TEACHERS' CHARACTERISTICS AND ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN THE TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGES IN FAKO DIVISION, CAMEROON

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' characteristics and their impact on students' professional training in some teacher training schools in Fako Division, the south west region of Cameroon. This study employed a descriptive survey research design with a target population of 100 teachers in two teachers' training colleges as respondents. Three research objectives were formulated for that purpose which was later transformed into research questions. Data was gathered through the use of questionnaires and was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. The findings reveal there was a positive relationship between teachers' content mastery, communication, motivation, and personality on student's professional training. Thus, based on the findings the following recommendations were made; teachers should communicate instructions in simple and clear language so that students will be able to understand also government should constantly organize seminars that will enable teachers to upgrade their knowledge, learn new skills, and become productive.

Keywords: teachers' characteristics, impact on students' professional training

1. Introduction

Every day, educators encounter intricate challenges that require them to make decisions with potentially significant consequences for students' futures. To ensure sound decision-making, teachers need to be mindful of the various ways in which students' learning can progress, aligning with the professional context. This involves considering learning diversities, language, and culture, as well as individual temperament, interests and approaches to learning. Teachers need to keep what is best for the student (trainee) at the center of the decision-making (Bransford, Darling Hammond, and LePage, 2005, p. 1). Teachers' character plays a vital role in the development of learner's capacity to become responsible citizens and improve quality, skills development, and maintenance of

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standards which is a call of concern to most educational systems in the world (UNESCO, 2007).

Professional training institutions are put in place in order to improve the quality and maintenance of high standards of education by gathering information for value judgment in the education process (UNESCO, 2007). Nafuko (2002) sees quality as the transfer of skills, knowledge, behavior, and attitude in order to have competent employees in society that will meet the needs of society. Students' professional training can also be influenced by many factors some of these factors can be students-based, teacher-based, and home-based. Teachers bear direct responsibilities for shaping students' professional training and constitute the most crucial school-based influences on student education. Factors associated with teachers may stem from cultural orientation and personal perspectives or attitudes toward students.

Ajayi (1998) claimed that the poor quality of teachers in schools today can be traced to poor training received in teacher training institutions through obsolete materials, methods, and equipment. A teacher is regarded as a leader whose excellence is evident in their capacity to generate ideas, establish structure, organize and oversee their classroom, enhance students' skills and knowledge, create engaging yet challenging lessons, steer students toward success, and possess the capability to accurately assess and evaluate students' learning while maintaining a positive self-image. Gravestock, Gregor & Greebleaf (2008) state that the explanations for good or poor student training have been quite exhaustive yet controversy still exists among scholars as to what actually contributes either singly or jointly to students' poor training.

Historically, the roots of professional training in Cameroon date back to the early days of education under French administration. Initially, professional training was part of secondary education, with the primary center being the higher primary school in Yaounde. However, admission to these institutions was highly selective, offering limited spaces for those who successfully passed the primary school leaving certificate and entrance examinations.

In 1925, a significant development occurred with the establishment of a teacher training college near Sangmaelima, specifically in Nfoulassi, by the Presbyterian American Mission. Notably, in 1927, this institution became a pivotal location where the first group of students, led by Minko Bomba (for music) and Rene Zam Afane (for lyrics), composed a patriotic song. This song was performed for the first time in 1928 and later adopted as the National Anthem of Cameroon on May 10th, 1957, during the proclamation of National Autonomy.

The growing demand for local qualified staff, driven by economic revitalization and new colonial factors, led to an expansion of professional training institutions between 1922 and 1930. During this period, various methods were employed to provide professional training to students who obtained their first school leaving certificate. Instances of these training activities were present in the subsequent institutions; The Regional schools of Dschang, Ebolowa, Garoua, Maroua, and Ngaoundere, as well as the Autonomous Professional Training Centre of Douala.

Each of these institutions engaged in varied activities tailored to meet the immediate requirements of local employees during this period. However, it is crucial to underscore that a significant portion of the training provided was relatively basic. These circumstances clearly signaled the necessity for more organized training facilities and well-prepared educators. The rising enrollment rates in schools across Cameroon have led to an escalated demand for professional training colleges. Consequently, educational policies in Cameroon have advocated for the active involvement of all stakeholders—parents, communities, and business organizations—in addressing the current challenge of a shortage of adequately trained personnel.

Contextually, professional teacher training colleges constitute a sector that is predominantly supported, regulated, and influenced by the state. The state's involvement takes various forms, including decrees (presidential), orders, decisions, and circulars (ministerial), particularly in alignment with the 2035 emergency plan for Cameroon.

The objectives of these teacher training colleges in Cameroon are multifaceted. They aim to equip future professionals with the capacity to acquire and share knowledge, create opportunities, and apply innovations. The legal foundation for education in Cameroon is provided by Law No 98/004 of 14 April 1998, which emphasizes the nation's commitment to making education a top priority. The law outlines the overarching purpose of education as training children for intellectual, physical, civic, and moral development, ensuring their smooth integration into society while considering economic, socio-cultural, political, and moral factors. The effectiveness of this law hinges on the power and quality of professional teacher training colleges, which play a pivotal role in achieving its objectives.

This study aligns with the broader context of fostering excellence, mastery, dedication, and enthusiasm in teacher training colleges in Cameroon. Many of these institutions face challenges in areas such as communication skills, knowledge of the subject matter, motivation, and the overall personality of teachers. If in planning such factors are not considered as in the case of Cameroon the consequences are; unsatisfactory performance such as an increase in failure rate, and low professional development (Ndongko, 1989). Therefore, this hinders the goals of education which are seen as a means of changing the pattern of inequality, poverty alleviation, and a ladder of upward mobility from one social class to another (Causa & Chapuis, 2009).

According to Rivkin, Hanusheck, and Kain (2005), there has never been consensus on the specific teacher factor that influences student professional training. Researchers have examined the influence of teacher characteristics such as gender, educational qualification, teacher experience, and teacher motivation on student's professional training with varied findings. This is contrary to Coonen (1987), who emphasized that teachers involved in in-service training were more effective in classrooms as compared to teachers who had not undergone training.

Akinsolu (2010) asserts that the availability of qualified teachers determines the quality of training received by students. So, what teacher needs to know about the subject

matter they teach extends beyond the specific topics of the curriculum. Shulman (1986) argues that "*teachers must not only be capable of defining for students the accepted truth in the domain. They must also be capable of explaining why a particular proposition is deemed warranted, why it is worth knowing, and why it relates to other propositions*". If anything is to be regarded as a specific preparation for teaching in a professional training school, priority must be given to the thorough grounding for something to teach (Peters, 1977, p.151). What therefore, prompted the researcher to write on this topic is the fact that the standards of education in teacher training colleges are falling leading to a corresponding fall in the field of practice and thus a great problem to the entire present population, and future generations of Cameroon.

2. Statement of the Problem

Students' professional training is a fundamental aspect of quality education in a country like Cameroon. Students' effectiveness and competences depend largely on the quality of training undertaken which also depends more on the characteristics of those giving them the knowledge and the skills needed to shape the society towards better productivity.

Professional teacher training colleges like Government Teachers Training Colleges (GTTC) of Buea, and Limbe as well as others across the national territory, had gained grounds to be one of the sectors on which Cameroon relies for its growth because it enables students to acquire skills, abilities and to create opportunities for themselves and to the society as a whole. Although students who leave these institutions are constantly being neglected by the government, for continuity of education government launches the entrance into the school on a yearly basis. In spite of the relevance and the resources put forth by the government to ensure standard professional outcomes, students do not portray what is intended by the government, the society on the other hand does not seem satisfied with the quality of training students receive in the college. These issues are manifested in many ways like late coming, poor communication and lack of content mastery, absenteeism, lack of willingness, irregular academic programs, indecent dressing, high failure rate, disrespect, and laziness. If these issues are not addressed and eradicated immediately, the education of our children in the field will be affected negatively.

A lot of variables might have been the cause to hinder students' appropriate professional acquisition such as teachers' knowledge of the subject matter, teachers' communication skills, teachers' personalities and teacher motivation, and other extraneous variables like the government's neglect of teachers from these sectors. Thus, how do these teachers' characteristics impact students' professional training is a major cause of concern in this study.

2.1 Purpose of the Study

The main goal of this study was to investigate teachers' characteristics and their impact on students' professional training in the teachers' training colleges in Fako division of the South West Region of Cameroon.

Specifically, this study seeks:

1) To investigate if teachers' content mastery influences students' professional training.
2) To determine whether teachers' communication skills have any significant influence on students' professional training.
3) To establish a relationship between teachers' motivation and students' professional training.

2.2 Research Questions

The following research questions will be answered in the course of the study: The main research question of this study is how do teachers' characteristics impact students' professional training?

2.3 Specific Research Questions

1) Does teachers' content mastering influence students' professional training?
2) What is the contribution of teachers' communication skills to students' professional training?
3) To what extent does teachers' motivation influence students' professional training?

2.4 Significance of the Study

This study will convey the following importance, that is, the study will be significant because its findings will:

2.4.1 To the Teachers

It is hoped that the findings will give recommendations that might be used to ensure adequate preparation of the teacher trainees in training to master the content and pedagogic skills to ensure efficiency and quality of teaching in various posted institutions.

Also, it will help them, most especially the untrained teachers to have a clear understanding of what is expected of them in relation to students entrusted to their care. The study will bring to limelight some characteristics that may affect students' professional training either positively or negatively. By this, teachers will see the need to exercise positive traits so as to enable students to learn well.

It will also make them understand that they need to constantly upgrade themselves with knowledge through attending educational seminars and to take intrinsic motivation very seriously so as to boost the academic attainment of students

2.4.2 To the Government

Also, the findings will be useful to the government of Cameroon to update the curriculum by selecting teachers who are suitable for professional training schools and who are masters of deontology in the teaching profession. Through these, the government will realize its intended goal of training skillful and competent students.

Also, the findings will reveal to the government the situational conditions of teachers in school through the performance of students this will enable the government to know if teachers are satisfied or not.

2.4.3 To the Students

The findings of the study may help students to understand that teachers have a great part to play in their studies through the various characteristics they possess. By this, students will be able to identify those teachers who possess ridiculous characters and adapt ways to manage them.

2.4.4 Researchers

Finally, it is hoped that the findings of this study will stimulate interest and further research in the areas in which the researcher failed to work to improve the quality of professional training.

2.5 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study is limited in scope and content as it relates only to GTTC Buea, and GTTC Limbe in the Fako division in the southwest region of Cameroon. Content-wise, the study exploits teacher's characteristics as the main independent variable and student's professional training as the dependent variable in GTTC Buea, and GTTC Limbe respectively. The indicators to be investigated are teachers' content mastery, communication skills, and motivation as some of the observable characteristics in a bid to establish how these factors impact students' professional training.

3. Review of Literature

3.1 Conceptual Framework

The study review of literature is related to teacher's characteristics, professional training, teachers' content mastery, teachers' communication skills, teacher's motivation, teachers' qualification, and teachers' experience.

3.1.1 Teachers' Characteristics

They are the distinctive and unique features or attributes that set a teacher apart, including qualifications, experience, content mastery, communication skills, age, gender, and motivation. The term "teachers' characteristics" refers to measurable and testable qualities derived from academic or professional records, making these characteristics observable. This study is centered on the traits possessed by teachers that could

potentially influence students' professional training. Literature on teacher characteristics indicates a focus on factors like age, gender, attitudes toward teaching, and teachers' overall quality. Therefore, it becomes crucial to highlight teachers' personalities, professional experience, motivation, content mastery, language proficiency, and communication skills. Teacher characteristics hold significance for students because they have the potential to positively or negatively impact them. Kiragu (2007) confirms the view that the success of a teacher in the classroom ought to be evidenced not only by professional records but also by student acquisition of skills as set out in the subject syllabus.

Afe (2001) stipulated that teachers' characteristics play a crucial role in educational attainment because the teacher is ultimately responsible for translating policy into action and principles to practice during interaction with the students. It is from this background that Wright, Horn, and Sanders (2000), concluded that, the most important factor influencing student learning is the teacher who stands at the interface of the transmission of knowledge, values, and skills in the learning process. Thus, the character of a teacher counts much on students' training because they can either scare or encourage students in training.

3.1.2 Professional Training

Professional training in education refers to assisting students, teachers, educators, and administrators in enhancing their professional knowledge, competencies, skills, and effectiveness. It involves the development of technical, quantitative, and analytical skills employed to analyze students' intended performance. Additionally, professional training encompasses mentoring in specialized teaching techniques applicable across different subject areas, acquiring new technological skills in the classroom, cultivating specialized skills to meet expectations, gaining leadership skills, and collaborating with colleagues. The concept of professional training finds support in the No Child Left Behind Act, which furnishes a concrete definition of what professional training entails. The law stipulates that professional training should adopt a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to enhance students' effectiveness in problem-solving.

According to Tambo (2003), classroom interactions are the basis for effective communication which in turn will promote appropriate learning among children. Interaction is generally referred to as a face-to-face encounter in which communication takes place. Hence a good knowledge about classroom interactions and a reasonable skill in creating and controlling these interactions by a teacher are very much necessary for the enhancement of professional competency among the teachers. A good teacher should be kind, and generous, listen to students encourage them, keep confidence, like teaching their subject, take time to explain things, help learners when they are stuck, tell them how they are doing, and allow them to have their stay, care for their opinion tell the truth, treat people equally and forgiving. All these qualities are what are expected from the trainers. Therefore, professional training is to build skills, acquire discipline, respect roles and regulations put forward by the institution, and have a unique way of behavior. Thus,

professional training is to educate a person so as to be fitted, qualified, and proficient in doing some job.

3.1.3 Teachers' Content Mastery

Teachers' content mastery in teaching and learning refers to the depth and breadth of their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter they are responsible for teaching. It encompasses a teacher's proficiency in the content areas of their curriculum, including a solid grasp of key concepts, theories, principles, and facts relevant to the subject. A teacher with content mastery is well-equipped to effectively convey information to students, facilitate meaningful discussions, answer questions, and provide insightful explanations. Content mastery goes beyond rote memorization; it involves a nuanced understanding that enables teachers to connect different concepts, adapt to students' diverse learning styles, and foster a deeper comprehension of the subject matter. Shulman (1986) pointed out that three categories of content knowledge- subject matter content knowledge; pedagogical content knowledge and curricular content knowledge are the heart of the current enquiry.

Subject matter knowledge: to acquire command of the subject matter to be taught, a teacher must not only be highly knowledgeable in the subject matter but he or she should also be able to select the subject matter according to levels and other characteristics of the trainees. The teacher should be able to provide students with reference documents where they can get all that they need in the course of the subject being taught.

Pedagogical content knowledge: the teacher should be able to present his content of work systematically, from simple to complex. He or she should have a good martyring of what he presents to the trainees; make use of common examples to enable students to understand easily, avoid repetition, and use simple language that is understood by all students. However, is common in many professional training colleges today that some teacher finds it difficult to express themselves in the prescribed language of instruction of the institution. Also, many students find it difficult to cope with the same situation of the language because of their educational background.

Curricular content knowledge: the teacher must be able to understand the curriculum of the training institution. What is expected of the teacher himself and the student, the number of hours prescribed per course, all the activities concerning the training school.

In essence, teachers' content mastery is a fundamental aspect of their expertise, influencing their ability to create a positive and enriching learning environment for students. It plays a crucial role in promoting student engagement, critical thinking, and overall academic success.

3.1.4 Teachers' Communication Skills

Norliza et al. (2010) noted that without communication, the teaching and learning process will not take place. Therefore, teachers with good communication skills will create a more

successful teaching and learning ambiance for the trainees which will lead to success (Guerrero & Floyd, 2006). It is important to note that teachers should develop skills to communicate in a language that is understood by all. To communicate means to give, impact, or have a means of passage. It also means to convey one expression to another.

Educationists have clearly pointed out that the communication process has four phases: Encoding; meaning to compose or to send out a secret code. It involves recording what another person has said in plain writing. Decoding; this means to interpret a code. Involve making meaning out of what another person has said. Interferences and noise; this is a disruptive face in the communication process. There are both internal and external interferences which may be natural or unnatural, and feedback; involves returning part of an encoded message in one's own understanding to the original person. The teacher should be able to use both verbal and non-verbal communication. Verbal communication deals with the voice, while non-verbal communication deals with action rather than voice. Language of the voice means the teacher may say one thing but in reality, means the opposite. Language of time deals with the affair in the classroom that's the amount of time spent in class, semester just being aware of the time specified by any course. Also, language of space and motion for example a student sleeping in class but at a touch he wakes. Lastly, facial language has to do with one's looks (Norliza et al., 2010),

3.1.5 Teacher's Motivation

Teacher's motivation refers to the internal or external factors that drive and influence a teacher's behavior, actions, and commitment to the teaching profession. Motivation plays a crucial role in shaping a teacher's attitude, performance, and job satisfaction. It can be categorized into intrinsic motivation, which comes from within the individual, and extrinsic motivation, which is driven by external rewards or pressures.

Renchler (1992) explains that every educator needs to be concerned about motivation. It is a quality that students, teachers, parents, school administrators, and other members of the community must have if our educational system is to prepare young people adequately for the challenges and demands of the coming century. Students need motivation to learn, parents need it to track the educational progress of their sons and daughters, students need it to become better teachers and school administrators need it to ensure that every facet of the schools they manage continues to improve.

Therefore, understanding and nurturing teacher's motivation is essential for creating a positive and effective learning environment, as motivated teachers are more likely to inspire and engage their students. Schools and educational institutions should also focus more on strategies to better enhance teacher motivation to improve overall educational outcomes.

3.1.6 Teachers' Qualification

Ruthland & Bremer (2002) refer to teacher qualification in two ways - traditional and alternative qualification routes. Traditional certification is when an individual completes

an undergraduate degree or postgraduate program in education. Alternative routes of certification are based on coursework in pedagogy and subject areas without a degree in education.

According to Harris and Sass (2008), it is generally acknowledged that promoting teacher quality is a key element in improving primary and secondary school education and one primary goal in education is to have a highly qualified teacher in every classroom. An Education Week survey of registered voters (Education Week, 2002) determined that Americans believe improving teacher quality is the "number one way" to improve the quality of students' academic performance. The rationale behind this idea is that teacher quality is a modifiable factor. For instance, teachers may be required to demonstrate certain qualifications in order to be eligible for employment or external intervention and training programs could be required of current teachers to retain employment (Ye, 2000). Therefore, educational researchers have focused on improving teacher quality as a way to improve student performance.

It is also worth noting that, while teachers' qualifications are crucial, the effectiveness of professional training is also influenced by the overall curriculum, the relevance of the training to industry needs, the availability of resources, and the engagement of students in the learning process. A combination of well-qualified instructors and a comprehensive, industry-aligned curriculum contributes to a more effective professional training experience for students.

3.1.7 Teachers' Experience

Teachers' classroom experience is dynamic and evolves throughout their careers. It is a continuous learning process that contributes to their effectiveness as educators and their ability to positively impact students' learning outcomes. Olele (1995) explained that as a teacher passes through many years of service, there is the likelihood of assuming different positions which will make him more effective in teaching and thus influence students' academic achievement positively.

According to Augrist (2004), teachers with long experience on the job are bound to be more knowledgeable in their specialized areas including their teaching subjects and education principles on theories. On the other hand, teachers with short or no experience on the job are bound to be less knowledgeable in their specialized areas and teaching subjects, thus negatively affecting students' academic performance.

More recently, Harris and Sass (2007) state that professional development activities can be conducted by many different organizations in schools and out of school, on the job, or sabbatical leave. On these occasions, practicing teachers update their content knowledge and teaching skills to adjust to the introduction of new curricula, new research findings on teaching and learning, changes in the needs of the student population, etc.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by two theoretical frameworks Job Characteristic Theory, and the Connectionism Theory of Edward Thorndike, also known as the Law of Effect.

3.2.1 Job Characteristic Theory

This theory was developed by J. Richard Hackman and Greg R. Oldham in 1976. It is a framework that explores how specific job characteristics influence employee motivation, satisfaction, and performance. This theory identifies five core job characteristics:

- **Skill Variety.** The degree to which a job requires a variety of skills and abilities.
- **Task Identity.** The extent to which a job involves completing a whole, identifiable piece of work.
- **Task Significance.** The impact the job has on the lives or well-being of others.
- **Autonomy.** The level of independence and discretion an employee has in performing tasks**.**
- **Feedback.** The extent to which the job provides clear information about performance effectiveness.

When considering teachers' characteristics and their impact on professional training, the Job Characteristic Theory can be applied in the following ways:

- **Designing Professional Training Programs.** Teachers' characteristics, such as skill variety, task identity, and autonomy, can be considered in the design of professional training programs. Providing opportunities for teachers to engage in a variety of tasks, see the impact of their work, and have some autonomy in decision-making can enhance their motivation and satisfaction.
- **Aligning Training with Task Significance.** Professional training programs can be aligned with the task significance of teaching. When teachers understand the significance of their role in shaping students' lives and futures, it can contribute to higher levels of job satisfaction and motivation.
- **Promoting Autonomy in Professional Development.** Allowing teachers some autonomy in choosing aspects of their professional development can enhance their engagement and job satisfaction. Teachers may be more motivated when they have a say in the training areas that align with their interests and needs.
- **Providing Timely and Clear Feedback.** Feedback is a crucial component of the Job Characteristic Theory. Professional training programs should include mechanisms for providing teachers with clear and timely feedback on their progress and performance. This can contribute to a sense of accomplishment and improvement.
- **Recognizing and Leveraging Skill Variety.** Teachers often possess a diverse set of skills. Recognizing and leveraging this skill variety in professional training can make the training experience more engaging and relevant for teachers.

By applying the principles of the Job Characteristic Theory to teachers' characteristics and professional training, education administrators and training facilitators can create a more motivating and satisfying professional development

experience for teachers. This, in turn, can positively impact the effectiveness of teachers in their roles and contribute to improved student outcomes.

3.2.2 The Connectionism Theory of Edward Thorndike

Connectionism Theory by Edward Thorndike, also known as the Law of Effect, is a behaviorist theory that emphasizes learning through the establishment of associations between stimuli and responses. According to Thorndike, behaviors that lead to positive consequences are more likely to be repeated, while behaviors followed by negative consequences are less likely to be repeated. This theory highlights the role of reinforcement and the consequences of actions in shaping learning and behavior.

Here's a brief exploration of the potential connections of this theory to this study:

- **Reinforcement and Feedback.** Thorndike's emphasis on the Law of Effect highlights the importance of reinforcement in learning. In a teaching context, positive reinforcement and constructive feedback are crucial elements for effective professional training. Teachers' characteristics, such as the ability to provide timely and meaningful feedback, can enhance the learning experience for educators undergoing professional training.
- **Adaptation of Teaching Methods.** Connectionism Theory emphasizes the formation of associations between stimuli and responses based on the consequences of behavior. In professional training, teachers with a good understanding of this theory may adapt their teaching methods to reinforce positive behaviors and adjust strategies when needed. The ability to modify instructional approaches based on the observed effects is a valuable characteristic.
- **Skill Variety and Task Significance.** Connectionism Theory may indirectly relate to the Job Characteristics Theory mentioned earlier, particularly in terms of skill variety and task significance. Teachers with a diverse set of skills (skill variety) and who understand the significance of their tasks are likely to be more effective in professional training. This understanding can impact their ability to create meaningful learning experiences for educators.
- **Autonomy and Task Identity.** While Thorndike's work does not explicitly address autonomy and task identity, these are important factors in teacher effectiveness. Teachers with a sense of autonomy in their professional roles and a clear understanding of their tasks' identity can bring these principles into their professional training roles. Allowing educators some autonomy in their training and helping them identify the relevance of the tasks can enhance engagement and learning.

It's important to note that Thorndike's Connectionism Theory is more closely associated with behaviorism and the psychology of learning, and the direct application of Connectionism Theory to this study, is evident just like other contemporary educational theories.

3.3 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey research design to collect data on teachers' characteristics and their impact on students' professional training in the teachers' training colleges in Fako Division. This design was found appropriate because data were collected and used to describe how teachers' characteristics influence students' professional training in the teachers' training colleges in the South West Region. According to Nworgu (1991), survey research is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group.

3.4 Area of Study

This study was in the Buea, and Limbe 1 municipalities in the Fako Division, which is one of the 6 autonomous divisions in the South West Region of Cameroon. The Buea, and Limbe 1 municipalities or subdivisions with others like Muyuka, Tiko, Idenau, Limbe 2, & 3 make up the Fako division with an administrative headquarters in Limbe. According to Mbeng E. S. M. (2016), the South West Region of Cameroon with its headquarters in Buea occupies a surface land area of about 25,410km sq. (9,811sq. mi), a population of about 14,810,433 (2013), a density of 583/km sq. (1,510/ sq. mi) (5th).

3.5 Population of the Study

The target population of this study was made up of all the teachers in the two public teacher training colleges of GTTC Buea, and GTTC Limbe all found in the Fako division, South West Region of Cameroon.

3.6 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The study's sample included 100 teachers from both GTTC Buea, and GTTC Limbe. The two public schools were selected using the purposive sampling technique based on the desired characteristics of the sample.

3.7 Instruments for Data Collection

The data collection instruments comprised questionnaires tailored for teachers in the GTTC Buea, and GTTC Limbe. Accompanying the questionnaires was a cover letter explaining the study's purpose and significance, along with assurances of anonymity, confidentiality, and no risk of harm due to participation. The questionnaires were structured into sections A through D. Section A gathered demographic details, including school name, respondents' gender, sex, age, qualifications, and years of teaching experience. Sections B, C, and D contained items aligned with the research questions guiding the study with Likert scale form for respondents to rate them by ticking Strongly Agree (SA = 4), Agree (A = 3), Disagree (D = 2), and Strongly Disagree (SD = 1).

3.8 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

To guarantee the reliability of the tools, two research specialists carefully reviewed and

provided feedback on the language, precision, pertinence, and suitability of items, response choices, and their alignment with the research questions. Subsequent to implementing the required adjustments, the instruments were deemed appropriate and valid for the study.

To test reliability, the questionnaires were given to ten respondents after which it was analyzed manually. It was administered again to the same group after two weeks and responses were analyzed manually. A correlation coefficient of about 0.5 and above was considered high enough to judge the instrument as reliable for the study.

3.9 Administration of Instruments

A letter was delivered to the school principals of the selected schools, which constitute the study's sample, before the distribution of the instruments. The instruments were administered by the researcher with assistance from the school authorities, and the return rate was 100%.

4. Data Analyses and Findings

Research Question 1: Does teachers' content mastering influence students' professional training?

Table 1: Teachers' Content Mastery

Items	Response Option				
	SA	A	D	SD	N
Teachers in my school present their lessons systematically from simple to complex.	30(30)	40(40)	15(15)	15(15)	100
Teachers in my school make good use of teaching aids.	50(50)	40(40)	10(10)	0(0)	100
Teachers are assigned to teach the subject they master best.	21(21)	44(44)	23(23)	12(12)	100
Teachers give students opportunities to ask questions during the lesson.	69(69)	31(31)	00(00)	00(00)	100
Teachers evaluate every lesson before it is concluded.	34(34)	42(42)	22(22)	02(02)	100
Total	**204(40.8)**	**197(39.4)**	**70(14)**	**29(5.8)**	**500**

Source: Computed by the Investigator.

The table above reveals that, out of a sample of 100 respondents, 70% (30% SA and 40% A) were of the opinion that teachers present their lesson systematically from simple to complex while 30% (15% D and 15% SD) had a contrary view. Again 90% (50% SA and 40% A) of respondents accepted the fact that teachers in their school make good and generous use of teaching aids while 10% (10% D and 00% SD) disagreed. Similarly, 65% (21% SA and 44% A) of respondents sampled concluded that teachers are assigned to teach the subject they master best, while 36% (23% D and 12% SD) of the respondents sampled had a contrary view. Also, 100% (69% SA and 31% A) of respondents sampled

maintained that teachers give students opportunities to ask questions during lessons. Finally, 76% (34% SA and 42% A) of the sampled respondents concluded that teachers evaluate every lesson before it is concluded whereas, 24% (22% D and 02% SD) of the teachers reacted the contrary.

From the table above descriptive analysis reveals that most of the respondents sampled (80.2%) agreed with the question items while (19.8%) disagreed. Conclusively; teachers' content mastery has an influence on students' professional training. That is a well-planned, mastered lesson by the teacher will enhance the presentation and delivery of the lesson to the students and consequently lead to students understanding of the lesson thereby making them become professionally ready to disseminate knowledge to the youngsters that will be entrusted in their care.

Research Question 2: What is the contribution of teachers' communication skills to students' professional training?

Table 2: Teachers' Communication Skills

Items	Response Option				
	SA	**A**	**D**	**SD**	**N**
Teachers in my school make use of charts or pictures to illustrate their lessons.	51(51)	44(44)	05(05)	00(00)	100
Teachers use real objects in teaching their lessons.	39(39)	56(56)	05(05)	00(00)	100
Students are taken out sometimes by teachers for observation.	30(30)	59(59)	11(11)	00(00)	100
Teachers use audio-visual aids in teaching	20(20)	20(20)	30(30)	30(30)	100
Teachers in my school allow students to exploit instructional materials by touching, smelling and testing.	49(49)	40(40)	10(10)	01(01)	100
Total	**189(37.8)**	**219(43.8)**	**61(12.2)**	**31(6.2)**	**500**

Source: Computed by the Investigator.

The table above revealed that, out of a sample of 100 respondents, 95% (51% SA and 44% A) were of the opinion that, their teachers use charts or pictures to illustrate their lessons. On the other hand, 05% (05% D and 00% SD) of them had a contrary view. Again, 95% (39% SA and 56% A) of the teachers sampled agreed that they use real objects in teaching their lesson. While 05% (05% D and 00% SD) disagreed. Also, 89% (30% SA and 59% A) of the sampled teachers maintained that students are taken out for observation by them during lessons. While 11% (11% D and 00% SD) were against this opinion. More so, 40% (20% SA and 20% A) of respondents were of the opinion that they use audio or audio-visual aids in teaching their lessons. On the other hand, 60% (30% D and 30% SD) of respondents disagreed. Finally, 89% (49% SA and 40% A) of respondents revealed that, in presenting instructional materials, they allow students to exploit them by touching, tasting, and smelling, while 11% (10% D and 01% SD) of the teachers said they hardly do so.

The findings above point out that most of the respondents were for the options strongly agree (SA) and Agree (81.6%). This therefore shows that teachers' communication skills have a significant contribution to the professional training of students in GTTC Buea and GTTC Limbe in the like that if teachers communicate well to students, they will be able to understand the concepts presented to them by the teachers and consequently by default it will enhance the ability and skills they received in the course of their training which will help them to become better teachers in the future.

Research Question 3: To what extent does teachers' motivation influence students' professional training?

Table 3: Teachers' Motivation

Items	Response Option				
	SA	A	D	SD	N
Teacher's efforts are always appreciated with a physical reward.	30(30)	59(59)	11(11)	00(00)	100
Teachers in our school are always provided with some incentives by the principal as a form of encourage.	21(21)	44(44)	23(23)	12(12)	100
The provision of school facilities such as pipe borne water, security, good air, toilets, good infrastructures, and classes encourage teachers to teach well.	30(30)	59(59)	11(11)	00(00)	100
Teachers are always motivated to attend seminars, conferences, and workshops in order to improve their teaching.	44(44)	21(21)	23(23)	12(12)	100
Teachers in our school always show satisfaction (are intrinsically motivated) in what they do.	51(51)	44(44)	05(05)	00(00)	100
Total	**176(35.2)**	**227(45.4)**	**73(14.6)**	**24(4.8)**	**500**

Source: Computed by the Investigator.

The table above indicates that, out of a sample of 100 respondents, 89% (30% SA and 59% A) of them were of the opinion that, their efforts are always appreciated with a physical reward. On the other hand, 11% (11% D and 00% SD) of them had a contrary view. Again, 65% (21% SA and 44% A) of respondents agreed that incentives are given to all of them annually, while 35% (23% D and 12% SD) respondents sampled disagreed. Also, of the 100 respondents, 89% (30% SA and 59% A) of them maintained that, their welfare is guaranteed both at home and in school, While, 11% (11% D and 00% SD) of the sampled respondents were against this opinion. Moreover, 65% (44% SA and 21% A) of respondents agreed that teachers are always provided with facilities such as water, security, and good classrooms, while 36% (23% D and 12% SD) of the students disagreed. Finally, 95% (51% SA and 44% A) of respondents sampled revealed that teachers show satisfaction with what they do, while 05% (05% D and 00% SD) of respondents say they hardly do so.

The findings above point out that most of the respondents were for the options strongly agree (SA) and agree. This leads to the conclusion that teachers' motivation in the like of incentives, provision of a conducive working environment, and appropriate pedagogic material influence student's professional training.

5. Discussion of Findings

5.1 Teachers' Content Mastery and its Influence on Students' Professional Training

The findings reveal that teachers' content mastery has a great influence on student's professional training. This is evident as 80.2% of teachers sampled agreed that content mastery is vital in training, they equally affirmed qualified teachers present their lessons very well and straight to the point for easy understanding by the students. This shows that teachers who master their content of work present lessons systematically and to the understanding of the students. This leads to a high degree of professional achievement by students in training. These findings were in conformity with that of Olowoyeye and Alonge (2014), who supported the fact that teachers must be knowledgeable in their areas of study. Certainly, effective teaching hinges on a teacher's profound command of the subject matter. Without this expertise, any effort invested by the teacher becomes futile. The level of a teacher's subject matter competence is considered a crucial factor in students' learning outcomes. Nevertheless, some scholars argue that mere mastery of content is insufficient. They contend that even if teachers possess in-depth knowledge, their teaching efforts can still be in vain if they lack adept questioning techniques during lessons. Therefore, it can be inferred that teachers not only need to master the content but also must excel in employing effective questioning strategies during their instructional sessions.

5.2 Teachers' Communication Skills and Their Influence on Students' Professional Training

The findings on this research question also reveal that teachers' communication skills have a great impact on students' professional training. This is true as 81.6% of the respondents strongly agreed to this fact. The findings of this study also reveal that students will learn effectively if they are taught in the language they best understand. Based on the famous law of effect, Thorndike (1949) cited in Amaefuna (2002) stressed the role of practice. Amaefuna (2002) emphasized that the role repetition plays is not only in habit formation but also in habit strength. These psychological principles support the saying that "practice makes perfect". This means the longer a teacher practices communicating in different ways, the more he/ she becomes perfect and experienced to the extent of boosting students' professional training. Teachers must have a proper way of combining the desired styles of communication in the context as supported by Panisoara (2010). The study also reveals that information, ideas, and concepts are communicated in a variety of ways such as gestures, body language, and writing. Without communication, the teaching and learning process will not take place Norliza et

al. (2010). Therefore, teachers with good communication skills will create a more successful teaching and learning ambiance for the trainees which will lead to success whereas those with poor communication skills will lead to a negative impact on student's professional training.

5.3 The Relationship between Teachers' Motivation and Students' Professional Training

With regards to this objective and the research question formulated, both the male and female teachers assert that motivation of teachers, paying them good salaries, providing them with opportunities to attend on the job seminars, providing them with hygienic situation in school and good infrastructural facilities will help improve on students' academic attainment. The analysis inline to this question as presented in table 8 above shows that there is a significant relationship between teachers' motivation and students' professional training. Awanbor (2005) noted that because of poor motivation due to inadequate remuneration, poor teaching environment as a result of lack of basic teaching materials, and listless and unmotivated teachers in the classroom, among others, the students have become an endangered species in the educational system. They no longer teach and the students in turn no longer learn.

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study's findings yield the following conclusions: a noteworthy positive relationship exists between teachers' content mastery and students' professional training, demonstrated by statistical significance ($x2 = 110.1$, n = 100, p<.05). There is a positive correlation between teacher's communication skills and students' professional training, with statistical significance ($x2 = 92.43$, n = 100, p< .05). Finally, a positive impact is observed between teacher's motivation and students' professional training, substantiated by statistical significance ($x2 = 101.8$, n = 100, p<.05). In summary, it is evident from the above analysis that teachers' characteristics exert a robust positive influence on students' professional training.

Based on the aforementioned findings and aligned with the three research objectives, the following recommendations are proposed: when recruiting teachers for professional training colleges, certain variables such as specialization and language of instruction should be carefully considered. These factors play a significant role in determining the suitability of teachers for specific roles in professional training institutions. Also, the government should constantly organize seminars that will enable teachers to upgrade their knowledge, learn new skills, and become productive.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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