

A CONFLICT OF COLONIAL CULTURES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SUB-SYSTEMS IN AFRICA: CELEBRATING FIFTY YEARS OF POLITICAL AND NOT EDUCATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY IN CAMEROON

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Abstract

This paper sets out to study the conflict of colonial cultures in the educational system in Cameroon. The problem identified in this conflict is the absence of a common vision in the provision of educational values for citizens in the same country. Lack of a common vision provokes problems of equity and quality education. The argument advanced here is that colonial cultures are principal determinants of the educational values in Cameroon. This position is expressed as educational alienation. Harmonization of the educational sub-systems is proposed as a possible means through promoting a culture that is typically Cameroon within the framework of her diversity of cultures. To attain this objective, this paper employs a mixed method of research. The quantitative and qualitative methods are used to prove the hypothesis that some problems of education in Cameroon could be traced in the conflict of colonial cultures. This problem is explained in Dewey's democratic conception of education as educational alienation. The multicultural theory of education rejects the prominence of colonial cultures to the relative neglect of indigenous cultures in Cameroonian school system (Bank 1994). With this theory, educational sovereignty is still to be realized in Cameroon. Therefore, after fifty years of political independence, one is still to think of education sovereignty in Cameroon. Harmonization of the educational sub-systems affords a possible perspective. This objective has to be taken with a multicultural rather than a bicultural overtone. This is to maintain the Cameroon reality of unity in diversity. This vision strengthens the politics of unity and national integration.

Keywords: Colonial Culture, Educational sub-systems, Educational sovereignty, Harmonization

Introduction

The history of Africa presents numerous interventions from European powers and these play a great role in the diversity of most African countries. Cameroon is one of the African countries with diversity of cultures, both colonial and indigenous. The first contact between Cameroon and the Europeans was in the fifteenth century. These Europeans were Portuguese traders and missionaries who established bases along the coastal land (Fonlon, 1969:29 in Fonkeng, 2007:14). The initial name given to Cameroon at the time was "Rio dos Cameroes" a Portuguese equivalence for "river of prawns". The British later changed this name to the Cameroons. When Germany later annexed Cameroon, the German version of the name became Kamerun. This also explains the French appellation "Cameroun" which came when the French took over from the Germans.

Cameroon fell under colonial rule in the second half of the nineteenth century during the scramble for Africa. At this time, the Germans governed Cameroon. This is precisely from the period of 1884 until the end of World War I when Germany lost the war in Europe. As a

result, the allied powers took control of German territories by employing the Mandate system. This system is derived from the tradition of the Roman Empire “Mandatum”. The principle of the Roman law Mandatum applied that someone, a mandarius (agent), could administer a territory on behalf of the owner, the Mandatum (Fonkeng, 2007:16). To this effect, the colony of Germany, Kamerun was recognised as a possession of the League of Nations. Cameroon became known as a mandated territory administered by France and Britain on behalf of the League of Nations.

The consequence of this mandatory system was the formation of an Anglo-French condominium. Cameroon was therefore divided into two: that is, between the French and the British in 1918. The partition of the territory gave France control of more than two thirds of the territory. Britain acquired a small piece of the territory. The League of Nations supervised the administration of Cameroon through the permanent Mandates Commission. This League of Nations’ Mandate was later terminated in 1945 and replaced after the Second World War by the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations Organisation. As a result, Cameroon became a Trust territory of the United Nations Organisation still under the control of the British and the French administration.

On January 1st 1960, French-speaking Cameroon declared their independence from the French administered United Nation’s Trusteeship. French Cameroon was known as La Republique du Cameroun. British Cameroon became independent of the British supervised United Nation’s Trusteeship in October 1961. This part was known as West Cameroon. This led to the emergence of a Federal Republic of Cameroon. North Cameroon, the Northern British part became part of Nigeria at independence. Southern Cameroon, the English South Western highlands area chose to follow the separate course of development in French speaking regions. A decade later, on 20th May 1972, the Federal Republic was transformed into the United Republic of Cameroon. In 1984, the United Republic of Cameroon became known as the Republic of Cameroon.

In a nutshell, a historical survey of Cameroon reveals that foreign influences have played a big role in the history of Cameroon. This is evident from the League of Nations to the United Nations Organization in the former French and British Cameroons as mandated and Trusteeship territories. These events enhanced the emergence of Cameroon as the first bilingual nation in Black Africa. Today, Cameroon has ten administrative regions comprising eight Francophone regions: Far North, North, Adamawa, Centre, Littoral, Western, Eastern and Southern and two Anglophone regions in the Northwest and the Southwest. Appointed governors in addition to the Divisional and Sub-divisional officers administer these regions. Executive powers are conferred on the President of the Republic. The bicultural nature of Cameroon is rooted in colonial influence. Therefore, knowledge of the history of Cameroon constitutes the explanation of the conflict of colonial cultures in the educational system of Cameroon.

Another important aspect in educational development is that elementary education in Cameroon was initially in the hands of Christian missionaries during the colonial era. It was in the 1930s that secondary schools began to develop alongside government interests in educational matters. In 1960, education became less plutocratic and, thus, became meritocratic. The state was fully involved in the provision of schools and accepted private venture in education. For this reason, Cameroon has experienced an increase in educational facilities. There is a link up from primary to secondary school and the provision of university education for all qualified candidates. The distribution of educational opportunities in the Cameroonian system has greatly reduced social divisions. Education has become the basis for excellence, self-improvement, social mobilization and development (Fonkeng, 2007: 18-20). Basic data reveals that the population of Cameroon has increased from about 16 million in 2004 to 20, 000,000 inhabitants in 2014.

This main objective of this paper is to investigate whether the conflict of the two colonial cultures is responsible for lack of harmonisation in the educational sub-systems in Cameroon. There is a co-existence of two cultures of colonial heritage. These two cultures represent the two sub-systems of education. Each sub-system is said to cling jealously to the values of its colonial culture for fear of assimilation. Our study seeks to know whether fear of assimilation explains failure to introduce the objective of harmonization in the educational system in Cameroon.

To study whether fear of the majority French culture is responsible for lack of harmonization.

To inquire whether pride of values of the curricula in the school sub-systems impede the process of harmonization.

To examine whether lack of harmonization can be attributed to colonial bodies promoting colonial interests like the Francophonie and the Commonwealth.

Research Questions

The main research question: How far does conflict in the two cultures of colonial heritage prevent the process of harmonization? It is articulated into three different questions. Is the fear of the culture of the French majority responsible for lack of agreement on harmonization?

Does the pride of values in the curricula of the two sub-systems prevent harmonization?

Can lack of harmonization be attributed to colonial interests of the Francophonie and the Commonwealth?

Hypotheses

The conflict of cultures in Cameroon probably gives reasons for lack of harmonization in the educational sub-systems. There are two cultures of colonial heritage that co-exist in Cameroon. These include; the English and the French cultures. Each culture jealously guards and preserves the values of its own system of education without compromising to the other.

The culture of the majority French is probably responsible for lack of harmonization.

Perhaps pride of values in the curricula of the school sub-systems prevents harmonization.

Maybe, the presence of colonial bodies aimed at promoting colonial interests compromise the objective of harmonization in the educational system in Cameroon.

Methodology of the study

The division of the scope is in two parts; viz, content and geographical delimitations. There are different categories gotten through purposive sampling. University lecturers, Teachers, pedagogic inspectors, student teachers and some students will provide responses to our questionnaire. Some of them were sampled for focus group discussions and interviews.

We shall limit the problem of curricular organization in the secondary school context. We consider the curricula for both grammar and technical institutions in order to diagnose the problems underlying lack of harmonization in the sub-systems of secondary education in Cameroon. This paper covers two different regions in Cameroon. In order to justify the problems arising from lack of harmonization in the two sub-systems of education, studies in both French and English speaking regions in Cameroon are imperative. The study falls within the context of curriculum studies with a strong bias in philosophy of education. The problem of harmonization is apparently a political issue. This paper limits itself within Dewey's pedagogy of interest in democratic education and the of multiculturalism. This theory explains the problem of equity and quality education in the educational achievements of Cameroonian students.

Besides, two approaches of research are used in this study. These include; the quantitative and qualitative methods of research. The reason for these two methods lies in the fact that the weaknesses of one approach should be complemented by the strength of the other. For this quantitative method, the questionnaire was my research instrument. For qualitative approach, I used interviews and focus group discussions to collect data. I carried a pilot test to test the validity of my main research instrument, the questionnaire. The pilot test proved that the instrument was reliable. This test also helped the candidate to modify some of the questions to avoid ambiguity.

The sample regions for collection of data included the Centre and North-West regions. The target population included teachers, students and student teachers in secondary schools and Higher Teacher Training Colleges for both general and technical. Having collected the data, I analyzed this data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences 17 programme. The data was analyzed based on the three hypotheses. I also tested his hypotheses using the Chi square, precisely the Pearson Chi square test. This test sought the correlation between each hypotheses and lack of harmonization in the curricula of the two sub-systems. The results of the test proved the following points; The null hypotheses were rejected at two levels which stated that there the conflict of cultures, fear of assimilation, pride of values in distinct curricula and colonial cultural interests are independent. On the other hand, we obtained the results that there is a strong relation between harmonization and these hypotheses.

The Problem of Lack of Harmonization

The co-existence of two educational sub-systems inherited from the colonial masters present interesting phenomena worth studying. There have been efforts in harmonizing the two sub-systems at the level of basic education. These efforts are far from being realised in secondary education. Here, both sub-systems function autonomously. This has given rise to what can be termed “academic exodus”. More and more French speaking Cameroonians prefer giving the Anglo-Saxon educational orientation to their children from basic education to secondary and even higher education.

Generally, English speaking Cameroonians do not reciprocate the “academic exodus” experienced from the French sub-system to the English sub-system. Part of the explanation given lies in the question of values in education. There is, therefore, a discernable dialectic of values. There are two sub-systems providing different values. Each sub-system jealously clings to its own values finding it difficult to compromise. What is interesting to note is that there is something to benefit from both sub-systems. The English sub-system is noted for good moral and intellectual values that enhance the child’s appropriate integration into the community. On the other hand, most products from the French sub-system continuously expresses brilliant intellectual values in subjects like Mathematics and Physics. This becomes imperative to study the merits of harmonising the curricula of the two sub-systems for the educational development of Cameroon. This study has to lead us to determine whether all aspects of education have to be harmonized or whether there are some pertinent aspects that require harmonization. This study also has to determine the processes and what it takes to harmonize two sub-systems of education in the context of dialectical cultures.

Moreover, there are discrepancies in the examination bodies that manage public exams in Cameroon. While the English-speaking students are writing the General Certificate of Education Examinations, (GCE Ordinary and Advanced Levels), the French-speaking students are writing the Brevet d’Etudes du Premier Cycle, (BEPC), Probatoire and Baccalaureate examinations. These two bodies entail a great financial expenditure of the country’s resources without commendable outcome. This paper sets out to pursue the need for harmonization and to ascertain what has to be harmonized. The country needs a harmonized and standardized system but the officials as well as educational stakeholders in the country do

not seem to agree on what should be retained or dropped in the process of achieving a system with sub-systems. It is, therefore, imperative for this paper to take the challenge and set the pace to ensure educational development in a country where problems of equity and quality education are identified.

In technical education, the French sub-system is dominant leading to many school dropouts in the English speaking part of Cameroon. Though there are recent reforms where the English-speaking students write the technical GCE Examinations, there are still problems of quality and equity in the management of secondary technical education in Cameroon. With regard to technical education, English speaking Cameroonians pursue a French-curricular system of education. Technical education is oriented towards the French sub-system and this is accountable for the host of problems faced by Anglophone students. In other words, very little efforts are made to encourage and give an Anglo-saxon orientation to this form of education especially in the English speaking part of the Country. In this case, Anglophone speaking Cameroonians feel marginalized as far as technical education is concerned (Interviews with students of Higher Technical Teacher Training College, (HTTTC), Bambili & Government Technical High School, (GTHS), Bamenda 2/05/2013).

Besides, education stands as a quintessence of life because it permits the individual to appropriately adapt to his environment. The school is an agency whose organization aims at helping the child to live in an enabling atmosphere according to his desires, needs, aptitudes and capacities (Dewey 1966 :34). The child has to live a reflective and critical life based on the school set up. This approach imposes an obligation on educators with regard to the proper environment for learning. With the conception of the school as a microcosm of society, it is necessary to portray its new character, which is different from that of the traditional four-walled-classroom. It is an embodiment of the child's experiences, family and religious environments, play, leisure and other social amenities of life. Therefore, Dewey's pedagogy of interest serves as a panacea to school environments that fail to promote interest in schooling and reduce the high rate of school dropouts. This brings into limelight the organization and the management of school resources like the curriculum in order to enhance the growth of the learners as well as the growth of the nation. A challenge to radically revolutionize the present curricula towards quality and equity in the educational systems is required. The pedagogy of interest in democratic education serves as a means of resolving the educational questions arising from the dialectic of values in the two sub-systems in Cameroon.

Presentation of findings

The hypotheses indicate that conflict of colonial cultures in Cameroon is an obstacle to the process of harmonization. Below, there are cultural considerations like fear of cultural assimilation by each sub-sub-system, pride of values in the curricula of the school sub-systems and the colonial cultural interests as problems responsible for lack of harmonization in the two sub-systems of education in Cameroon.

Mutual Fear of Assimilation as An Obstacle to Harmonization

Table 1: Distribution of the opinions of respondents on the fears of assimilation by one sub-systems

	Very serious	Serious	Moderate	Minor	Not a problem	Indifferent	Total
Numbers	148	102	52	38	48	12	400
Percentage	37,0	25,5	13,0	9,5	12,0	3,0	100

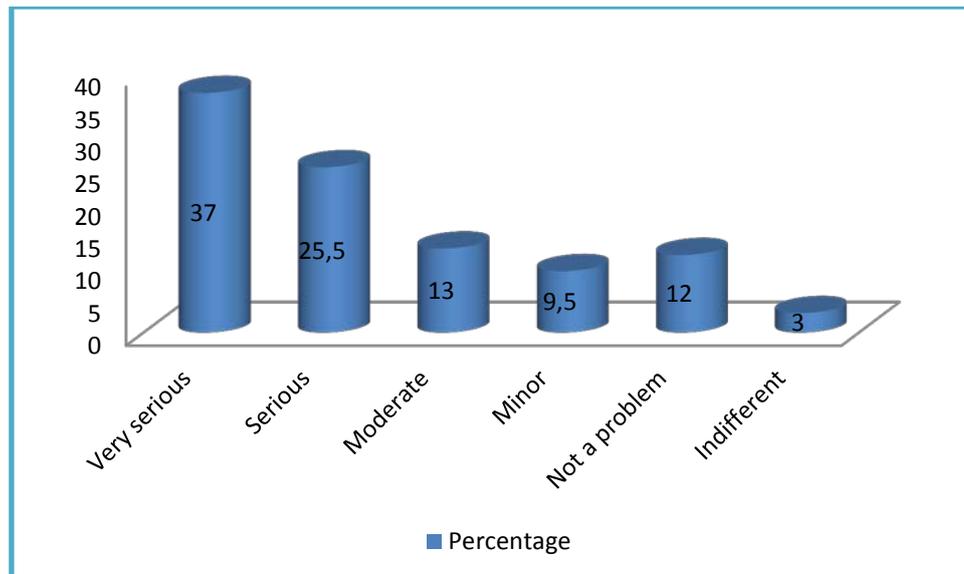


Figure 1: Percentage distribution of the opinions of respondents on the fears of assimilation by each sub-system

Another argument advanced by teachers in the English sub-system of education against harmonization is that the policy of harmonization is a means to cultural assimilation. From the history and evolution of education in Cameroon, some examples have been used to justify this position. The first example is that the English sub-system had eight years of primary education. Initially, it was reduced to seven years and presently it has been reduced to six years to agree with the years of primary education in the French sub-system. He rejects the need for harmonization at all cost. For him, the present situation is gradually instilling what he describes as « a culture of doing everything in a rush ». This is an attitude he identifies in the French sub-system of education. In this case, he blames the falling standards on the ‘rush syndrome’ that has encroached in the educational circle. A typical example is the tendency to write the GCE Ordinary Level in Form Four and the GCE Advanced Level in lower sixth. This is a serious academic virus that has infected most parents and students especially in the capital city. The pedagogic inspector for French language contended that most of the examples he can cite are children from the Francophone backgrounds who pursue the English sub-system of education. He went further to indicate that the interest of these parents and students is to succeed in the final exams and proceed to the next step. This is done irrespective of the acquisition of the basic achievement level required in every stage of education. The process of reasoning here is narrowed to success in examinations as if examinations tell the whole story about education.

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From the arguments and examples postulated by the teachers especially the pedagogic inspector for teaching French language in the English sub-system of education, it is therefore acceptable to observe that cultural considerations are serious barriers to the educational objective of harmonization. This affirms the first hypothesis where it is stated that Cameroonians of each culture jealously clings to the values of their sub-system of education without compromise. The argument here is not the percentage of persons who argue as such but the reality of the barrier in question. If one argues in terms of the percentage in this case, one’s argument will be susceptible to the misleading reasoning of argumentum ad numerum or ad populum (Copi, 1998; Hurley, 2000). By this reasoning, one limits the truth of an

assertion to the greater number of people who support the view. Truth is one and does not depend on the democratic principle of the majority will. Therefore, some English-speaking Cameroonians acknowledge lack of harmonization in the educational sub-systems in Cameroon, but do not see the need to materialise the objective as a solution to problems of education. One of the major reasons given is cultural differences. The fear expressed by most of them arises from the tendency in the French colonial policy of assimilation. This fear is coupled with the fact that the French-speaking Cameroonians constitute the greater population in the country.

Table 1 above presents opinions on the fear of assimilation of one sub-system by another. For the responses to this question, out of the four hundred copies of the questionnaire analyzed, 148 respondents say it is a very serious issue. This refers to 37% of the respondents. Also, 102 respondents say that it is a serious matter and this leads to 25% score. Moreover, 52 respondents observe that the situation is moderate. This indicates 13% score. In addition, 38 of them hold that it is a minor problem. Here, we have the score of 9.5%. Besides, 48 respondents maintain that it is not a problem registering the score of 12%. Lastly, 12 respondents did not answer this question giving 3%.

From the responses, it is plausible to affirm that cultural considerations are an impediment to the process of harmonization. This opinion is confirmed in the data analysed and the number of responses that testify this opinion. This observation is reinforced in the focus group discussions conducted both in Yaounde and Bamenda. From the discussions, most Anglophones argue that the policy of harmonization is a means of deception towards assimilation. This opinion is backed up by a national pedagogic inspector for teaching French to the Anglophones. The arguments advanced by most of the teachers are that the English sub-system is outstanding and attractive in the world. In this case, harmonization, which is disguised assimilation, is simply a means to destroy the English sub-system of education. To justify the fear of assimilation, some teachers argue that recent reforms to merge the science subjects (integration in curriculum organization) and generally consider it as sciences as in the French sub-system should be rejected by the English sub-system. Some of the teachers in GBHS Mendong and Essos argue that the competency-based approach is a subtle attempt to destroy the English sub-system of Education. The greater percentage in this response testifies the fact that, fear of assimilation is a major barrier to harmonization. They argue that the political system is gradually making the GCE board to function like the Baccalaureate Office and write examinations at the same time. Everything is done in a rush. Consequently, for the Francophones, harmonization simply means assimilation and to make the Anglophone sub-system function like the French sub-system.

The 9.5% and the 12% responses that hold it is a minor and not a problem respectively, is probably from most of the French-speaking Cameroonians. From the group discussions with some teachers from the Francophone sub-system in Bamenda, most of them maintained that harmonization of the two sub-systems in Cameroon is an absolute necessity. Most of them identified problems in both sub-systems that could easily be resolved with the process of harmonization. In this line of thought, they did not perceive harmonization as a disguised form of assimilation. Some of them observed that assimilation is an unjustified fear and that there is a need to sensitize teachers, students and parents in order to achieve this objective.

Pride of Values in the Two Sub-systems as Impediment to Harmonization

Table 2: Distribution of the opinions of respondents on pride of values in the curricula values of the two sub-systems

	Very serious	Serious	Moderat	Minor	Not a problem	Indifferent	Total
Numbers	146	131	69	29	12	13	400
Percentage	36,5	32,8	17,3	7,3	3,0	3,3	100

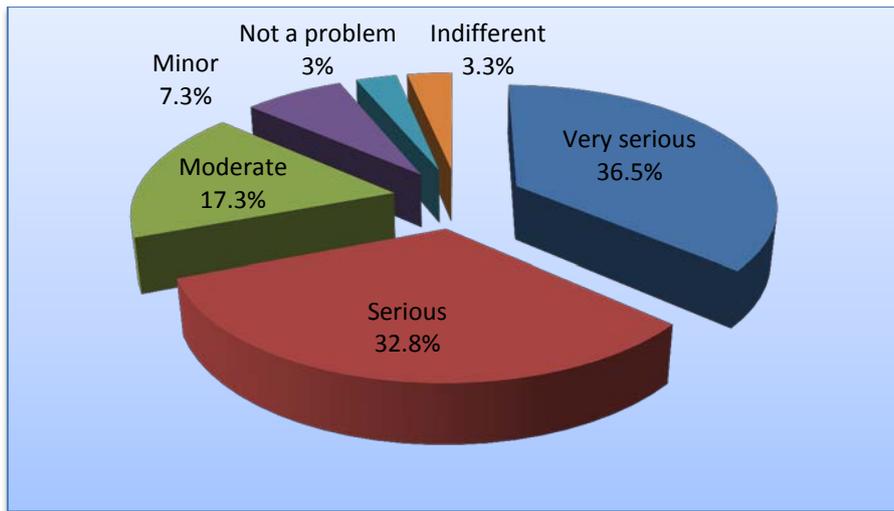


Figure 13: Percentage distribution of the opinions of respondents on the pride of values in the curricula in the two sub-systems.

Table 2 and Figure 2 present the distribution of the opinions of respondents on differences in curricular values of the two sub-systems. 146 respondents (corresponding 36.5%, as indicated in figure 13) out of 400 perceive the differences in the curricular values of the two sub-systems is a very serious problem that hinders the harmonization of the two sub systems of education in Cameroon. Again, 131 (corresponding 32.8%) indicate that differences in the values of the curricula of the two sub-systems is a serious problem impairing the harmonization of the two sub-systems. 17.3% view it as a moderate problem, 7.3% perceive it as a minor problem, and only 3% consider it as no problem. 3.3% chose to sit on the fence on this issue.

From these observations, it is evident that the differences in the values of the two curricula of the two sub-systems is a shared problem that hinder the harmonization of the French and English sub-systems of education in Cameroon. This is justified because only 3% viewed it as no problem compared to 97% who viewed it an issue that matters. From focus group discussions with teachers in Yaounde and Bamenda, it could be inferred that the 3% that did not consider this to be a serious issue are some secondary school teachers in the English-speaking sub-system. They present skeptical and cynical attitudes towards the problem. Some English-speaking inspectors argue that the process of harmonization is a means to destroy the values of the English sub-system of education. The justification given to this thesis is drawn from technical education, which basically has an orientation of the French sub-system of education. The problems here include; poor performance of Anglophones in this area of education and the numerous school dropouts justified in methods of teaching and processes of evaluation (Discussions with teachers and students from Government Technical High School Bamenda, 14/05/2013).

Cultural Interests of Two Colonial Masters

Table 3: Distribution of the opinions of respondents on the cultural interests of two colonial masters

	Very serious	Serious	Moderate	Minor	Not a problem	Indifferent	Total
Numbers	208	70	48	37	12	25	400
Percentage	52,0	17,5	12,0	9,3	3,0	6,3	100

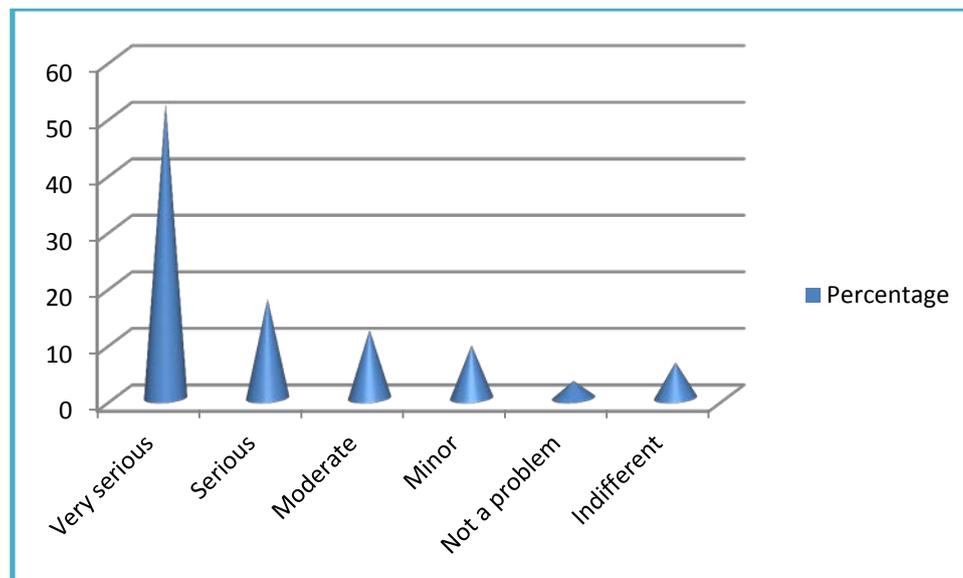


Figure 3: Percentage distribution of the opinions of respondents on the cultural interests of two colonial masters

Table 3 presents an overview of the opinions on how colonial cultural heritage influences the organization of the curriculum. Cultural interests of the two colonial masters Britain and France are seen to be a major obstacle to the harmonization of the curricula in the two sub-systems in Cameroon. From the opinions gathered, 208 responses hold that it is a very serious problem. This is 52% responses. 70 responses consider it as serious giving 17.5%. Also, 48 responses say it is a moderate problem and this gives us 12%. Further, 37 responses consider it as a minor problem and 12 responses say it is not a problem. This gives 9.3% and 3% respectively. 25 responses were indifferent by not giving any opinion. This registers 6.3%.

The results of these responses confirm the fact that cultural interests of the colonial masters hinder the process of harmonization in the organization of the curricula in Cameroon. The 52% responses probably refer to the fact that each sub-system jealously clings to its values refusing to compromise to the other. While the English sub-system celebrates the values of the commonwealth, the French sub-system is there to preserve the values of the Francophonie. Here, one finds a correlation between the colonial cultural heritage and the organization of the curriculum. This condition serves as a major obstacle to the process of harmonization.

On the other hand, there are some opinions which say that it is a minor issue or not a problem. These opinions arise from persons who do not think that colonial interests should interfere into the management of the affairs of Cameroon. These persons could be described as exaggerated optimists who think that Cameroon enjoy absolute sovereignty in the socio-political affairs of the country. In this case, they probably think that the process of harmonization is possible because Cameroonians are required to shape their destiny.

Some of the teachers in Government Bilingual High School Mendong and Essos argue that the competency-based approach is a subtle attempt to destroy the English sub-system of Education. The greater percentage in this response testifies the fact that, fear of assimilation is a major barrier to harmonization. They argue that the political system is gradually making the GCE board to function like the Baccalaureate Office and write examinations at the same time.

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The 9.5% and the 12% responses that hold it is a minor and not a problem respectively, is probably from most of the French-speaking Cameroonians. From the group discussions with some teachers from the Francophone sub-system in Bamenda, most of them maintained that harmonization of the two sub-systems in Cameroon is an absolute necessity. Most of them identified problems in both sub-systems that could easily be resolved with the policy of harmonization. In this line of thought, they did not perceive harmonization as a disguised form of assimilation. Some of them observed that assimilation is an unjustified fear and that there is a need to sensitize teachers, students and parents in order to achieve this objective.

Test of hypotheses

This sub-section tests the three hypotheses that this paper proposes. These hypotheses include; fear of assimilation, pride of values in the distinct cultures and colonial interests as explanations to lack of harmonization in the educational sub-systems in Cameroon. Owing to the fact that this is a correlational study, this tests aims at determining the relationship between each hypotheses and the problem, which is lack of harmonization.

Conflict of Cultures and Lack of Harmonization

This sub-section examines the relationship between two aspects of the hypotheses. These two aspects include; fear of domination from the culture of the majority and pride of values in the distinct curricula of the sub-systems as cultural aspects influencing harmonization of the two sub-systems of education in Cameroon.

Table 4: Association between Harmonization and Fear of domination from the Majority French

Fear of domination from the majority French will exist * harmonization exists in all aspects of education Cross tabulation

Count

		harmonization exists in all aspects of education				Total
		strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree	
fear of domination from the majority French will exist	High	44	20	36	85	185
	important	11	18	32	54	115
	average	5	11	8	0	24
	Low	5	0	8	4	17
	little or no	15	0	10	20	45
Total		80	49	94	163	386

Our Chi Square probability here is 0.000, which is less than 1%. This rejects the null hypothesis that fear of domination from the majority French and harmonization of the two sub-systems are independent. This is clear indication that the fear of domination from the majority French hinders the harmonization of the two sub-systems of education in Cameroon.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	61,435 ^a	12	,000
Likelihood Ratio	71,564	12	,000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1,635	1	,201
N of Valid Cases	386		

a.5 cells (25,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2,16.

Table 5: Association between harmonization and pride of values in the distinct sub-systems

Pride of values in the distinct curricula exists * harmonization exists in all aspects of education

Cross tabulation

Count

		harmonization exists in all aspects of education				Total
		strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree	
pride of values in the distinct curricula exists	High	31	10	34	87	162
	important	19	23	20	41	103
	Average	0	5	16	32	53
	Low	21	10	19	5	55
	little or no	7	0	5	0	12
Total		78	48	94	165	385

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	79,397 ^a	12	,000
Likelihood Ratio	97,333	12	,000
Linear-by-Linear Association	19,756	1	,000
N of Valid Cases	385		

a. 3 cells (15,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1,50.

We have a Chi Square probability of 0.000, which is less than 0.01 (1%). This rejects the null hypothesis that harmonization of the two sub-systems and the pride of values in the distinct sub-systems are independent. Thus pride of values in the distinct sub-systems is strongly associated with lack of harmonization in the two sub-systems of education of Cameroon. The argument is that each culture jealously clings to the values of its sub-system. None is ready to compromise. Consequently, this pride prevents the process of harmonization.

From the two aspects of the hypotheses tested above, it can be argued that there is a correlation between the conflict of cultures of colonial heritage in Cameroon and harmonization.

The reality of this conflict minimizes the possibility of this process in the educational system. Therefore, the results of the data confirm the hypothesis that the conflict of two cultures in Cameroon gives reason for lack of harmonization in the two sub-systems of education in Cameroon.

Interpretations and Discussions

Democratic conception of education in Dewey's terms requires aspects of equity and quality education. The exigencies of equity in education refer to fairness and equal access to opportunities (Nelson et al. 2006). Fairness here must be understood in Rawls' context where the principle of difference is binding in the execution of justice. Here, the vulnerable groups

or the minorities are favoured in order to enhance their progress and well-being (Rawls 1999). This situation is antithetical to “might is right” ethics or “survival of the fittest” conditions of life. In the application of Rawls’ principle of difference, democratic education enhances the needs, interest, preferences, desires and aptitudes of the vulnerable or weak students in order to ensure their participation and integration in the life of the community. It is fairness or equity that ensures quality education in a democratic or multicultural context (Parker 2003). Therefore, the discrepancies and problems expressed in the curricula of the two sub-systems of education betray the absence of equity and consequently quality education.

Besides, these problems extend to other aspects in the management of the curricula of the two sub-systems of education in Cameroon. One identifies problems in different examinations and evaluation procedures and those associated with human resource personnel. The problem of equity was discernable in the distribution of human resources in the two sub-systems of education. What could be interpreted is that the two sub-systems of education do not have the same status. The English sub-system is the underdog as far as the provision of teachers in both general and technical secondary schools is concerned. These problems provoke other associated shortcomings in the provision of equity and quality education to Cameroonian citizens. For example, the “cult of excellence” and certificates have reduced schooling to the “incubus of examinations” (Scheffler 1980). Teachers teach what is tested and students learn what enhance success in examination. This desire also degenerates into buying and selling of examination questions, marks and certificates in public examinations.

Further, technical education in Cameroon is presented as an example of assimilation in education. The French orientation of technical education and its associated pedagogic problems betray the absence of equity and quality education in Cameroon. This form of education and the exigencies of its public exams provoke high school dropouts thus rendering technical education unpopular to many English speaking Cameroonians. This problem is traced in the political will, which favours the culture of the majority French. The examples above serve as strong reasons for Anglophones to express fear in the policy of harmonization.

In an attempt to justify the policy of harmonization, it was imperative to refer to the different philosophies that promote the spirit of unity. Harmonization is a veritable problem that requires redress. To justify this problem, it is important to explain the appropriateness of this policy to the educational system in Cameroon. These include; an easy adaptation of schools to the demands of the changing society, the promotion of team work and dialogue between the two sub-systems of education. This ensures quality teaching in a multicultural environment, either in the general or the technical sector. This approach stands as a better chance to ensure fairness in curricular organization, the conservation of cultural patrimony (Mvesso 2005), resolution of the problems of equity and enhancement of education to good citizenship. Finally, with the merits of harmonization, mobility of students from schools in one sub-system to another within the country has little problems. Parents move from one part of the country to another without fear of quality education for their children.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Educational values in this context refer to the outcome of the harmonization process. The synthesis of values from the two sub-systems of education produces a set of educational values unique to Cameroon. One of the problems discussed is that the different values in the two sub-system of education reflect the values of colonial heritage. The French sub-system reflects the values of the French and the English sub-system reflects the values of the British. These two colonial values are responsible for the problems of equity and quality education in Cameroon.

Owing to these problems, it is recommendable to establish educational values that reflect the needs, desires, preferences and experiences of Cameroon (Dewey 1966). Cameroon

needs an autonomous secondary education curriculum reflecting the interests of Cameroonians (Nyerere 1973). Interest here refers to Dewey's intuition, which holds that the organization and management of the curriculum should be based on the needs and experiences of learners. These Tchombe observes that in Africa and more precisely in Cameroon, reforms in education seem to lose sight of their history and cultural heritage. This is in conformity with the colonial education policies that ignored and marginalized African cultural heritage, pedagogical practices, including indigenous psychology in traditional education (2009). Colonial masters promote values in education like assimilation, domination, economic and human exploitation. The urgency to deliver the Cameroonian education system from colonial claws is visible. It should be unique, autonomous and independent by asserting the sovereignty of Cameroon (Nyerere 1973). At the moment, one perceives mental colonization in education. Therefore, values proper to Cameroon are imperative. How is this possible?

Harmonization is a proper means of defining the destiny of Cameroon educational system. The establishment of values proper to the interest of Cameroon does not mean a total rejection of all the colonial educational values. This is narrow-mindedness and superficiality. Colonialism is part of the Cameroonian heritage. Nkrumah observes that "a goat does not eat all the grass it sees" (Nkrumah, 1970). This is indicative of the fact that there is something valuable in colonial heritage. These values that enhance educational development of Cameroon are commendable and should be preserved. However, these values have to be laid on the people's culture. Ebenezer Njoh mouelle argues that one's education has to be rooted in one's culture before he appropriately dialogues with other cultures (1972). If this approach is not maintained, cultural dialogue may degenerate into assimilation, imperialism and neocolonialism.

The international bodies have to support, oversee and encourage all procedures and processes that lead to the establishment of a curriculum proper to Cameroon. The means to do this is the promotion of research and other means of sensitizing Cameroonians on the policy of harmonization. It is therefore imperative for Cameroonian researchers, educational stakeholders, politicians and philosophers to think of better ways of developing a democratic culture in Cameroon schools (Fonkoua et al. 2007).

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