriate sample for this study. From an accessible population of 231 administrators a sample of 138 (principals, vice principals and bursars) was selected. Out of a total of 1,078 teachers a sample of 291 was chosen. Subjects were selected from a total of 12 schools from four sub-divisions as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of sample of the population indicating schools, number of teachers and school administrators selected in each Sub-Division in Fako Division.

Sub- Division	Public Schools	Teachers	Administrators
Buea	B.G.S. Molyko	30	20
	G.H.S. Buea	30	15
	G.B.H.S Muea	26	13
	G.H.S Bojongo	25	07
Limbe	G.B.H.S Limbe	30	20
	G.H.S Limbe	20	15
	G.S.S Bonadikombo	15	04
	G.S.S Mbonjo	15	04

Muyuka	G.B.H.S Muyuka	20	10
	G.H.S Ekona	20	10
Tiko	G.B.H.S Tiko	30	10
	G.B.H.S Mutengene	30	10
Total	12	291	138

The instrumentation used for data collection was a designed questionnaire. It was designed after a careful review of related literature and more specifically the functions of the S.M.B. Two questionnaires were constructed, one for administrators who are members of the S.M.B. (principals, vice-principals, senior discipline masters / mistresses and bursars). Another questionnaire was constructed for teachers. Ethical considerations were addressed in the introductory part of both questionnaires and also in the introductory letters addressed to the schools from the university.

The researcher visited accessible schools, met the principals who directed her to see the vice principals and senior discipline masters. In collaboration with these authorities, the researcher had contact with the teachers who were given copies of the questionnaire to answer. However, some of the questionnaires were collected on the spot and others some days later as instructed by the respondents. Telephone numbers of some respondents were taken to find out if they had completed the questionnaire. The task of distributing the questionnaire was quite challenging as the researcher's car had several breakdowns on the way. In some instances, I had to abandon the car and hired a taxi. The exercise was also costly on the part of the researcher. The researcher personally served 291 teachers and 138 school administrators with the questionnaires. The table below shows the response rate for administrators and teachers respectively.

The data analysis was done using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, mean, percentages, and standard deviation. Data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (S.P.S.S.) version 17.0 for Windows.

FINDINGS

Introduction

The data collected were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 17.0 for windows) and presented using simple descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations).

Eight (8) items on the questionnaire were aimed at answering the above question. The analysis is done in two parts – administrators and teachers. The “Effective (E)” and “Highly Effective (HE)” as well as the “Ineffective (I) and Very Ineffective (VI)” responses for both administrators and teachers have been collapsed (combined) and presented together with corresponding mean scores and standard deviations in Tables 4 and 5 below. This is done in descending order.

Table 4: Degree of effectiveness of the S.M.B. in financial resource management as perceived by administrators (N=118)

S/N	N	Questionnaire Items	E/HE	I/VI	Missing	Mean	Std. Dev.
1.	118	Effectiveness in adopting the annual budget of the school.	106 (89.8%)	11 (9.3%)	01 (0.8%)	3.37	.65
2.	118	Effectiveness in ensuring that the school is managed in a transparent manner.	102 (86.4%)	16 (13.6%)	-	3.20	.70
3.	118	Effectiveness in supervising the transparent use of money by the school principal.	99 (83.9%)	18 (15.2%)	01 (0.8%)	3.10	.70
4.	118	Effectiveness in ensuring that every member of the S.M.B. knows the objectives of the school as the first step in drawing up the budget.	99 (83.9%)	19 (16.1)	-	3.28	.81
5.	118	Effectiveness in ensuring that financial management regulations are respected.	93 (78.7%)	25 (21.2%)	-	2.99	.72
6.	118	Effectiveness in controlling the execution of the budget of the school.	88 (74.6%)	26 (22.0%)	04 (3.4%)	3.15	.75
7.	118	Effectiveness in the adoption of administrative accounts.	81 (68.6%)	36 (30.5%)	01 (0.8%)	2.92	.78
8.	118	Effectiveness in the management of administrative accounts.	73 (61.9%)	44 (37.3%)	01 (0.8%)	2.81	.81

The means of all the items (8) range from 2.81-3.37. All the means are above the cut-off point of 2.5 on a scale of 1 - 4. This means that the S.M.B. is perceived by school administrators to be effective in the management of financial resources. It is important to observe that if the cut-off point was increased to a mean of 3.00, only 3 items will fall short of this mean. 20.49% of the teachers choose the ineffective and very ineffective response options. This is not a percentage to be neglected. It means that more work needs to be done to raise the mean to as close to 4.00 as possible. The next table presents the analysis of the responses of teachers (N=291). The results of the analyses are presented in descending order.

Table 5: Degree of teachers' perceived effectiveness of the S.M.B. in financial resource management (N= 291)

S/N	N	Questionnaire Items	E/HE	I/VI	Missing	Mean	Std. Dev.
1.	291	Effectiveness in adopting the annual budget of the school.	238 (81.8%)	43 (14.7%)	10 (3.4%)	3.14	.74
2.	291	Effectiveness in ensuring that every member of the S.M.B. knows the objectives of the school as the first step in drawing up the budget.	233 (80.1%)	53 (18.2%)	05 (1.7%)	3.09	.79
3.	291	Effectiveness in ensuring that the school is managed in a transparent manner.	232 (79.7%)	56 (19.3%)	03 (1.0%)	3.00	.76
4.	291	Effectiveness in supervising the transparent use of money by the school principal.	223 (76.7%)	65 (22.4%)	03 (1.0%)	2.94	.76
5.	291	Effectiveness in controlling the execution of the budget of the school.	219 (75.2%)	65 (22.3%)	07 (2.4%)	2.95	.73
6.	291	Effectiveness in the adoption of administrative accounts.	214 (73.5%)	64 (22.0%)	13 (4.5%)	2.94	.75
7.	291	Effectiveness in ensuring financial management regulations.	208 (71.5%)	79 (27.2%)	04 (1.4%)	2.93	.79
8.	291	Effectiveness in the management of administrative accounts.	202 (69.4%)	75 (25.8%)	14 (4.8%)	2.87	.76

The means for all the items (8) range from 2.87-3.14. All the means are above the cut-off point of 2.5 on a scale of 1 - 4. This means that majority of the teachers (77.99%) are of the opinion that the S.M.B. is effective in the management of financial resources. In spite of the above, 22.01% of the teachers said the S.M.B. was either "ineffective" or "very ineffective". This percentage is significant and suggests that the S.M.B. need to improve its effectiveness in managing the financial resources of the school.

It can be clearly see that from the analyses, Both teachers and administrators are of the opinion that the S.M.B. ensures effective financial management in schools. For example, the mean responses from administrators range from 2.81-3.37 and for teachers from 2.87-3.14. 106 or 89% of the administrators were of the opinion that the S.M.B. is effective in the adoption of the budget; are effective in ensuring transparent management (freq. 102 or 86.4%; and effective in ensuring that financial management regulations are respected by school administrators (freq. 99, 83.9%). From the perspective of teachers, 238 (81.8%) were of the opinion that the S.M.B. is effective in the management of the budget; effective in ensuring that members know the objectives of the board (freq. 233, 80.1%) and effective in ensuring that schools are managed in a transparent manner (freq. 232 or 79.7%). In spite of the above, a significant number of school administrators and teachers were of the contrary opinion. For example, 22.01% of the teachers said the S.M.B. was either "ineffective" or "very ineffective" suggesting that the S.M.B. needs to improve its effectiveness in managing the financial resources of the school.

The subjects were also asked to mention some of the barriers to the effectiveness of the S.M.B. as well as proposals for the way forward. Many proposals were made among them the need to strengthen the management capacity of board members through seminars and workshops and to ensure that they have a mastery of relevant official documents.

Money is very important to the success of a school and many other organizations. According to Heller (1997) "Finance is the life wire of every organization and remains a very sensitive and problematic area which demands shrewd and transparent management in order to achieve goals and

objectives". If factors such as corruption, conflict of interest, lack of transparency and communication barriers which limit the ineffectiveness of the S.M.B. are catered for, the S.M.B. will become more effective in managing financial resources in the school.

M.B. to be very effective.

Conclusion

The creation of the school management board (S.M.B.) in the management of public secondary schools is a commendable development in the management of educational organizations in Cameroon. This has been revealed by the findings of the study. For example, the subjects attest to this when they assert that the S.M.B. can ensure the judicious use of allocated resources (financial, human and material). Moreover, the education of children is for the benefit of all in the community. The S.M.B. as such is indispensable in the management of public schools and this has been proven by the findings which revealed that the S.M.B.s are effective in the management of public secondary grammar schools. The S.M.B. therefore assists the school to achieve its objectives of teaching and learning so as to improve the academic performance of students.

The management of secondary schools requires collective efforts of all stakeholders, students, teachers, school administrators at various levels, parents individually and collectively through the P.T.A. as well as all members of the School Management Board (S.M.B.). This study only dealt with the functioning of the S.M.B. and the perceptions of the board's effectiveness from teachers and school administrators. It should be noted that the findings were mixed, though leaning more towards effectiveness than ineffectiveness.

One of the general items on the questionnaire required the subjects (school administrators and teachers) to provide reasons why the S.M.B. is important. They all did, and gave reasons such as overseeing the activities of the school (freq. 87, 75%), monitoring the management of funds allocated to the school (freq. 78, 67.2%) and makes important decisions concerning the school (freq. 62, 53.5%). Both teachers and school administrators have similar opinions about the importance of the S.M.B.. For example, they all indicate that

the S.M.B. is important in ensuring the practice of good governance in schools: fighting against corruption, ensuring proper management of resources, and ensuring that there is accountability and transparency. Ideally, all the structured items desired to measure effectiveness should have had means of 4.00. They did not. This is a simple pointer to the fact that more work need to be done to increase effectiveness in all the areas. It is hoped that the findings of this study will constitute the substance of discussions among all stakeholders in order to make the S.M.B. and consequently secondary schools, more effective.

Recommendations

This study had some limitations making it difficult for the researcher to make recommendations that should constitute the basis for practice. However, the following have been made:

- Educational authorities (regional delegates, divisional delegates and pedagogic inspectors) should regularly visit and monitor the activities of the S.M.B. to ensure that they are adequately respecting the terms of Decree No 19/02/2001 which spells out the duties of members.
- Principals and administrators at higher levels within the hierarchy of secondary schools, should ensure that the text creating the S.M.B. is placed at the disposal of all its members to enable them perform their duties better.
- Training workshops should be organised for the members of the S.M.B. on the proper management of school resources.
- Principals should view individuals of the educational community (various stakeholders) as having the potential to contribute in one way or the other in ensuring the effectiveness of the S.M.B. in performing its functions. As a consequence, school principals should adopt good governance practices such as participatory decision making, transparency, accountability, among others.
- The S.M.B. should work without fear or favour and should be liable to sanctions in case of ineffectiveness and inefficiency.
- Members of the S.M.B. as well as the teaching staff should also be actively involved in research which will help them to answer some of the whys by themselves which make the S.M.B. ineffective.
- There should be a rigid and constant control of Principals in the whole Republic of Cameroon in order to ensure a free and fair utilization of financial, human and material resources which are often scarce.
- Furthermore, a study of this nature could be carried out at the level of schools within the basic education sector as well as at the level of higher institutions of learning (Universities and Higher Professional Institutes).
- This study was carried out by using a quantitative research method. A similar study on the evaluation of the effectiveness of school management boards could be carried out by using a qualitative research method, so as to get detailed descriptions of the actual situations of the S.M.B. in schools.
- This study was limited to public secondary grammar schools in Fako Division. A study of this nature could therefore be carried out in mission and lay private schools in the other divisions of the South West Region.
- This study was carried out using only questionnaires to collect data for the research. Similar research could be

conducted using both questionnaires and in depth interviews as well for data collection.

- In addition to the above, a study of this nature could be carried out not only using the administrative and teaching staff of public secondary grammar schools as respondents, but using members of the S.M.B. such as Parents, Representatives of the Trade union and the council, students and local chiefs.
- This study only dealt with the perceived effectiveness of the S.M.B.. Within a context characterized by increasing calls for good governance, no component of educational organizations should be free from regular monitoring and evaluation. The effectiveness of all the other components must also receive research attention.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1] Allen, Lew and Carl D. Glickman. (1992). "School Improvement: The Elusive Faces of Shared Governance." NASSP Bulletin 76, 542 (March 1992): 80-87. EJ441 161
- [2] Anderson, J. A. (1994). *Leadership and Effectiveness*. Lund: Lund University Press.
- [3] Bangston, C. L (1991). *The School Administrator: Facilitating Effectiveness with your School Board Team*.
- [4] Bauer H. H. (1992). *Scientific Literacy and the Myth of the Scientific Method*. University of Illinois Press. ISBN 0-252-06436-4.
- [5] Cameron, K. S., & Whetten, D. A. (1983). *Organizational Effectiveness. A Comparison of Multiple Models*. New York: Academic Press.
- [6] Davidoff, S. K. and Lazarus, S. (1997). *The Learning School. An Organizational Development Approach*. Cape Town. Juta and Co, Ltd.
- [7] Dimmock, C. and Walker A. (2000). *Educational Leadership: Culture and Diversity*. Sage: London.
- [8] Donaldson, T. and Preston L. E. (1995). *The Stakeholder Theory of the Corporation: Concepts, Evidence and Implications*. *The Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Jan, 1995), pp. 65-91.
- [9] Doran, C. (1999). *The Effectiveness of School -Based Management from the Perspective of Secondary School Communities*. New South Wales: Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Newcastle, Callaghan, and NSW.
- [10] Draft Document of the Sector Wide to Education in Cameroon 2005.
- [11] Fiedler, F. E. (1974). *Leadership and Effective Management*. Washington: Glenview, Ill.
- [12] Fonkeng, E. G. (2004). *The History of Education in Cameroon (1844)*. Yaoundé: University Press.
- [13] Freeman, R. E. (2010). *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [14] Frith, D. (1988). *School Management in Practice (2nd ed)*. Great Britain: Biddles Ltd.
- [15] Glickman, N. (1993). *Deaf Identity Development. Construction and Validation of a Theoretical Model*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. University of Massachusetts.
- [16] Griffin, R. W (1987). *Management (2nd ed)*. Houghton Mifflin Company.

- [17] Heller, F. (1997). *Management Decision Making: A Study of Leadership*.
- [18] Houghton et al. (1975). *Management of Organizations and Individuals*: London: The Open University press.
- [19] Hoy, W. K. and Miskel, C.G. (1996). *Educational Administration: Theory, Research and Practice*, (5th edition). New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- [20] Johnson et al. (1998). *Introduction to the Foundations of American Education*. (7th edition). Boston, USA: Allyn and Bacon, INC.
- [21] Krejcie, R. V. and Morgan. (1970). *Determining Sample Size for Research activities, Educational and psychological measurement*, 30, 608, Sage Publication.
- [22] Land, D. (2002). *Local School Board under Review: their Role and Effectiveness in relation to Students' Academic Achievement* Review of Educational Research, 72 (2), 229-278.
- [23] Leedy, P.D. (1989). *Practical Research Planning and Design*. New York: McMillan.
- [24] MacMillan, J.H. P. Schumacher, S. (1993). *Research in Education: A Conceptual Introduction* (3rd edition). New York: Harper Collins.
- [25] Madaus et.al. (1989). *What My Students Did When They Did Their Homework Last Weekend*. Boston. Beacon Press.
- [26] Mayo, G. E. (2004). *Critical Evaluation in Business and Management*, Volume 1. New York: Routledge.
- [27] Mbua, F. N. (2002). *Educational Planning: Issues and Perspectives*. Limbe: Design House.
- [28] Mbua, F.N. (2003). *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*. Limbe: Design House.
- [29] Morfaw, R. (1999). *A Hand Book on Pedagogic Inspection in Primary Schools. A Guide to Student-Teachers, Teachers, Inspectors and Education Administrators*. Kumba: Educational Resource Centre.
- [30] Ndongko, T. M. (1989). *A Hand Book on Secondary School Administration* Nigeria: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.
- [31] Nworgu, B.G. (1991). *Educational Research: Basic Issues and Methodology*. Nigeria-University of Nsukka: Wisdom Publishers Limited.
- [32] Okumbe, J. A. (1998). *Educational Management: Theory and Practice*. Kenya: Nairobi University Press.
- [33] Ornstein, A. C. and Levine, D.U (2000). *Foundations of Education* (7th ed). Boston, USA: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- [34] Republic of Cameroon. (1979). Interministerial Circular No. 242/L/729/ MINEDUC/MJS of 25th October 1979 which stipulates the role of P.T.A in the financial management of Secondary Schools.
- [35] Republic of Cameroon. (1995). Decree No. 95/010 of 1st July 1995 which stipulates the role of the School Management Board in the Financial Management of Secondary Schools as a matter of law and policy in Cameroon.
- [36] Republic of Cameroon. (1998). Law No. 98/004 of 14th April 1998: To Lay Down Guidelines for Education in Cameroon. Yaoundé.
- [37] Republic of Cameroon. (1979). Educational Ordinance No. G.370/477/MINEDUC of 1979, created the Parents Teacher Association (P.T.A) in Cameroon for primary schools and colleges, for both public and private schools.
- [38] Republic of Cameroon. (1995). Final Report on the National Forum on Education. Yaoundé: MINEDUC.
- [39] Republic of Cameroon. (1995). Final Report on the National Forum on Education. Yaounde: MINEDUC.
- [40] Republic of Cameroon. (1996). Decree No. 96/06/ TM of 13th February 1996.
- [41] Republic of Cameroon. (1996). Ministerial Instruction No. 046/B1/1464/MINEDUC/ G.P.F.P of 16th September 1996.
- [42] Republic of Cameroon. (2001). Ministerial Decree No 2001/041 of 19th February 2001 Organizing Public Schools and Colleges, and Defining the Attributions of Schools Officials.
- [43] Republic of Cameroon. (2002). Presidential Decree No. 2002/016 of 24th August 2002.
- [44] Republic of Cameroon. Arrete No. 20/B1/1464/ MINEDUC/CAB of 13th May 1996.
- [45] Republic of Cameroon. Circular No. 044/A/135/MINEDUC/SG/GRF/SAPPS.
- [46] Sadker and Sadker. (1991). *Teachers, School, Society*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- [47] Schlechty, P. C. (1997). *Inventing Better Schools: An Action Plan for Education Reform*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- [48] Senge. (1990). *Fundamentals of Public Administration*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- [49] Sergiovanni, T. J. (1994). *Building Community in Schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- [50] Sergiovanni, T. J. (2000). *The Life World of Leadership- Creating culture, community and personal meaning in our schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- [51] Sergiovanni, T. J. (2002). *What's in it for Schools?* San Francisco: Routledge.
- [52] Tambo, I.L. (2001). *Principles and Methods of Teaching*: Limbe: Design House.
- [53] Tambo, I.L. (2003). *Cameroon National Education Policy Since the 1995 Forum*: Limbe: Design House.
- [54] Tamukong, J. A. (2004). *Towards better management of public education: Africa Development*, Vol XXIX, No. 2, 2004, pp. 134-157.
- [55] Tchombe, M.T. (2000). *In - service Education and Continuing Professional Development* in Ndongko, T.M. and Tambo, I.L. (Ed). *Educational Development in Cameroon* (1961 – 1999: Issue and Perspectives. University of Regina Press. Nkemji Global Tech.
- [56] Ukeje, B.O, Akabogu, G.C. and Ndu, A. (1992). *Educational Administration*. New Heaven Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishing Co. Ltd.
- [57] Wyk, N. (2003). *The Right and Role of Parents in Education: An International Overview*. Education Today, 53 (3) 33-42

Internet Sources

- <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTEDUCATION/2009>
- http://www.globalpartnership.org/media/library/Final_ESDF