



**THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHER PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES ON
THE QUALITY OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CAMEROONⁱ**

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Abstract:

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of teaching, professional development, and assessment strategies used in the teaching of Citizenship Education in Secondary Schools in the Buea Municipality of the South West Region of Cameroon. The study sought to find out how these variables influence the quality of teaching. Two research questions guided the study. The first sought to determine the impact of teacher professional development on the teaching of citizenship education while the second assessed how the assessment strategies used influenced the quality of teaching of the subject. The multiple case study design was used to carry out the investigation. The sample comprised six teachers drawn from three schools. The purposive sampling procedure was used to select participating schools and teachers for the study. Instruments used in gathering data included an interview and observation schedules. Two teachers were interviewed, and one teacher observed in each sample school to find out the impact of teacher professional development and assessment strategies on the quality of teaching. The data from interview and observations were transcribed and coded thematically. The findings showed that teachers were not systematically participating in professional development activities due to the unavailability or high cost such activities and also due to the socio-political instability. Consequently, their assessment strategies leave much to be desired as they did not carry out formative assessment during lessons and relied on written tests administered after certain chunks of contents had been covered.

ⁱ INFLUENCE DES STRATEGIES DE DEVELOPPEMENT PROFESSIONNEL ET D'ÉVALUATION DES ENSEIGNANTS SUR LA QUALITE DU COURS D'ÉDUCATION A LA CITOYENNETE DANS LES ECOLES SECONDAIRES AU CAMEROUN

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Résumé :

L'étude avait pour objectif d'étudier l'influence des stratégies d'enseignement, de développement professionnel et d'évaluation mises en œuvre dans l'enseignement du cours d'Éducation à la citoyenneté dans les écoles secondaires de la commune de Buéa (région du Sud-Ouest du Cameroun). L'étude a entrepris de déterminer l'influence de ces variables sur la qualité de l'enseignement. Deux questions de recherche ont encadré les travaux. La première a visé la détermination de l'impact du développement professionnel de l'enseignant sur la didactique de l'Éducation à la citoyenneté, tandis que la seconde a évalué les modalités d'influence des stratégies d'évaluation utilisées sur la qualité de l'enseignement de la matière. Le modèle d'étude de cas multiples a été adopté dans la conduite de l'enquête. L'échantillon comprenait six enseignants provenant de trois écoles. La procédure d'échantillonnage par choix raisonné a été utilisée pour sélectionner les écoles et les enseignants qui ont participé à l'étude. Les instruments utilisés pour la collecte des données comprenaient un entretien et des programmes d'observation. Deux enseignants ont été interviewés et un enseignant a été observé dans chacune des écoles échantillons pour déterminer l'impact des stratégies de développement professionnel et d'évaluation des enseignants sur la qualité de l'enseignement. Les données issues des entretiens et des observations ont été transcrites et codées par thème. Les résultats ont montré que les enseignants ne participaient pas systématiquement aux activités de développement professionnel en raison de l'indisponibilité ou du coût élevé de ces activités et en raison de l'instabilité sociopolitique. En conséquence, leurs stratégies d'évaluation laissent vraiment à désirer, car ils ne procèdent pas à une évaluation formative pendant les cours et s'appuient sur des tests écrits administrés après que certaines portions du cours ont été couvertes.

Mots-clés : enseignement, perfectionnement professionnel, évaluation, influence, éducation à la citoyenneté, écoles secondaires, programme, influence

1. Introduction

Citizenship education was introduced into the Cameroon school system in the early 1960s but only gained prominence in the 1980s with the rise of corruption in public services and the apparent lack of the spirit of patriotism by citizens, especially the youth. With the objective of instilling moral, and civic qualities in the youth and developing their artistic qualities, the government through Ministerial Order No 30/05/MINESEC/IGE/IGP/ SH of 12th April 2005, revised the syllabuses and established the "Citizenship Education Syllabuses" in General and Technical Secondary Schools. Recently, in a bid to achieve the global education goals and train its youth to acquire the 21st century skills, the government resorted to the development of a sectorial strategy

encapsulated in its Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (2009) and has embarked, from 2010, on transforming its economy to become an emergent nation by 2035. Education is a key sector charged with the development of the suitable human resources to make this vision a reality. In this light, all school curricula have undergone reform including the Syllabuses of Citizenship Education. Essentially, a new pedagogic paradigm has been introduced in a bid to train students who have the knowledge competences and attitudes to effect the expected national transformation. Teacher professional training in the light of the new curriculum is, therefore, key to its effective implementation.

2. Research Questions

- 1) What is the impact of the teachers' professional development on the teaching of citizenship education?
- 2) How does the use of assessment methods influence the teaching of citizenship education?

2.1 Review of Literature

Amstrong and Savage (1994) described professional development as a "*career long obligation*" resulting from the fact that, when teachers undertake a training course, they acquire insights into the psychological needs of the students. Further, they argued that with a sound professional training backed by certificates, there will be a corresponding high quality in the use of educational resources in the classroom and the manner in which lessons will be presented to the learners. With the aid of professional training, teachers will find it convenient to display instructional materials, use teaching methods appropriately as well as use the different assessment strategies to address the needs of the learners.

In the same vein, Bame (2007) affirms that the professional commitment by teachers leads to quality teaching and learning and that the teacher's responsibility is to ensure that learners gain positive behaviours after each instruction. Therefore, the high academic performance of students is what the teacher must pursue. Consequently, teachers enthusiastically accept the challenges of teaching without complaining about the learners' needs, the absence of resources and work load because professional development is demonstrated in the way teachers interact with the students, their colleagues, the administration, parents and the public as a whole. This teacher behaviour, he suggests, will motivate learners to see them as role models and will encourage them increase commitment in learning by actively participating in the teaching and learning process.

For Tsafact (2003), teacher professionalism gained through continuous training should not only entail an individual or subjective quality but also reflect on the learners after instruction. This means that the learners must be able to provide answers to questions based on the objectives of the lesson, integrate in their respective communities,

solve problems, and make progressive contributions with the knowledge they gained after instruction. Therefore, the responsibility of the teacher is to use his attribute of professionalism to organise the lesson in ways that will enable learners to gain the required skills needed for survival. Felisa and Judith (1999) propose that it is important to pay attention to the needs of teachers if a successful citizenship education is to be achieved in the future. They recommend valuable professional development tools and well-designed training experiences and even pre-service training to provide the teacher with knowledge. Teachers' learning can be incorporated through educational programmes, workshops, seminars, materials, follow-up support, opportunities for advancement, and recognition. All this will provide the teacher with skills necessary to teach citizenship. Also, teachers should be seen as beneficiaries and advocates for such programmes rather than transmission vehicles (OAS 1998, p. 41). For quality teaching, such training should be systematically integrated with follow up support and opportunities for sharing.

A seminar is a form of academic instruction, either at a university or offered by a commercial or professional organization (Kena, 2016). It has the function of bringing together small groups for recurring meetings, focusing each time on some particular subject, in which everyone present is requested to actively participate. The Instructor prepares the concepts and techniques they will present and discusses through a combination of visual materials, interactive tools or equipment, and demonstrations. It includes some take-home material for the participants that relate to the lecture. Kraft (2017) added that during seminars, teachers learn new teaching strategies to improve the quality of instruction. This allows them to make changes in the way they teach their students, and incorporate innovative teaching methods in the classroom. It teaches them how to work with a variety of learning styles, since not all students learn the same way. It also helps teachers change their day-to-day teaching methods, encouraging them to accept new methods based on accurate education research. In the teaching of citizenship education, teachers gain knowledge in implementing the subject matter, using the different teaching methods, materials and assessment strategies to impart knowledge to learners from seminars organised either by the school administration or some Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

In this connection, the Government of Cameroon through the Ministry of Secondary Education annually organises seminars at the Regional and Divisional levels to ensure the professional development of secondary school teachers. In this connection one was held in Government High School Bokwango from March 23rd to 24th 2018 under the direction of the Divisional Delegate for Secondary Education and other pedagogic inspectors and principals to increase the quality of teaching by upgrading teachers' knowledge and skills to teach Citizenship education and to identifying the challenges teachers face in teaching citizenship education in order to make recommendations for possible solutions. The seminar was attended by all the social science teachers (history, geography, philosophy and economics) who have the responsibility to teach citizenship education in secondary schools in Fako Division. The seminar lasted for two days and

the complaints posed by teachers were mostly that of insufficient teaching materials and their huge work load which has an influence on their other teaching subjects.

Desimon (2009) advocated that, a workshop for teachers should involve all the elements of a Seminar, with the greater proportion of time consecrated to “hands-on-practice” or laboratory work. Workshops in education are educational programmes designed to teach or introduce participants to practical skills, techniques, or ideas which they can then use in their work or their daily lives. The practice or Lab work is designed to reinforce, imprint and bring forward an immediate functioning dimension to the participant’s eye and hands by implementing and practicing the actual concept or technique that was taught through the lecture and demonstration process. Rockoff (2014), identified three general features of a workshop: that they are conducted by people who have real experience in the subject under discussion, often designed for people who are working together, or working in the same field and are small, usually from 6 to 15 participants, allowing everyone some personal attention and the chance to be heard.

Reflective practice guides teachers to self-dialogue and inquiry that lead the decision-making process within teaching-learning contexts. In this respect, Schön contended that “*reflectivity is a dialogue of thinking and doing through which I become more skilful*” (Giovannelli, 2003, p.293). The author further identified “reflection in action,” which entails self-critique when understanding a phenomenon and how we re-describe it through experimentation and “reflection on action” that implies rebuilding and examining actions and events. In this light, teachers’ reflection should start with the classroom assessment, focused on self-assessment of their pedagogical practices, language teaching and materials and their effect on students’ learning outcomes, which might enable them to reconstruct and improve a particular teaching and/or learning situation. Likewise, Rodgers (as cited in Nunez, & Tellez, 2015) argued that reflecting on the teaching context focuses teachers on what truly happens in the classroom, not on what they expect to happen. This can be done in a four-stage sequence: “presence in experience” (recognising crucial aspects to alert teachers about why and how to handle a classroom event); “describing experience” (objectively addressing classroom observation); “analysis of class performance” (teachers’ justification of the issues observed); and “taking intelligent action” (trying out and innovating in the classroom). Hence, reflection might shape the teachers’ personal and professional growth. Personal growth benefits from reflection since the core concern of teachers, as teaching materials developers is to fulfil the learners’ needs and interests, and professional growth capitalises on teachers’ awareness of how their reflective practice works and its incidence on their personal and professional development.

Wink (as cited in Nunez et al., 2006) emphasised that the reflection process allows educators to devote time to learn, unlearn, and relearn on their teaching practice. In line with Rodger’s reflective sequence that teachers reflect upon, assess, and act to improve their teaching, researchers like Barlett (1990), Pollard and Tann (1993), Viafara (2005), and Wallace (1991) suggested reflective cycles to lead teachers into knowing how they teach, self-assessing their teaching practice and planning to make informed decisions that may

refine their teaching. Furthermore, Loughran (2002) notes that *“one element of reflection that is common to many is the notion of a problem. What that problem is, the way it is framed and reframed, is an important aspect of understanding the nature of reflection”* (p. 33). Similarly, Nunez et al. (2015) remarked that *“reflection should be a constant process among teachers that permits them to solve teaching and learning problems”* (p. 113). The notion of a problem fosters reflection since teachers’ concerns make them act to alleviate a learning difficulty. In the same direction, Nunez and Tellez (2009) affirmed that *“The onset of teachers’ reflection is the individual assessment of the classroom, which enable[s] them to make decisions when they create or adapt materials that fulfil particular needs and learning setting”* (p 172).

Peter (1997) proposes that the purposes of assessment are to diagnose students’ problems, and make judgement about students’ academic performance, in order to provide feedback and incentives to learners, place learners, plan and conduct instruction in the classroom as well as to establish and maintain the classroom social climate by ensuring order and stability. The fundamental characteristics of a good assessment method are its validity and reliability. Geoff (2004) agrees that assessment measures the breadth and depth of learning. Besides, it can inspire, motivate and provide the feedback which is very important for targeting prompt instructional issues. He further identifies and makes a clear distinction between two types of assessment which are norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessment. Norm-referenced assessment is that which compares candidates with each other and rewards the best. The percentage of candidates getting each grade remains unchanged, regardless of their marks unless a conscious attempt is made to change those percentages. Criterion-referenced on the other hand measures what the candidates are capable of doing. Thus, they receive a pass if they can comply with the criteria and a fail if they cannot. Similarly, Patricia (1988) considers assessment to be a very important tool in improving teaching and learning but suggests that to achieve this objective, teachers should be the ones to formulate the questions. In this regard, Angelo and Cross (1988), proposed certain techniques that should guide teachers in selecting questions for assessment. These techniques should: focus on changing aspects of teacher or learner behaviour that can be used to promote better learning; provide information about what students are learning in individual classrooms; give teachers and students information they can use to make mid-term changes and corrections; results from the use of the technique should be relatively quick and easy to analyse; assessment techniques should be relatively simple to prepare and use; and the questions should be connected with the learners’ ability to answer.

There are two most important and widely used types of assessment in the teaching and learning process: the formative and the summative assessment, Haney (1997). Formative assessment is used at every stage in the teaching and learning process. It acts as a guide to the teacher to find out if the learners are following up the lesson. The teacher also uses it to find out whether the teaching methods and materials used are appropriate or clearly fulfils the reason for which it was selected. Summative assessment on the other hand is carried out at the end of a term. It presents a general report on the students’ performance, provides information to the administration on whether the learner should

be promoted to the next class. Russell (1997) explained that assessment is used for many reasons by different teachers and stakeholders. He notes that since teachers have limited time to carry out many tasks (grading learning, reporting progress to students, parents, and administrators) within specified periods, assessment might not be well administered and its results might not be sufficient to give a good feedback. This is the case with continuous assessments and the “sequence system” in Cameroon primary and secondary schools.

In his instructional theory, Reigeluth (1970), postulated that instruction should be presented in an increasing order of difficulty. Also, topics/lessons should be arranged and presented in a systematic and chronological manner. Reigeluth added that prerequisite knowledge is very important in promoting students’ acquisition of knowledge. This is because it gives learners the basics needed to understand a more complex concept.

Reigeluth focused on the organization of an entire course/lesson according to one of three major types of outcomes: concepts, principles, and procedures. He suggested that a particular content may be taught by setting out to achieve any of the three goals (for example, statistics may be taught by emphasizing the concepts in statistics, the principles of statistics, or the procedure for calculating statistics). He stated that one of the first actions of the designer/instructor was to determine which of the three content structures; conceptual, theoretical (principle-based), or procedural-should be emphasized in a particular unit or course. Reigeluth (1992), has, in fact expanded his theory to allow for a “*simplifying condition method*”. He suggested that following identification of outcomes and content structure, the designer/instructor identify the most overarching, fundamental concepts, principles, or procedures (depending upon which content is selected). These overarching generalizations should be taught first at the application level in what Reigeluth described as an epitome.

Reigeluth described three primary types of epitomes, corresponding to different goals for learning: conceptual, procedural, and theoretical. Each type of epitome is characterised by a type of synthesizer and by the instructional conditions necessary for understanding the synthesizer. A conceptual epitome has as its synthesizer the “top” layer of material, consisting of an orientation structure that reflects as much of the breadth of the material to be learned as is possible in an orienting class session. The synthesizer for a procedural epitome is a simplified “parallel procedural structure” which allows an entire procedure to be grasped at an orienting level in a single introductory session. A theoretical epitome may be developed in similar manner to the conceptual, in which the top layer is an overarching principle that is fundamental to theory. After the epitome is taught and practised at the application level, more detailed instruction, an “elaboration” of the content is encountered. Within each level of elaboration, information is sequenced according to prerequisite relationships. Instruction at each level of elaboration is tied to the other levels with synthesizing and summative statements that integrate the levels of elaboration. Reigeluth likened this form of

instruction to the “zooming in” of a camera to pick up details in a visual field and then “zooming out” to give the viewer a perspective of the whole picture.

Merill (1979) supported Reigeluth’s Elaboration theory by adding that if instruction is organised in a specified way (simple to complex) then that instruction will result to higher level learning. Students learn best when they see a relationship or connection between concepts.

3. Methodology

The multiple case study design was used to carry out this study. A multiple case study is the careful examination of similar cases to get in-depth result concerning a particular problem by triangulating data and reporting (Stake, 2006, p.82).

The population was made up of 36 secondary schools in the Buea Subdivision. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 3 case schools representing each school type in the general population. Therefore, Presbyterian High School, Buea town, Inter Comprehensive High school, Great Soppo and Government High school Bokwango, constituted the sampled schools for the study. The selection of these schools was based on their long period of existence and their huge student and teacher populations. Citizenship Education has been taught in these schools since it was introduced into the syllabuses, therefore the teachers possessed the necessary experience and knowledge of the subject and provided detailed information needed for the study.

Data was collected through the use of an interview and observation schedules. Interviews were conducted with the teachers using the interview schedule which consisted of 2 sections, each addressing one of the research questions of the study. Section A had four questions and section B had three. Five teachers were interviewed in each school. The interviews were conducted in the staffroom on successive school days agreed upon by the teacher and the researcher. Each interview lasted 30 minutes and was tape recorded and later transcribed for analysis.

An observation schedule was used to observe classroom assessment methods in the presentation of the lesson to the learners to determine if they promoted learning and also check whether evaluation activities were in line with those prescribed by the subject syllabus. Three teachers, one from each sampled school was observed during a period of one Month.

4. Findings

4.1 Teachers’ Professional Development

The themes under professional development answered the research question which focused on the impact of teacher professional development on the teaching of citizenship education. The questions asked provided participants an opportunity to share their ideas on the type of activities they carry out to enhance their classroom practices as teachers and also whether they take into consideration certain policies of the country which

facilitate teaching and learning. Four major themes were explored in this area: pedagogic seminars, teacher reflective practices, peer observation, and Vision 2035.

Regarding Pedagogic seminars, all participants in the study agreed that they have been seeking out professional development opportunities through pedagogic seminars which enhance their classroom practices. In this pursuit they are encountering challenges related to the availability of seminars, lack of funds, insecurity created by the on-going socio-political crises that started in 2016, and the accessibility as expressed below:

“Yes, through pedagogic seminars but for the past 2 years it has been very difficult to see any information directed towards that. Some of these seminars requires high participation fee and are organized in far places. The school and departmental heads exonerate themselves from sponsoring such activities and push it to me whereas I don’t have the means.” (Respondent C)

“Yes, through seminars. But for the past months, these avenues for in-service training are hardly available, especially around Buea. Besides, there is an issue of insecurity which is a threat to me.” (Respondent E)

“Yes, I usually do through seminars but for the past years due to the crisis I haven’t attended any. This is because of the aspect of insecurity and financial issues. There are no financial resources put in place by the school to assist teachers to take part in these pedagogic activities. So, for the past years, attending pedagogic seminars to boost my teaching skills is a nightmare.” (Respondent B)

All the respondents were in agreement that as part of their professional development, they use peer observation - especially elderly peers - to improve their practices in the learning community. They explained that they did this through observing and being observed by their colleagues who provide feedback after the sessions. In the process they also pool resources from colleagues to facilitate teaching. This is captured in these words;

“Yes, I usually contact my colleagues when I encounter difficulties. Sometimes I observe them teach and also invite them to observe my teaching and make recommendations. The recommendations made especially by my senior colleagues really help me to improve on my classroom practices and thus enhances learners’ acquisition of knowledge.” (Respondent A)

“Yes, I work with colleagues by observing their lessons, using their textbooks, borrowing syllabuses and also asking them to observe some of my lessons and make possible contributions to improve my teaching. Most at times, I observe them teach especially those who are old in the field. Their contributions always help me to teach better.” (Respondent B)

“Yes, by observing them teach and also asking them to observe and evaluate my lessons. Their contributions help to improve on my classroom practices and also enhances learners’ acquisition of the skills and competences needed from the lessons.” (Respondent C)

“Yes, I do by seeking advice on the type of materials and methods to use to teach a particular lesson. I do this especially to the senior colleagues who have been teaching the subject for about 5 years. I think this is one of the pedagogic practice that has helped to impart me with the knowledge of teaching citizenship education.” (Respondent D)

“Yes, I do that often. I observe them teach and take down relevant facts that could enhance my classroom practice. There are times that I invite my senior colleagues to participate in my class. After this particular period, I always feel great due to the corrections and recommendations made by these teachers.” (Respondent E)

“Yes, I do that at regular basis. I observe how they teach and also invite them to observe my lessons. I do this because the Competency Based Approach to teaching requires a lot of knowledge in order to impart the learners with the necessary skills, attitude and aptitude needed from the subject. So, to achieve these objectives, I always make appeal to my senior colleagues to observe my lessons and make possible contributions.” (Respondent F)

3 (50%) of the participants agreed that they carry out systematic self-assessment to improve on their classroom practice. And they do it through reflective practices. The participants shared their views on how their teaching has been improving due to their sustained engagement in self-assessment practices. They added that this has helped them to be able to adjust their methods of teaching, selection of materials, and assessment strategies as can be gleaned from their responses that follow.

“I always carry out a systematic self-assessment to improve on my classroom practices. Before any instruction, I try to find out whether the methods and materials selected as well as the evaluation strategies are in connection with the objectives of the lesson. I do pre-teaching in the form of self-dialogue, picturing the learners in my mind and also try to find out whether the materials, methods and assessment techniques selected would enhance their acquisition of the required competencies.” (Respondent C)

“Systematic self-assessment is a powerful tool as far as the teacher’s professional development is concerned. I carry out self-assessment at regular basis. I do pre teaching in my house with my children before going to class to present a particular lesson to the learners and after the process, I modify the methods, materials and assessment strategies of the lesson. This helps to improve my classroom practices.” (Respondent B)

“Since I have been teaching citizenship education for a long time, I am already used to all the necessary techniques needed to teach the subject. I do not need to assess myself but to

use my initiative as a professional in the field to tackle any difficult situation in the teaching and learning process. Besides, this goes with the saying "experience is the best teacher" I always feel satisfied after a particular period of teaching by the performance my learners show." (Respondent D)

4.2 Vision 2035

The respondents agreed that they were conscious of the needs of the learning outcomes of the new syllabuses to train human resources with the knowledge and know-how to participate in the transformation of the nation from a producer of primary products to one that adds value and consequently, to become an emergent nation by 2035. However, they face a lot of problems in implementing the school programmes due to the lack of required human, material, financial, technological, and infrastructural resources.

"The vision 2035 requires a lot more than just mere speculations. I am expected to train learners to become vibrant youth with skills and aptitude required to live in an industrialized nation. But where are the resources to do that? Citizenship education is a practical subject and therefore, requires a lot of financial and material resources to effectively implement the contents of the subject. The objectives of the vision 2035 are mind blowing but that's only in theory because I don't see any hope in achieving that. There are no modern materials in school to assist in the teaching process. Even if there were, the school environment won't even support their use because of the dilapidating state of the infrastructures and the shortage or complete absence of electricity." (Respondent D)

"I am aware of the vision 2035 and its demands but practically, as a teacher, I face a lot of problems to take these demands into consideration while teaching. To achieve the objectives of vision 2035, the government officials and educational stakeholders have to restructure the school programme to be project based in nature so as to impart the learners with the required skills to survive in the emergent Cameroon. High status should be given to citizenship education as a subject because it has an indispensable role to play in shaping the thoughts of the learners." (Respondent B)

4.3 Assessment Method

Teachers were questioned to know the type of assessment methods they used in the teaching of citizenship education and how these encourage learners in becoming responsible citizens. Three major themes were developed in this area: essay questions, oral questions, and structural questions.

4.3.1 Essay Questions

Interview data and observation, showed that some teachers still rely on essay tests where learners are only evaluated at the end of a topic, after two weeks or at the end of the term while some use oral questioning in addition. In evaluation using essay questions,

students are expected to provide their answers in an in depth form. Some respondents believe that it is the best form of evaluation since it covers a wide area of the content and that it encourages students to study harder thereby improving on their competences.

“I use the Essay method of evaluation because it covers a wide area of the subject matter. Besides, using essay questions encourages learners to read deep thus enhancing the acquisition of the knowledge and competencies needed after the learning period. Evaluating learners at the end of the term using essay questions makes them to read harder, ponder about concepts, do research etc. which at the end impart them with the skills and aptitude required.” (Respondent D)

“I use essay questions because they help me to find out whether the learners have understood the concept and also to check whether the objectives of the lesson were realized. So, at the end of the lesson I give them a short essay which covers the whole topic treated. If the questions are well answered, I understand that they have acquired the competencies required from that topic.” (Respondent F)

“I use essay questions in evaluating my learners, but I do this fortnightly with this method, the learners are already aware of the period they would be evaluated and so prepare themselves. This system of evaluation makes them to learn very hard thereby acquiring the competencies needed to live in their respective communities.” (Respondent B)

Two participants make considerable use of oral questions to test learners' readiness for the lesson, to test their follow up, to get their contributions and also to find out whether they have understood the concept. This shows that the teachers make use of the formative evaluation.

“I use formative evaluation at every stage in the teaching and learning process. I ask the students questions related to the lesson to make them very active. Asking the learners questions (orally) makes them to think and say what they know about a particular aspect/concept. This method is good because learners discover their own learning themselves and thus enhances the acquisition of the knowledge, skills and competences expected from them after a particular learning period and in the long run impacts them with attitudes and aptitudes needed to live as responsible individuals in their different communities.” (Respondent A)

“Oral questions make the learners to think and discover their knowledge themselves. It also makes them to ponder and contribute enormously as far as the lesson is concerned. Responding to these questions is a clear indication that the learners possess the required competencies to live in their respective communities. So, my lesson is just to polish the knowledge that the learners already possess.” (Respondent C)

One of the respondents affirmed that he makes use of structural questions in evaluating learners. Structural questions take the form of short test (quiz) which the teacher uses to test learners' knowledge in the teaching and learning process. It is an aspect of formative assessment as the teacher uses it frequently to check whether learners are following up as far as the lesson is concerned.

"I make use of Structural questions all the time in the teaching of citizenship education and it really makes learners active participants in the teaching and learning process. The content is broken down and transformed to structural questions which makes it easier for learners to acquire all the competencies required from the topics. I ask them structural questions in the form of matching tests, fill in the blank spaces, "Yes" or "No" questions, etc. which enhances their acquisition of knowledge." (Respondent E)

Teachers who rely only on essay questions in assessing learners were asked why they don't make use of short test, oral questions and other strategies in assessing learners and they provided the following arguments:

"I don't think oral questions are necessary. This is because I summarize the questions of each lesson to take the form of an essay question. Besides, an essay question covers a wider scope of the content and enables me to pass out the knowledge as quickly as possible." (Respondent B)

"I usually ignore the use of short tests and oral questions because the use of these methods demands a lot of energy and it is also time consuming. Besides, I don't even have enough time to waste on that since I have just two periods a week. The content of the subject is very broad but limited time to exhaust it." (Respondent F)

I don't use the oral questioning method because of limited time for the lesson and the workload. (Respondent D)

Respondent D's response is in line with his classroom practice. In the lesson I observed, the teacher neglects the use of questioning to test learners' level of understanding and also to get their own contributions as far as the lesson was concerned. The teacher neglected the use of formative assessment where learners were to be tested at every stage in the teaching and learning process. The teacher concentrated only on giving the learners notes. There was no take home assignment which would have made the learners to study ahead of time. This made the learners very passive thus making the objectives of the lesson not realized. The use of summative evaluation is good at the end of the term or academic year, but the teacher should not rely on that in the teaching and learning process.

The lesson was an interesting one as the teacher began to ask the learners questions based on the previous lesson. Throughout the lesson, the teacher made use of oral

questions. This was very suitable because it made the learners active participants in the teaching and learning process. The class was so interesting that the learners listed answers to all the questions he asked. The teacher made good use of formative evaluation thereby enhancing learners' acquisition of knowledge. At the end of the lesson, the learners were also evaluated to check their level of understanding. It was positive because they responded to the questions with ease thereby fulfilling the objectives of the lesson.

The findings reveal that teachers do not really make good use of formative evaluation as some only assess learners at the end of the lesson, the end of the term, and academic year. The findings also show that some teachers use oral questions, short tests to ensure that learners contribute to the teaching and learning process. Other respondents added that they don't make use of oral questions and short tests as a method of formative evaluation because of the limited time that has been attributed to the subject and the nature of the work load.

5. Discussion

In relation to teachers' professional development, the findings of this research show that though teachers seek to attend workshops and seminars, they face challenges related to cost, lack of information, heavy workload and time constraints. Equally, very few of the teachers are engaged in other professional capacity building activities such as reflective practice and peer observation. This implies that teachers go for years without participating in any in-service training activities organised by the relevant educational authorities. This situation is aggravated by teachers' lack of interest in pursuing professional capacity building activities such as reflection on practice and peer observations which are heavily dependent on their personal initiative. The consequences of the lack of professional development on the quality of teaching Citizenship Education cannot be overemphasized especially during the period of implementing a new syllabus. The findings of this study are corroborated by those of Davies (2000), who employed a case study research method to investigate the extent to which teachers' professional background influence the teaching of Citizenship Education in Canada. The findings showed that there were little or no pedagogic seminars or workshops organised to provide citizenship education teachers with in-service training to enable them acquire skills and competencies needed to effectively teach the subject. The study revealed that there were almost no research-based centres for citizenship education and it was rather unclear, what was practised as citizenship education in the classrooms and schools in that country.

The findings on student assessment practices reveal that teachers do not really make good use of formative evaluation as some only assess learners at the end of the lesson, or topic and at the end of the term, and academic year. The findings also show that a small number of teachers use questions and short tests during lessons to ensure that learners contribute to the teaching and learning process while the majority use essay tests after covering a certain amount of content. These teachers argued that they did not

make use of formative assessment (oral questioning and short test) because of limited time that had been attributed to the subject and the nature of their teaching load. For teachers to effectively assess the learners, they must familiarise themselves with all the assessment methods required to teach the subject and also be able to use the different methods at every time to address learners' problems in the teaching and learning process as advocated by Haney (1997). These findings contradict those of Pratt (1994), who in a similar study investigating the type of assessment methods used in the teaching of citizenship education in secondary schools in Canada found that teachers carry out formative assessment by using oral tests, structural questions, and matching tests at every stage in the implementation process. These teachers argued that these methods of assessment make learners active participants in the teaching and learning process and help them to acquire the required skills and competencies.

6. Conclusion

From these findings, it could be concluded that teachers encounter a series of problems in the teaching of citizenship education beginning with their professional capacity building through the syllabus implementation process. The findings reveal that teachers hardly attend pedagogic seminars due to lack of information, high participation fees, unavailability of seminars and workshops, and, more recently, insecurity caused by the socio-political situation. Consequently, the quality of instruction of the majority of teachers is below standard. In pursuit of personal professional development activities a few are engaged in teacher reflective practices and peer observation and feedback which helps to improve their professional development and hence raise their quality of teaching.

Formative evaluation was given very little attention at every stage in the teaching and learning process as most of the teachers observed chose to assess learners either after covering huge chunks of the content or at the end of a topic or academic term.

6.1 Recommendations for Policy

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

- the ministry of Secondary Education should ensure that pedagogic workshops and seminars are organized frequently to impart teachers with the skills and competencies required to teach the subject.
- teachers should be informed where and when such workshops would take place and the cost made affordable for teachers.

Note: One possibility would be to eliminate the transcripts of responses from respondents and include as an appendix. This will enable you present just the summaries of the various responses in the body of the text, and where necessary, refer the reader to the appendix for the full transcript. Usually, I think it would be clearer if such results are tabulated.

About the Author

Dr. Fedelis Lekeaka Alemnge, was born on 16th October 1964 in Ekombe-Bonji, Kumba, in Meme Division of the South West Region of Cameroon. He studied and obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Modern English Studies in 1986 from the University of Yaounde, Cameroon. He served as Administrative Assistant at the Regional Baha'i Centre in Yaounde, from 1989 to 1993, and as a volunteer at the Baha'i World Centre from 1994 to 2002. He obtained a Master of Arts degree in Educational Studies from the University of Sheffield in Britain in 2002, and a Doctorate degree in Curriculum Studies and Teaching from the University of Buea in 2015. He was recruited as an Instructor of Curriculum Studies and Teaching by the University of Buea in 2003, and as an Assistant Lecturer by the Ministry of Higher Education, 2008. He has been teaching in Department of Curriculum Studies and Teaching, Faculty of Education of the University of Buea and was promoted to the grade of Lecturer in 2016. He has served as the pioneer coordinator of the Distance Education programme of the Faculty of Education from January 2008 to March 2018, then as Head of Department of Curriculum Studies and Teaching from March 2018 to June 2020 and since June 2020, has been serving as Vice-Dean in charge of Research and Cooperation in the Faculty of Education of the same University. He is married and father of three children. He has published ten, and co-published three articles in international peer-review journals, and two book chapters in international book projects.

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ON THE QUALITY OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CAMEROON

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