

# **Principals' control mechanisms as a tool of administrative behaviour in influencing teachers' commitment in secondary schools in Bui-Division of the North West Region of Cameroon.**

## **ABSTRACT**

This work aims at investigating Principals' control mechanisms: Lack of teachers' commitment was identified as the problem in question. The main objective of this work is therefore to study the extent to which teachers' commitment is influenced by Principals' control mechanisms. The null and alternative hypothesis were articulated to answer this question. Some theories were used to give the problem a significant base. The study used data collected from principals and teachers of secondary schools and simple random sampling (SRS) and purposeful sampling techniques were used to obtain the sample size for principals and teachers in government secondary schools in Bui Division. The quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed in data collection and analysis. In the quantitative approach, questionnaires were used while in the qualitative approach, we used interview and the observation guides. The findings showed that the principals' control mechanisms affect teachers' commitment in secondary schools. Statistically, the calculated value of spearman correlation index of 0.796 was obtained with a p-value 0.05. The alternative hypotheses was affirmed that principals' control mechanisms significantly influence teachers' commitment. Based on the above results, some recommendations and suggestions were made for policy making in this direction.

**Key words:** Principals' Control mechanisms, administrative behavior, teacher commitment and secondary school.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Like other African countries, the origin of formal education in Cameroon can be traced back to the coming of white missionaries. The main mission for the introduction of western education to the African continent was to civilize and Christianize Africans since they lived in what was known as the "*Dark Continent*". Fonkeng (2006) opines that: *The foundation of education in*

*Africa can be traced back to western civilization and the activities of both the church and the state in provision of schools. Through the process of evangelization, the church was able to establish itself in African with the introduction of schools and the training of teachers.*

It can be argued that the rationale for introducing education to Africans was not motivated by the essence of education itself but was driven by the intention to educate and use Africans in exploitation ventures. The Europeans were equally racially motivated to seek political domination over Africa. Rodney (1972) argues that the educational process in Africa also meant imbibing values which led to further African subjugation. However, this does not mean that western education in itself was bad but the intention for which it was introduced to African was to promote economic and political interest of the western nations in which the German Based Mission, the German Baptist Mission the German Pallotin (Roman Catholics), the North American Baptist, the Sacred Heart, the Holy Ghost and the Gossner were famous.

The German administration brought more innovations in educational developments. Nevertheless, missionary bodies were more concerned and involved with the educational enterprise than the German colonial government. No secondary school in the strict sense of the word was run in German Kamerun because of the short time Germans spent in Cameroon. Following the defeat of the Germans in the First World War, by Anglo-French forces, the country was divided to the two parties. France occupied 4/5 (East Cameroon) while Britain took 1/5 (West Cameroon) and administered it as an integral part of Nigeria

It was until 1944 that the first secondary school Lycée Général Leclerc was opened in French Cameroon primarily reserved for white students. Two years later, Lycée Jos was open in Douala in 1956. Many other schools such as the modern college for Boys in Nkongsamba, Lycée de Maroua were opened. By 1955 (before independence) there were 9 mission colleges and five public secondary schools in French Cameroon (Fonkeng: 2006).

Secondary educational development was faster in French Cameroon than British Cameroon. The first secondary-Saint Joseph's College Sasse was opened by the Roman Catholic mission in 1939. Ten years later the Cameroon protestant college (CPC) was opened in Bali Nyonga. In spite of the fact that the secondary school system in Cameroon is classified as one of the best

(Tambo, 2003) it is void of quality at various levels. Looking at the performance rate of students, most in official examinations like the GCE, BEPC and BACC, one would discover that repetition tendencies are rated at or above 40% (Tambo, 2003). Added to the issue of repetition is that of school dropouts who are leaving the secondary school system on yearly basis for meagre income earning activities. Amin (2005) Fonkeng (2006) argues that “*public efforts in education were slow throughout the colonial era and missionaries did not hesitate to take the advantage of this situation, particularly as education was the main tool in the evangelization process*”. At independence in 1960, the educational platform began to experience changes as individuals got involved in the creation of schools. With the referendum in 1972, the Ministry of National Education was reorganized creating a department of private education which had the responsibility of organizing and controlling private education.

Today, education in Cameroon is run by the public and private sectors. The private sector is divided into confessional and lay private. Considering the level of underdevelopment in Cameroon, one would be tempted to conclude that lack of quality in the educational system is the cause. This entails that quality educational has not been provided to learners starting from the colonial education system till date. The law of 1998 and 2001 assigned new orientation to the Cameroon educational system which are conveyed in the following objectives:

- the training of citizens, who are rooted in this culture but open to the world and respectable to the general interest and of the common goal,
- the promotion of science culture and social progress,
- the solidifying of the sense of ethnic and of national interest,
- the promotion of democracy and of a democratic spirit,
- the development of creativity of a sense of initiative and of an enterprising spirit,
- the training and improvement of managerial skills,
- the promotion of bilingualism and the mastery of indigenous languages,
- the search for knowledge in every field of knowledge, -the promotion of hygiene and health education.

## 1.1 Administrative Behavior in Context

Administrators through their institutions are responsible for effectively and efficiently using the material, financial, information and human resources at their disposals to deliver or attain stated objectives or goals (Fonkeng&Tamajong, 2005). The administrator's role therefore demands a wide range of both technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills. By administrative behaviour, we mean the way those who have been given the powers to organize, command, control, co-ordinate, direct and implement the policies of an institution, relate to their collaborators in a school system. It also refers to the nature of relation that exists between the administrators and the teachers. It is concerned with how those at the top (their attitudes), function with their personnel using the available resources for the attainment of the organizations goals, aims and objectives. The most successful institutions make the best use of their employees' talents and energies. Pfeffer (1998) observes that "*organizations can reap a 40% gain by managing people in ways that built commitment, involvement, learning and organizational competence*". Due to the fact that teachers are pillars in the training of the secondary school students, their success depend so much on how well the administrator interacts and works with the variety of individuals. An administrator who is skilled will be capable of getting things done through employees and colleagues in the institution, assisting and influencing them to support and achieve institutional goals.

Administrative behavior is a very broad field comprising of many subject areas. Work behavior is typically examined at different levels: individual behavior, group behavior and collective behavior in an organization, with different issues salient at different levels. A deeper understanding of teacher's level of assiduity aids administrators to understand how perceptions, attitudes and personality influence work behavior, motivation and either work related outcomes (job satisfaction, commitment and learning). Examining interactions in the group setting provides insight into the challenges of leadership, teamwork, communication and decision making, power and conflict. Administrative

behavior (sometimes referred to as administrative theory) helps to explain how organizations structure work and power relationships, how they use system for decision making and control, how an organizations culture affects behavior, how organization learn, and how they adapt to changing competitive economic, social and political conditions.

Administrative behaviour whether in school or other types of organisations is concern with the behaviour that occurs under the conditions posed by an organisational position. While a specific organisations setting may create unique challenges or problems, the behaviour of interest are similar to those of individuals, groups and other organization in other settings Weick, (1969). Thus school organisationalbehaviour does not create unique administrative issues so much as certain issues are more prevalent in efficient and effective teaching and occur along with other challenges, Shortell and Kaluzny, (2000).

Many of these challenges directly or indirectly affect what is expected of teachers and how committed they are in school as an organization. School organisations are staffed with highly professional work force and imposed exacting requirements on how work is organized and accomplished. The complex work of teachers have a high risk of serious problems in learners learning outcome which necessitates highly reliable system of practice at all levels in the organization. Complex teaching techniques require sophisticated technical expertise which requires a highly efficient, effective and well-coordinated work force. Professional workers especially trained teachers work with great deal of autonomy and control on the learners to assure quality learning. As a result, school administrators are responsible for facilitating efficient and effective teaching and learning in schools through their high level of administrative techniques.

## **1.2 statement of the problem**

Secondary school teachers who have duly received training in teachers training colleges are expected to discharge their pedagogic duties as trained teachers with a lot of

Commitment .This is however not the case with most trained teachers in the secondary schools. Government decision to create teachers' training colleges in all divisional headquarters in Cameroon is to enable young Cameroonians to be equipped with the basic pedagogic skills for effective and efficient teaching and learning process. Again the introduction of Circular No 21/B1/1464/MINEDUC of July 24<sup>th</sup> 2000, on minimum package, also circulars 21\B1\1464\MINEDUC of July 24<sup>th</sup> 2000 and 21\A\135\MINEDUC\CAB of September 20<sup>th</sup> 2001 of distribution and packaging of minimum packages and budget execution respectively are deliberate attempts by the government of Cameroon to boost the teachers' morals, to enable them to be more committed in their teaching and learning process.

Huge sums of money have been spent by the government of Cameroon in terms of training, recruitment and payment of teachers, construction of classrooms and the provision of didactic materials. Education at the primary and secondary levels is the base and to make it more efficient and productive, the government of Cameroon and other stakeholders have come up with new strategies to enable teachers to be committed in the discharge of their pedagogic duties as professional teachers. These strategies include the creation of research centers, the termly incentives given to teachers and the introduction of New Pedagogic Approach and Compensatory Teaching. All these are aimed at enhancing effective teaching learning in secondary schools. However despite all these efforts made by the government of Cameroon and other stakeholders, the level of teachers' commitment is still below expectation leading to pupils' poor academic performances and to a greater extent an increase in school dropouts, increase in illiteracy rate and crime wave in our society. The degree of teachers' commitment or assiduity is reflected in their teaching methods, workload, and degree of coverage of curriculum, absenteeism rate, punctuality and his relationship between the administration, parents, teachers and students.

When teachers are duly trained, they are supposed to become nation builders through their active commitment in the discharge of their professional duties on issues relevant to the school system. When the state's scarce resources are spent on training of teachers and they fail to be committed on school related issues, it becomes problematic as it leads to wastages of the resources that would have been used in other sectors of the nation's development. Apparently, lack of commitment of secondary school teachers in Bui Division in the North West Region has led to students' academic poor performances, a drop in the quality of education, high repetition rates and dropout, high crime wave, increase illiteracy rate and low rate of development in Bui division in particular and in Cameroon generally. Most principals in the North West Region and Bui Division in particular are sufficiently deficient in administrative procedures. This has made most secondary school teachers to be less committed in discharging their professional duties. Some lapses in the school processes such as inaccurate pedagogic activity, poor administration, and unfriendly school. The students will not acquire the basic knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enable them fit well in the job market and the tertiary level of education, thus this will lead to poor results, high crime wave in the society and above all falling standards of education thus hampering vision 2035 to be realized.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

- To evaluate the relationship that exists between control mechanisms and teachers' commitment in secondary schools.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

- What relationship exist between principals' control mechanisms and teachers' commitment in secondary schools?

### **1.5 Research Hypotheses**

**Ha:** There is a significant relationship between control mechanisms and teachers' commitment in secondary schools.

**Ho:** There is no significant relationship between control mechanisms and teachers' commitment in secondary schools.

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

This study will be very important to the government as it will enable the government to together with other stake holder to have a comparative view on administrative behaviours with a focus on system processes in public and private secondary schools. The results of this study would enable the teacher to carry out a thorough educational diagnosis on the various existing problems found in the government school system and provide possible solutions. The results of this study will enable the students to collaborate with their teachers and school administration so as to optimize students output in the secondary school. This study would enable the secondary school administration to take management of human resources seriously.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Principals' Control Mechanisms and Teachers' Commitment**

The secondary school principals have various way to control their teachers and cause them to be committed in the discharge of their professional duties. Research over the past few decades has consistently indicated that new teachers feel unprepared when it comes to classroom management skills (Merrett &Wheldall, 1993) and that they are often unprepared to function successfully in today's classrooms with regard to managing administrative tasks, curriculum, and behaviour problems (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006). Also, it is a well-established fact that student misbehavior is a factor in teacher burnout and the decision of novice teachers to leave the profession (Public Agenda, 2004). It seems therefore that the need for successful classroom management skills has not diminished during a time when school reform has put the spotlight on effective learning.

McNergney and McNergney (2007) opine that school management is “collective ability of teachers, students, administrators, school boards, and even the police and the courts to establish a common framework for social and academic interactions”. To The above definition ties with this research work because it relates what the teacher does to establish and maintain conditions that facilitates effective and efficient teaching and learning. Oliver referred to a definition on classroom management which was presented by Emmer and Stought (2002) as any action a teacher takes to create an environment that supports and facilitates both academic and socio-emotional learning. In the past, the term classroom management could be defined as a way to ensure students complied with teacher demands (Spring, 2005). Kohn (1999) believes it was teacher directed and driven by negative beliefs about students. Today, these definitions can be synthesized to mean a comprehensive term used to describe the encapsulation of actions and strategies that teachers implement to involve students in learning, how efficiently they use instructional time, provide optimal learning experiences, maintain safe and orderly environments, control student behaviour, and form cohesive learning relationships (Miller & Pedro, 2006).

A narrow view of classroom management sees it primarily as discipline and management of student behaviour. However, successful teaching requires more than controlling student behaviour. According to Evertson and Harris (1999) “the meaning of the term classroom management has changed from describing discipline practices and behavioural interventions to serving as a more holistic descriptor of teachers’ actions in orchestrating supportive learning environments and building community”.

Brophy (1999) echoed those sentiments when he stated that “the most successful teachers approach management as a process of establishing and maintaining effective learning environments”. Larrivee (2005) equally noted that “classroom management is a critical ingredient in the three-way mix of effective teaching strategies, which includes meaningful content, powerful teaching strategies, and an organizational structure to support productive learning”. Despite an understanding that classroom management is a

complex set of skills that includes much more than being able to influence and control student behaviour, there is still an overall impression that classroom management is primarily about “discipline”. Following the above presentation, it is obvious that classroom management has two distinct objectives: it does not only seek to establish and sustain an orderly environment for students to be engaged in meaningful learning, it also aims to enhance students’ social and moral growth.

The essence of classroom management to meaningful learning seems to be made clear enough by literature. The conditions of the classroom play their part in the effectiveness of the teaching/learning situation; every teacher must realize that the classroom environment will influence the type of learning that occurs in that room (Wiles & Bondi, 2007); every teacher is confronted with the challenge of classroom management and the action a teacher takes in a given situation could be the difference between effective teaching and chaos Marzano (2007). In a 2006 survey of 12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers conducted by the American Psychological Association (APA), teachers identified help with classroom management and instructional skills as their top need. In fact, Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1993) as cited in Boynton & Boynton (2005) reviewed “11,000 pieces of research that spanned 50 years” and discovered that the most important factor affecting student learning was classroom management. Research conducted by Jackson (1968) as cited in Emmer & Stough, (2002) revealed that increased attention on complex classroom settings and pedagogic knowledge combined with teaching goals, procedures and strategies contributed to effective classroom management and learning. In his research, Jackson purports that management is a combination of various classroom dynamics which include multidimensional events and people; numerous tasks occurring simultaneously; immediate, fast-paced events that limit reflections; unpredictable outcomes and events; awareness of behaviours witnessed by all students; and past and future actions.

To complement Jackson's research findings, Jones (1996) as cited in Emmer & Stough (2002) believe that five basic views of comprehensive classroom management exist. Jones believes that in order to maintain learning environment and to control behaviours, teachers must understand current research in classroom management, create positive relationships among and between students, be familiar with instructional methods that facilitates learning for students in various levels, have knowledge about organizational management to maintain on-task behaviour, and be familiar with counseling methods that assist students with chronic behaviour problems. Both studies on classroom management components are very imperative and may be connected to ensure effective learning amongst students. However, not all teachers have the knowledge and skills they need to effectively manage classrooms. Bosch (1999) states: *Contrary to popular belief, classroom management is not a gift bestowed upon some teachers. While it is true that some teachers adapt to classroom management techniques, making it look to their colleagues like they possess some innate talent, classroom management is a skill, a skill that can be taught like any other, and most importantly, a skill that like any other must be practiced to achieve proficiency.*

Sergiovanni (2002) identifies teachers' roles as manager, executive, mediator, and leader. The manager teacher executes highly structured learning environments that seek to manage student behaviours. The executive role requires teachers to be aware of current research practices and to make critical decisions about instruction, assignments, and subject matter. The mediator role entails that teachers should perform interactive teaching that allows students to link previous knowledge to new constructs, and the leader role requires teachers to model the importance of the subject matter and focus on key concepts that explain why and how content is being studied.

Teachers who adopt these four roles are well structured, are aware of current research practices that promote learning, help students make sense of learning, and personally care about and appreciate learning (Sergiovanni, 2002). Some researchers have also found that

many novice and veteran teachers admit of lacking effective classroom management skills and student motivation tactics that endorse learning (DarlingHammond, 2003). Cameron and Sheppard (2006) believe that effective classroom management is crucial to teaching, learning, and student achievement. Their research indicates that teachers who are unable to command student attention and involvement in wide range of instructional activities are teaching ineffective and as such, learning would be ineffective. Boynton (2005) support this view as he believes that ineffective classroom management skills can waste instructional time, reduce time-on-task, and interrupt learning environments. In order to render teaching/learning effective, Darling-Hammond (2003) purports that teachers must be well prepared and properly trained in classroom dynamics, such as classroom management and pedagogy, to strongly influence student learning and. Besides, Armstrong (2006) believes that teachers have a very strong influence on classroom dynamics, but he also believes that well managed classrooms with student-centered goals contribute to developing holistic educational environments that promote effective learning.

However, not all teachers are equipped with appropriate strategies to manage diverse classrooms or build holistic cultures conducive to improve on students' learning. Glasser (1998) equally concurs that more and more teachers believe they are not to be blame for poor school discipline, habitual classroom disruptions, and ineffective learning. He also purports that teachers increasingly blame students for their behaviour and that students choose to be disruptive, but Kohn (2009) believes that many teachers fail to recognize the possibility that their classroom management strategies may need to be evaluated instead of students' misbehavior. To support Glasser, Kohn emphasizes on the point that many times, the teachers' corrective requests may need to be analyzed rather than continuing to find out why students do not comply with simple instructions. Analyzing discipline requests may compel teachers to focus on classroom management and personal practices.

## **2.2 School Administration (Principalship)**

School administration can be defined as control, direction, and management of all matters affecting the school (Luma, 1983). Fonkeng&Tamanjong (2009) see school administration as “a process which seeks to contribute to the maximization of the educative process; this is its sole *raison d’être*”. It is the principal or head teacher who is in charge of day to day management of the school institution. According to the Wallace Foundation (2012), the principal of the school has five key roles to play in order to enable the school meet its objectives. They are “shaping a vision of academic success for all students; creating a climate hospitable to education; Cultivating leadership in others; improving instruction; managing people, data and processes to foster school improvement.” Walker (1965) In Fonkeng&Tamanjong (2009) buttress that school administration can be seen as: decision making, problem solving and a social process and the duties of the principal include major areas such as instruction, administration proper, students affairs, staff management and community relations. From the above considerations we can define school administration as the process of controlling, directing and management of available resources to enable the school meet its objectives or it is getting things well done through a rational coordination and management of inputs to best suit the interest of the educational enterprise. The school principal is the one in charge of managing these resources through the techniques of decision making and problem solving and he remains that central source of leadership in a school system.

### **2.2.1 School Administration Processes**

#### **Policy Making**

Policies and aims of educational institutions are provided through the statutes, regulations and laws by the competent authorities of a nation. Policies can be formulated at various levels but policy in the context of this study deal with those rules and regulations formulated by the principal to foster the smooth running of the school system. The

formulation of law, rules and regulations by the principal is done in view of the prescribed policies of the Ministry of Secondary Education. (Fonkeng&Tamanjong, 2009). Series of issues such as on teachers' commitment, effective presences, program coverage and pedagogic practices as well as students discipline, punctuality, class attendance and performances among others are supposed to be addressed by policy formulation and this is the responsibility of the school principal. The formulation of policies by the principal would certainly influence policy formulation by teachers in their various classroom settings.

### **Decision Making**

There are four main types of decision making according to Fonkeng&Tamanjong (2009) which are decision making about specific actions, decision about decision making rules, decision making about the structure of the institution and decision making about the general purpose of an action and directing and controlling the decision making process is considered the prime function of administration. The process of decision making requires the principal to do a lot of consultation so as to render the process democratic.

### **Planning, Organization and Directing**

According to Mallick (2012), planning has the following advantages: it inspires the teacher to improve on further lessons, helps the teacher in evaluating his teaching, develops self confidence in the teacher, proper care is taken into consideration on the level and previous knowledge of students, the teaching matter is organized in a timeframe, it inspires the teacher to ask proper and important questions, it provides guidance to the teacher as to what and how he should teach, It helps in creating the interest of students towards the lesson, it stimulates the teacher to think in an organized manner, it helps the teacher to understand the lesson objectives properly.

Arends (2001) points out that an important element that bears emphasis in any discussion of planning is the use of time: how much time to give to each activity, to devote to review versus new materials, to housekeeping chores such as lunch counts and transitions between activities and academic work and that working with students takes a lot of planning and preparation just like lawyers have to prepare for their cases for court and actors have to rehearse their scenes, teachers have to prepare for classroom teaching.

Schooling as a formal component of education goes on in an organized manner. The principal also has the obligation to organize the system for proper teaching and learning to take place. Tambo (2003) distinguishes two types of organization which are vertical and horizontal organization. Vertical organization focuses on the arrangement of students from entry to graduation. This can either be done using the graded or non-graded approaches. While horizontal organization deals with grouping students first for daily teaching and secondly for allocating teachers to teach the various groups. This may lead to student streaming or mix ability grouping so as to ease the teaching and learning transaction.

### **2.2.3 Principalship and organizational efficiency**

Aderounmu&Ehiametator (1981) describe school administration as the art of organizing and managing men and materials to attain the goals of teaching/learning. They stated further that educational administration is a branch of public administration. They describe educational administration as being essentially a service activity or tool through which the fundamental objectives of the educational processes may be fully and efficiently realized. It is geared towards the attainment of goals of teaching by teachers and learning by students. Ezeocha (1990) describes an administrator as “a co-ordinator who has to organize activities in such a way that things must work smoothly, quickly and effectively.” He does this to get the objectives and goals of an organization fulfilled. His

functions involve effective planning, organizing, supervising, controlling, evaluating, communicating and decision-making.

It is the school head who is charge with the responsibility to assure organizational efficiency which can be seen as the organization's degree of success in using the least possible inputs in order to produce the highest possible outputs. For the school as an organization to succeed at accomplishing its aims, it must be able to create the right plans needed to accomplish those aims, pull together the resources needed to implement those plans, and then use resources such as cash, materials and labour in the actual implementation of those plans. Organizational efficiency is the organization's ability to implement its plans using the smallest possible expenditure of resources. It could be an important factor in the school's organizational effectiveness, this being the ease and degree of success with which the organization is able to accomplish its aims.

According to Alan (2006), Organizational efficiency is a vital factor to the effectiveness of the organization's acquisition of resources and the use of those resources to implement its plans, but it is less important to the creation of those plans. Increased organizational efficiency make implementation both cheaper and smoother, but it is less useful if the plan being implemented was a bad plan. Resources include both concrete items such as cash and more abstract concepts such as human capital. Factors that influence the efficiency of the organization's use of its resources can be both internal and external to the organization. For example, the quality of an organization's labour could dependent in part on the ministry of education which controls that organization. For Alan (2006), Quality of management is perhaps the most influential factor on organizational efficiency since it is management that chooses how to implement strategic plans -- including selecting what methods and resources to use, and leading employees in order to make the most of their labour.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

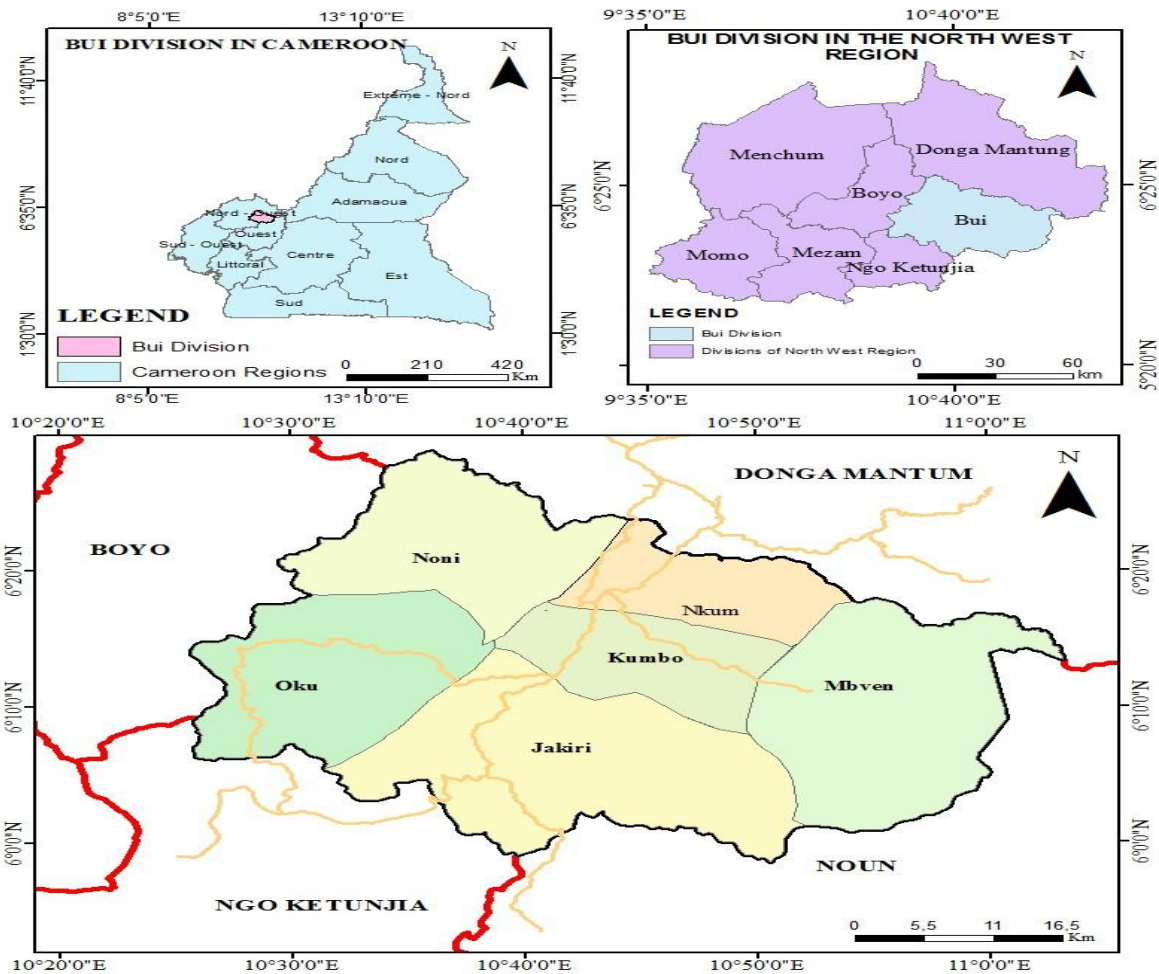
### **3.1. Research Design**

This study was designed to explore the association that exists between principals control mechanisms and teachers' commitment in secondary schools in Bui Division in the North West Region of Cameroon. Data was generated through school principals and teachers' direct interviews, indirect observation with heads of institutions and teachers. This study involved both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative approach involves the use of questionnaire to collect data from principals and teachers from both public and private secondary schools. The qualitative approach involves the use of instruments such as interview guide and observation. The mixed method approach which involves the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was used so as to obtain information from different foci. The rationale for adopting this approach was based on the fact that it enabled us not only to check the veracity of data collected but also to describe the problem under observation from various angles. This approach is relevant to this study because it will enable us to corroborate and triangulate findings from principals, teachers, and the school environment.

### **3.2. Site and Type of Study**

The study was conducted in Bui Division in the North West Region. This study will be limited to administrative behaviours within the school system most especially in the classroom teaching/learning situation.

**Figure 1: The map of Bui Division in the North West Region of Cameroon**



**Source:** National Institute of Cartography: Topographical map of Kumbo, No xvii 1/2000, 1963.

Bui Division is situated between latitude  $6^{\circ}2'$  and  $6^{\circ}48'$  north of the equator and between longitude  $11^{\circ}51'$  east of the Greenwich Meridian. It is bounded to the east, north east and south east by the Noun Division, to the south west by the Ngoketunjia Division to the West by Boyo Division and to the North West by Donga Mantum Division.

Also Bui Division is the second largest Division next to Mezam Division in the North West Region of Cameroon. The reason for choosing Bui Division is due to her many public and private institutions of learning and secondly to economize scarce resources.

North West Region is one of the ten regions of the Republic of Cameroon. This town harbours many secondary school institutions which are both public and private in nature. Secondary education in this region is controlled by the regional delegation, which is under the tutelage

control of the ministry of secondary education. This is a fundamental and a correlational study seeks to understand the relationship or the association that exist between the variables under study. The study seeks to examine how administrative behaviour variables such as administrative control mechanism, professional knowledge base, reward strategies, school social climate, and communication patterns determine teachers' commitment in secondary education.

### 3.3. Population of Study

The population of study is the totality of individuals having common characteristics on which the researcher bases to make inference and test the set research hypotheses. The target population here is the sum total of the principals and teachers in public secondary schools in the Bui Division. The Accessible population constitutes all principals and teachers from Bilingual Government Secondary Schools and mission secondary schools in Bui division. These individuals are of different sexes and of various religious and cultural backgrounds. A general characteristic of this population is that they are teachers at the secondary school level. It is on this population that the results of the findings will be generalized. The teachers working in the public sector are civil servants and a few part-time teachers.

The population of the study was 2700 teachers in Bui Division. It was gotten using the Taro Yamane 1976 formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N \times 2}$$

Where n = the sample size

N = the finite population

0.5= level of significance

1 = a constant

$$N = \frac{2700}{1 + 2700 (0.05) \times 2}$$

$$= 348$$

### **3.4. Sampling Technique and Sample**

The accessible population of study is made up of principals and teachers of secondary schools. The schools were selected with the use of simple random sampling technique.

#### **3.4.1. Sampling Technique**

*“The process or technique of selecting a suitable sample for the purpose of determining parameters or the characteristics of the whole population”* (Adams et al, 2007)

The type of sampling technique used in this study was proportionate sampling (SRS). Sampling is vital in this research given the fact that the study is partly quantitative and we have to reduce cost and economize time while at the same time augmenting completeness and a high degree of accuracy due to limited area of operation. In the context of our study two sampling techniques were used.

#### **The Simple Random Sampling Technique**

The simple Random sampling is a probabilistic sampling which all elements have the same probability of being selected. The simple Random Sampling (SRS) is a sample obtained from the population in such a way that samples of the same size have equal chances of being selected. Within the precincts of this sampling technique, we used the lottery method to pick random samples from the population size. Twelve schools from the list of schools in Bui Division, whose teachers constitute our sample were carefully selected. Names of schools were written on tags and placed in a container and stirred afterward. A tag was then drawn from the container and the process continued till the required tags were obtained.

#### **Proportionate sampling**

Proportionate sampling here consists in taking representative proportions out of the population to constitute a sample for the study. From the thirteen selected schools we had to proceed to select proportionate percent of teachers from each selected school to make up our respondents for the study. In each school these individuals were made up of trained teachers either from lower or higher teachers training college and were made up of men and women from various cultural and

religious backgrounds. The rationale for using this sampling technique was based on the impossibility of having access to lists of members of the population of interest.

### 3.4.2. The Sample

Sample according to Amin, (2005:237) is “a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis” in this study sample is made up of teachers’ men and women. The questionnaires were administered to this sample. These teachers are from various socio-cultural, religious and political backgrounds.

Our sample in this study was made up of 376 principals and teachers in the secondary school (348 teachers and 28 principals/vice principals). These individuals had different characteristics; some were principals, trained and untrained teachers from public secondary schools.

**Table 1: Sampling Framework**

Schools	Teachers’ Population	Sample Size
GBHS Kumbo	94	76
GHS Melim	28	25
GBHS Kimbo	46	36
GBHS Tatum	44	36
GHS ELAK Oku	26	24
GHS Kitiwum	30	26
GBHS Jakiri	37	32
GHS Nkar	27	24
GHS Shisong	17	14
GBHS Kikaikom	30	28
GHS Nkor	17	14
GHS Kikaikelaki	15	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>348</b>

*Source: Divisional Delegation for Bui, MINESEC (2015)*

Lottery method was used to pick random samples from the population size. Twelve schools from the list of schools in Bui Division, whose teachers constitute our sample were carefully selected. Names of schools were written on tags and placed in a container and stirred afterward. A tag was then drawn from the container and the process continued till the required tags were obtained. The number of teachers, principals and VPs were selected according to the total number of teachers present in that school.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Descriptive Analysis

**Figure 2: Distribution of respondents based on principals' control mechanisms.**

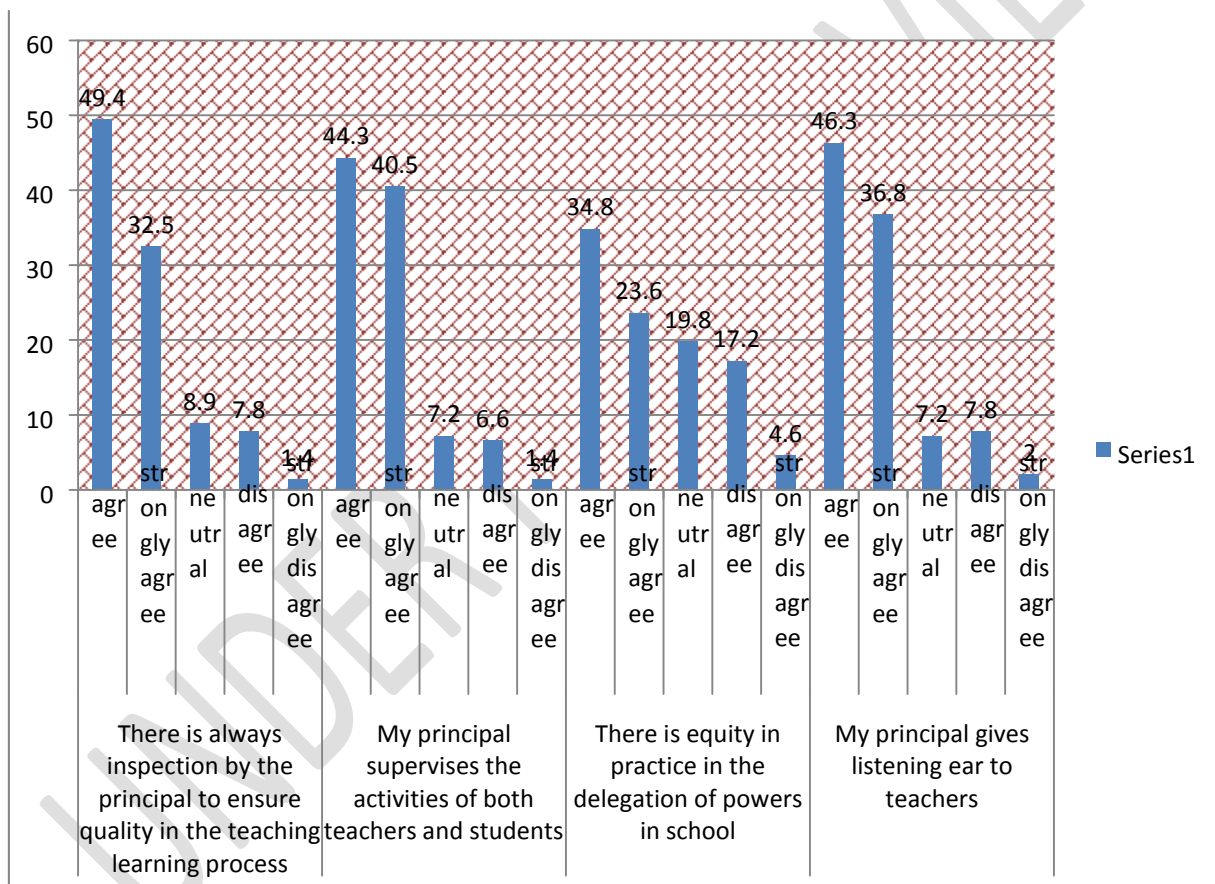


Fig. 2 represents teachers' information on principal control mechanisms in relation to teachers' commitment in secondary schools. The first item is based on teachers' views on whether there is always classroom inspection done by their principals to ensure quality in teaching learning process. From the responses given by teachers, out of 348 respondents,

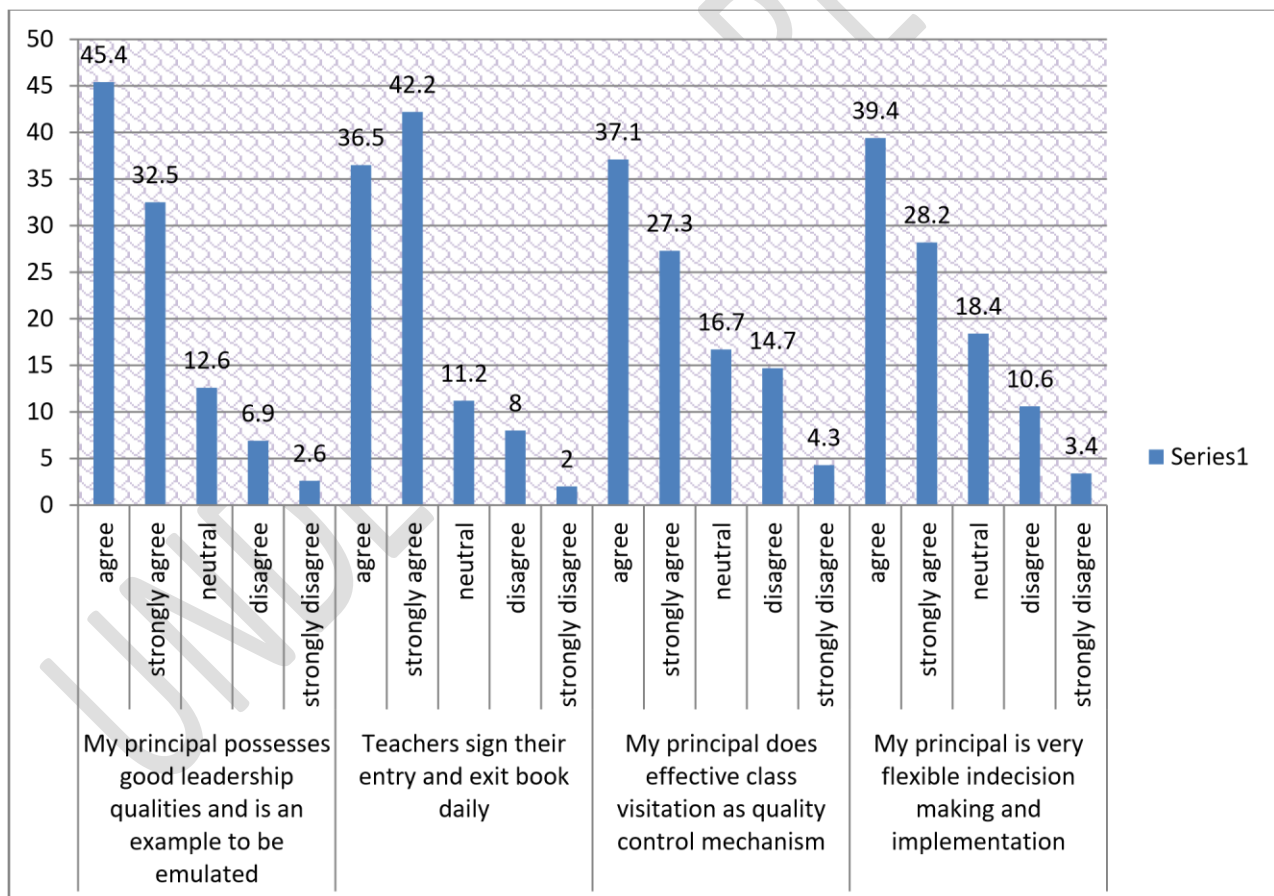
172 (49.4%) and 113 (32.5%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively on principals regular classroom checks to ensure quality teaching-learning while 31 (8.9%) did not take any position. 27 (7.8%) and 5 (1.4%) disagreed and strongly disagreed on this. This reveals that most secondary school principals understand the need for teachers to be constantly checked to ensure quality teaching. It also shows that an insignificant number of secondary school principals are yet to come to terms with regular classroom regular checks. When teachers are inspected on regular basis, commitment on the part of teachers is assured thus guaranteeing quality teaching and learning.

The second item looks at principals' availability in supervising teachers' and students' activities in class. From the responses from teachers, (348), 154 (44.3%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively on principals' routine supervision of teachers and students. From the total number of respondents, (348), 25 (7.2%) were neutral. 23 teachers (6.6%) and 5 (1.4%) respectively disagreed and strongly disagreed on this. This indicates the high degree of attachment most secondary school principals have for supervision of teachers. In modern teaching learning process, there is a close link between the supervision of teachers and the commitment to teaching.

The third item seeks to know if secondary school principal delegates powers to their teachers. Out of the three hundred and forty eight (348) who responded on this, 121 (34.8%) and 82 (23.6%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively on the on the fact that secondary school principals do assign some tasks to their teachers to perform in school while 69 (19.8%) were neutral on this stand. Sixty (60) teachers, (17.2%) and 16 (4.6%) respectively agreed and disagreed on this point. Delegation of powers is paramount in secondary school because it enables teachers to be more committed in discharging their pedagogic duties as professional. Where there is no delegation of powers by the secondary school principals, most teachers become frustrated thus will be less committed in teaching.

The fourth item concerns whether secondary school principals give a listening ear to their collaborators. From the total number of respondents (348), 161 (46.3%) and 128 (36.8%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively on the fact that secondary school principals give them listening ears to permit them contribute their own ideas for the development of the school thus a high degree of commitment is shown. Twenty five (25) teachers (7.2%) out of 348 teachers were neutral on this point. Twenty seven (27) teachers disagreed (7.8%) and only 7 (2%) strongly disagreed. This implies that a principal who listen to his/her teachers' contributions on school issues cause them to be more committed in the discharge of their duties as teachers because they tend develop a sense o belonging.

**Figure 2(continue...): Distribution of respondents based on principals control mechanisms**



Item five above shows the respondents' views on their principal's leadership qualities and their degree of commitment. Out of the three hundred teachers who responded to this item, 137 (39.4%) and 98 (28.2%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively that their principals possess some good leadership qualities. Sixty four (64) teachers (18.4%) did not indicate whether their principals have some leadership qualities that can influence their teaching. Thirty seven (37) (10.6%) and 12 (3.4%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively on this view point. A leader who is versed with good leadership styles is capable of using his managerial skills to some teachers to be more committed in the discharge of their duties.

In item six above, three hundred and forty eight (348) teachers duly responded on whether their principals actually control them through signing in and out of school log book. 127 (36.5%) and 147 (42.2%) teachers agreed and strongly agreed respectively confirm that they actually sign in and out the school log books in their various schools. This helps to check absenteeism there by causing them to be readily available in their various schools. 39 (11.2%) of the teachers were neutral while 28 (8%) and 7 (2%) disagreed and strongly disagreed on this. This is an indication that committed teachers are always available in school for effective and efficient teaching. Teachers that are always available inculcate in their students that spirit of hard work which leads to greater academic achievement than teachers who are always absent from school.

Item seven is concerned with secondary school principals' class visitation to assure quality input and output. From the three hundred and forty eight (348) respondents, 129 (37.1%) and 95 (27.3%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively on their principals' class visitation to guarantee quality input and output in secondary schools. 58 (16.7%) out of the 348 teachers were neutral while 51 (14.7%) and 15 (4.3%) disagreed and strongly disagreed with this item. When there is a consistent class visitation by the school principals, the teachers will, of course, sit up and will be more committed in the

discharge of their duties as teachers. This will go a long way to guarantee quality input and output in the secondary schools.

Lastly, on the last item which looks at whether school principals are flexible in their administration, it was observed that out of 348 respondents, 137 (39.4%) and 98 (28.2%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively on this item. Sixty four (18.4%) were neutral while 37 (10.6%) and 12 (3.4%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively on this item. Most teachers prefer to work with principals who are more flexible than rigid ones. Flexible administrators will create a school atmosphere that is conducive for teachers thus enabling them to be committed.

#### **4.2 Test of Hypothesis**

**$H_{a1}$ : Principals' control mechanisms influence teachers' commitment in the secondary schools.**

**$H_{o1}$ : Principals control mechanisms do not influence teachers' commitment in the secondary schools.**

**Table 2: Correlations on Principals control mechanisms**

			Principals' Control Mechanisms	Teachers' Commitment
Spearman's rho	Principals' Control Mechanisms	Correlation	1,000	,796
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,	,001
		N	350	350
	Teachers' Commitment	Correlation	,796	1,000
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,001	,
		N	350	350

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

From the table on correlations above it is discovered that the relationship between principals' control mechanisms and teachers' commitment is significant. This is based on the fact that the level of significance is 0.01 thus lesser than 0.05 which is the alpha and the standard error margin. It also entails that we have 1 chance of making an error if we accept that the relationships between the two variables exist. Alternatively looking at the Spearman rank correlation index is 0.796 indicating that the link is positive. The results indicate that principals' control mechanisms is a determinant of Teachers' commitment in the secondary school. From the result we rejected the null hypothesis and retain that principals' control mechanisms significantly influence teachers' commitment in the secondary schools. This correlates with Lezotte's (1994) assertion that "the primary responsibility of the principal is to facilitate effective teaching and learning with the overall mission of enhancing students' achievement; and instructional

leadership provided by the principal has been identified as a contributing factor to students' achievement.”

## **5.0 Implication and Conclusion**

The results of this study implies that the principal is the central figure in assuring the proper function of the school system. This strictly depends on his charisma, enthusiasm and attitude towards his job. Lawson (2001) found out that positive culture is associated with high students' achievement; while O'Donnel & White (2005) buttressed that principals who emphasize on the improvement of school teaching-learning climates are increasing their teachers' ability in optimizing students' performances. Powell (2004) reveals that effective leadership is a key role to students' success. This means that the principal occupies a central position in bring about school efficiency. This cuts across organization efficiency through efficient school processes and outputs. According to Dewey (1916), the core of the process of teaching is the arrangement of the environment in which students interact. Teaching should be directed towards helping students to understand phenomena and ideas. This means that the principal and teachers have to recognize what and how students already think about a given phenomenon. More important teaching requires learners to change their ways of perception, experiencing and conceiving aspects of the real world around them. So teaching as a fundamental activity in the school should not only be the responsibility of the teacher but the joint endeavor between both principal and teachers.

An analysis of the system theory Talcott (1950) reveals that an organisation functions efficiently through proper use of inputs which are transformed in order to have desirable outputs. Within the school as an organisation, there are multiple inputs such as the labour and capital inputs which are further transformed into expected outputs. It is the principal who is found at the head of the school and

under normal circumstances, he is supposed to be accountable to his authorities. He has the responsibility to meticulously organise the available materials and human resources in order to enhance maximum efficiency in the input – output production process. This means that the principal is to be held accountable in case the school does not perform well. The principal has a lot of responsibilities within the school and as such must sit up to face the challenges. The creation of a proper pedagogic environment and the effective implementation of the policy on class size is the sole responsibility of the principal in secondary school. This is very important because the transformation of the inputs into outputs cannot be effectively used to reduce, failure, stagnation and dropout in an inappropriate environment.

As far as principals were concerned in this study, the following lapses were identified as possible causes of secondary school teachers' lack of commitment.

- School principals do not ascertain an efficient use of the scarce available resources. Most of them lack the competences and commitment to do so.
- School principals are mostly adopting a laissez leadership style in the school system where especially as far as teachers' effective presence and assiduity is concerned.
- Most principals admit up to 180 students in a single classroom making the task difficult for teachers to carryout proper classroom management and effective teaching.
- Most principals have installed a non participative administrative systems in the schools which has reduced teacher participation in attaining school objectives and as such limiting teacher and student from sharing in the school vision to increase success.

- Secondary school leaders have not set up a management program for school facilities to ensure their sustainability.
- School leaders have rules and regulations drafted to govern the school yet high indiscipline still prevails because these rules are not applied correctly and objectively.
- Most principals are unable to create a good communication link between administration and teachers.
- School principals who assume the function of school leadership appointed by educational authorities. Leadership nowadays becomes challenging due to new problems that have cropped up in the school system.

The principal needs to have the ability of a manager to influence subordinates to voluntarily make efforts towards achieving organizational goals or objectives. (Fonkeng&Tamanjong, 2009). As such the leadership style has to be motivating to workers so as to enable them to be committed and assiduous to task. In authoritarian leadership, the principal becomes a dictator and takes decision unilaterally and arbitrarily. He expects teachers to accept orders without questioning. In this case, communication in this style of leadership is handicapped thus leading to poor human relations and weakness in team spirit. This would likely make teachers develop inertia towards work owing to the fact that the work environment interns of human relationships are poor. A laissez-faire leadership style would instead lead to a chaotic environment which will hamper the attainment of institutional goal. Democratic leadership appears to be the best as it is open and participatory. Here, the principal as the head does a lot consultation, delegation of power before decisions are made.

In the secondary school situation, the educational administrator in this case needs to recruit the right type of staff, induct the staff and give him/her tools for work. When this is done in the right manner it leads to efficiency. A teacher going to teach the next day, is required to prepare his learning experiences, writes his lesson notes, chooses the right type of instructional materials, and the method of teaching beforehand. A supervisor of instruction plans the best strategy for supervision before leaving his office. Efficient planning certainly yields efficient results. In contrast to this school administrators lack required skills and are also motivated by personal interest. Sometimes there are also in rush and so cannot plan properly.

Organizing is the establishment of an appropriate machinery or organ to carry out needed functions to meet institutional objectives. In Cameroon, the schools are divided into different organs for effective administration. Also school administration is handled by vice principals, heads of departments, discipline masters, class masters and class delegates who collaborate with the principal for effective management. The quality of this team strongly depends on the quality and charisma of principal. But in most cases principals seem to care less about the effective running of school systems and this is one of the causes of inefficiency in school management systems in the country.

Conclusively, it can be argued that the principal is the highest person to be blamed if school objectives are not met. This is because he is the designated manager of all the available resources and his ability to effectively employ them will certainly influence the degree of attainment of school objectives. If teachers' attrition are indiscipline in the exercise of the duties and nothing is done to redress the situation, it denotes that administration should be blamed. Sometimes it appears to be that school principals lack plausible techniques in uniting and orientating large school populations and many resources towards attainment of

set objectives. Principals nowadays also need to acquire exceptional management skills that will enable them to face the challenges in their post; and this could be possible with the creation of a school for educational administrator where they will be trained on resource utilization methods and techniques. Secondly the decentralization of responsibilities of the school system could be a great instrument in enhancing quality and efficiency.

School principals, as leaders, should know their environment and be able to provide support when necessary. They play important roles in school development by providing a safe environment and creating a positive atmosphere. In addition, they should create the language of “us” and place emphasis on staff development.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

Based on the major findings and conclusions drawn with respect to the factors affecting teachers’ commitment in secondary schools in Bui Division, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Principals have to carry out an equitable distribution of teaching hours so as not to overload or overburden some teachers with a lot of responsibilities while others have very small hours. This requires a lot of tact in the utilization of human resources in the system. Principals have to make sure the resources available optimally utilized so as to product better results.
- Education policy maker should create a school for principalship where aspiring principals would acquire modern techniques of school administration so as to face the present challenges facing the school system. This will prevent nominations for the post of principal based on seniority and friendship.

- The ministry of secondary education should recurrently organize workshops for principals to enhance their professional growth and job performance.
- A participative approach as an element of effective leadership should be applied by principals to improve on the school democratic environment, so that in decision making the views of all teachers are taken into account and the teachers feel they can influence school matters even though the primary source of teachers' power comes from within the classroom, i.e. from the ability to control the curriculum and classroom practices. When teachers are involved in curriculum planning becomes motivating and constitutes also an important aspect of participative leadership. This would instill the sense of collaboration between teaching staff and administration. Instructional leadership as a component of effective leadership should be applied effectively. It is related to the role of principals as leading professionals who are aware of what goes on in the classroom, including the curriculum, teaching strategies and the monitoring of student progress. The principal here has to provide support, encourage and give practical assistance to teachers if needed.
- Another important aspect needed to be applied in the school by principals is effective personal monitoring of staff performance and the proactive selection and replacement of staff. This is very important and should be taken serious. Proactive selection and replacement of staff involves head hunting for good recruits and pressuring less competent staff to improve their performance or to move to another school. Principals of secondary schools in the state should devise means of combating truancy among their students and ensure that high academic standard is maintained in their respective schools; these will assist in achieving system goals and objectives. The school administration should stream students based on the intellectual qualities so as to enable them develop strategies to

effectively handle slow learners. School principals should be duty conscious and should recruit students based on their performances. With this school authorities would be able to say how well students would be able to perform in their academic life. School administration should include teachers in establishing time tables. Teacher effective presence should be reinforced by the school administration and absentee teachers should be severely sanctioned.

- Principals should stop protecting teachers who have abandoned teaching for other activities out of the country.
- Education planners and Managers need to strengthen school monitoring and evaluation mechanism of principals so as to improve access to school, participation and retention; hence students can stay and learn in schools. Training and re-training of principals should be intensified so as to empower them on modern skills required for effective administration in schools. Principals seem to lack sufficient knowledge on innovative pedagogic approaches such as the CBA. We suggest that effective professional programmes should be carried out so as to upgrade these competences. This is because the use of new pedagogies could upgrade teachers' participation in school processes there by optimizing quality.
- Principals need to change their attitude towards their job and carry it along with commitment and assiduity so as to be emulated by their teachers. They need to be intrinsically motivated to do their job. There is also an urgent need for an inter-sectoral budget restructuring to release more resources for education this will go a long way in meeting both students and teachers requirement for effective service delivery in improving the school system efficiency.

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