



# The Influence of Teaching Practice Assessment on the Effectiveness of Geography Teaching in English Speaking Secondary Schools in Anglophone Cameroon

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## **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author AMC designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author KEL managed the analyses of the study and part of literature searches. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

It is noted that the quality of the educational system of any given country depends largely on the quality of teacher education. For this quality to be realized, it is important to constantly monitor the stages (theoretical, teaching practice, research project) of teacher education. This study intended to investigate the influence of Teaching Practice Assessment on the Effectiveness of Geography Teaching in English Speaking Secondary Schools in Anglophone Cameroon. It was carried out within the Menchum and Fako Divisions of the North West and South West regions of Cameroon respectively. This research had as population size, some 1444 geography teachers and all their students drawn from all government secondary schools within these two regions. Teachers' sample (60 Teachers) population was obtained through the use of purposive sampling method and that of students (300 students) was obtained through the use of simple random sampling. Respondents were expected to fill in closed ended questionnaire items. Data collected were reported using

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frequency tables and proportions while Logistic Regression Model was used to predict the effect level of influence of teaching practice on geography teachers' teaching effectiveness. This effectiveness was assessed based on the assessment of teaching practice. It was realized that this predictive factor considered alone had a predictive effect of 26.8% on teaching effectiveness though not significant enough. Based on the outcome of this findings, it can be said that this variable considered alone cannot bring about geography teaching effectiveness. Based on this finding, it was recommended that more emphasis during teacher training should be laid on subject matter mastery by student-teachers. Also, some form of financial incentives should be given to student-teachers. Finally, a thorough screening exercise should be done in the selection of supervisors and cooperating teachers to ensure that only the most qualified are assigned to guide and supervise student-teachers.

*Keywords: Teaching practice; assessment; influence; effectiveness; geography; English speaking; secondary schools; Anglophone Cameroon.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Worthy of note is the fact that teacher education is an important foundation of any educational system and teaching practice or practicum is a key component of the teacher training programme.

It is through teacher education that the basis for good schools can be created because no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers [1,2].

Teaching practice is a very important component of any teacher training program. It should be the central pivot of the professional training [3].

Considering the numerous demographic changes and evolving school instructional policies, many teachers experience an increasingly wide range of student learning differences regarding academic, behavioural, physical and cultural perspectives in their classrooms (Munthe & Rogne, 2015).

This concern significantly requires teacher education that helps teachers become the innovators and researchers in education, laying the educational foundation for the continuous learning and the practical change in the workplace [4].

This can only be realistic through a managed teaching practice programme (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005).

It is very important to equip teachers with an education model that develops the pedagogical and psychological skills and supports them to effectively operate within the perspective of lifelong learning (Selmo & Orsenigo, 2014).

Teacher quality and educating high-quality teachers have emerged as the fundamental problems to be solved by nations since the correlation between education and economy is becoming more apparent, and the principal factor in student achievement is teacher quality (Cochran-Smith, 2008).

Teacher quality has been a continual issue in the field of education (Wang, 2012). When measurement procedures are introduced into the education system to improve the quality of its teaching force, beginning teachers often need to keep themselves abreast with what constitutes a high-quality teaching (Goh & Wong, 2014) [5].

If well-conceptualized and implemented, the teaching practice component of the teacher training programme will be able to bring about sustainability, rigor and resilience in the effective teaching and students sustainable learning process.

## 2. BACK GROUND

According to Sanders & Rivers [6], the quality of teacher education constitutes an important part in the process of effective curriculum implementation. He further posed that any future success by today student teachers in the teaching industry to a greater extent depends on how the teaching practice component of the teacher training programme is effectively guided and followed up.

Teacher education constitute three important parts. That is course work, practice (teaching practice) and research [7].

According to (Fagbulu, 1984, cited in Endeley, 2014), teaching practice is a kind of

apprenticeship stage during which the student-teachers are sent out to schools to gain practical and professional experience by translating all the educational theories they have acquired or learnt during training into practice.

Before students are sent out for teaching practice by any teacher training university or college as the case may be, it is expected that the student teacher must have undergone or taken some courses on teacher education.

It is after this that orientation on the exigencies within the practicing school is done before the student teachers are permitted to go out for teaching practice.

While in the field, student teachers are expected to work with the school administration, cooperating and other teachers, students as well as a supervisor usually sent from the student's teacher training college.

At the end of the practicing period, the cooperating teacher and supervisor are expected to submit an assessment report of the student teachers teaching performance.

The outcome of a well-organized and managed assessment process can significantly send feedback to the teacher training college as to the quality of teachers they are sending out to the society.

Worthy of note is the fact that the more standard and qualified teachers that are released into our schools, the better the training of our students thus consequently the better our society will do well.

The Teaching Practice component of the teacher-training programme is considered as a key instrument and a step in resolving the numerous inadequacies and inconsistencies in the teacher-training programme.

Much attention should be given to this so as to enable teachers to become effective players in their role as change agents.

Law No. 98/004 of 14<sup>th</sup> April 1998 to lay down guide lines for Basic, Secondary and Teacher Education in Cameroon, section 37 states that "Teachers are principal guarantors of quality education" and it is believed that this function cannot be effectively realized if the teaching practice component of the teacher-training

programme is not carried out with much rigor and resilience.

The Cameroon teacher-education system expects all teacher-training colleges to place student-teachers on teaching practice.

Despite these expectations, placement of student teachers and effective follow up has been a concern especially in the aspect of having schools that are well equipped with geography teaching aids, qualified cooperating teachers as well as the naivety of some supervisors who may never even go around supervising the students. In situations where they go around, effective collaboration is hardly observed between them, student teachers and cooperating teachers.

Generally, the teaching-practice exercise involves sending/posting the student-teachers out to different schools (cooperating schools) specified by the teacher- training college or university authorities concerned for a period of weeks which varies from one institution to the other. Unlike in the 1990's, the exercise presently is conducted for a period of twenty-six (26) weeks instead of twelve (12) weeks in most institutions, and it is expected to be done in two halves. That is, thirteen weeks during the second year of enrolment and the last half during the last or third year of the Bachelor of Education programme (The University of Buea model).

While on teaching practice, student-teachers are placed under Cooperating teachers. Cooperating teachers are expected to help the student-teachers establish realistic professional goals, achieve a life-work balance, develop meaningful professional relationships, demonstrate effective instructional strategies, establish a supportive and safe learning environment, demonstrate flexible thinking and actions, explicitly communicate the instructional decision-making process, demonstrate positive school-family relationships, co-plan lessons and other class activities, co-teach when appropriate, share authority in the classroom, share resources and materials, include the student-teacher in reflection tasks, clarify instructional practices in order to increase teaching efficacy, guide reflection on professional practice, rely on evidence to make decisions, reinforce appropriate actions, complete both formative and summative evaluations according to state and university standards, write a recommendation to support the job search among many other factors.

During this period, the university or teacher-training college supervisor is expected to make at least two tours to the practicing school. He/she is equally expected to examine and advise the professional performance of the student teacher. At the end, a joint assessment of the performance of the student-teacher is carried out by the cooperating teacher and the student teacher's supervisor.

Worthy of note is the fact that efforts by both the government and the private investors to improve quality teacher training and subsequent teaching effectiveness as well as better students' performance is taking place within a context that is surrounded by numerous challenges to teaching and learning [8].

The Cameroon teacher- training sector like any other is battling with globalization and the need to adapt to information and communication technologies, the ability to use modern teaching aids has been a major concern. This is coupled with the fact that most teacher-training institutions are not even able to afford these didactic materials. Student enrolment in both public and private institutions has witnessed a drastic increase within a short period of time. This increase is not commensurate to available quality teachers as well as infrastructure to accommodate them.

Furthermore, teachers' salaries are very low as compared to the ever-increasing cost of living. This is a serious concern because even those who are trained are now looking for means to move to more rewarding professions.

In order to tackle some of these issues, the government of Cameroon is working hard to improve the quality of learning in primary and secondary school through interventions such as curriculum reforms, distribution of learning and teaching materials and literacy programs, adaptation of training and teaching to the socio-economic environment, focus on achieving a well-educated human resources base to support the country's industrialization efforts, promotion of research and development of education practices within the sector and promotion of health in schools, improvement of good governance, management of the education sector with a special focus on decentralization, maintenance of current regulation mechanisms until new ones are developed, reinforcement of the decentralization of education sector, improvement of human resource management,

improvement of teaching conditions and encouragement of efficient career management, reinforcement of sector planning capacity, the stepping up transparency in resource management, strengthening of higher education with a focus on professional preparedness, science, and technology amongst other measures.

It is hoped that government's efforts will yield dividends by raising the standards needed in the teacher- training sector. If teaching practice is well conceptualized and implemented, it could make substantial and commendable contributions in the pre-service education of the would-be teachers. Bearing in mind that teaching practice is the formal practical training of the would-be teachers, and with the main purpose of enabling those teachers to apply competencies (knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes) acquired through course-work within the teacher-training institution or university to actual classroom situation [9].

### **3. ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING PRACTICE**

Assessment is considered as an indispensable part of instruction, as it determines whether or not the goals of education are being met. Assessment affects decisions about grades, placement, advancement, instructional needs, curriculum and in some cases, funding. Assessment inspires us to ask these hard questions: "Are we teaching what we think we are teaching?" "Are students learning what they are supposed to be learning?" "Is there a way to teach the subject better, thereby promoting better learning?" [10].

According to Mertler (2003), a large share of classroom time is allocated to assessment-related activities; hence identifying factors affecting teachers' classroom assessment practices becomes critical.

Teaching practice assessment is formative and summative (Luckett and Sutherland, 2000). It is important to note that through summative assessment supervisors exert the greatest power over students hence it is vital that they exercise this power responsibly and accountably.

Different stakeholders have diverse expectations of assessment. For instance, educational institutions desire to know whether their graduates are achieving high standards, set by

the institution (Luckett and Sutherland, 2000; Harlen (1987)). Students also want to know what is expected of them, how they are judged and how they are progressing and also want recognition of their achievements.

During teaching practice assessment, lecturers' desires to know whether the students have mastered key concepts and skills necessary in teaching and learning.

In the University of Buea, the assessment of student-teachers is done between the cooperating teacher and the supervisor. At the end of every teaching practice exercise, the student receives an aggregate score derived from the cooperating teacher, the University supervisor and a students' portfolio which is made up of a report, lesson plans, lesson notes, a journal and teaching aids.

The use of documentation portfolios, which can be defined as a collection of student-teachers' practices centring to provide a multidimensional interpretation of teaching and professional development (Goodman, Goodman, & Hood, 1989; Shannon, 1994), is a key tool for practicum assessment. Portfolios are useful tools for using them as a vehicle for supporting the assessment system, which is flexible, uses various data sources and aids various purposes, gathers evidence longitudinally, and offers a unified assessment of the pre-service teacher (Ryan & Kuhs, 1993).

In most teacher-training institutions, an assessment form guides assessment of teaching practice. The form has outlined items of what to look for in a lesson. This could be more of criterion-referenced assessment where the performance is judged against pre-specified criteria or standards. Here the student's performance is compared to that of his or her peers (Brown and Brown 1990). An institution can use assessment carried out by lecturers to determine failure or passing of teaching practice. It is therefore important to choose the most appropriate method to suit the purpose of assessment. Research has shown that there are great inconsistencies between different assessors assessing the same work and there is need to minimize these inconsistencies in teaching practice assessment (Brown, 1997) [11].

Assessment is influenced by approaches to assessment such as the traditional approach

where the lecturers are usually considered to be the only legitimate assessors and integrated assessment or computer –based assessment. Lecturers are the key assessors of students' performance during teaching practice. Their assessment relies heavily on their professional judgment. This raises the question of objectivity since lecturers assess a student who would be teaching any of the subjects in some of the curriculum, of which they may not be, specialists in.

According to Lockett and Sutherland (2000), in assessment, the expectations of objectivity and subjectivity will always arise among scholars. There is need to acknowledge that different assessors interpret student performances using different standards. The issues of inconsistencies can be minimized by double grading or cross grading to improve reliability. However assessors need to make reliable and valid qualitative and quantitative judgment when assessing teaching practice (Luckett and Sutherland, 2000).

Mpwar (2006) asserts that formative assessment is used to provide feedback to students and teachers to promote further learning. Summative assessment contributes to the judgment of student learning for reporting and certification purposes. Formative assessment is assessment for learning.

It is used at the beginning of an instructional period and during the process of instruction as teachers check for student understanding. Diagnostic tools determine what students already know and where there are gaps and misconceptions. Formative assessment also includes assessment as learning, where students reflect on and monitor their own progress. The information gained guides teachers' decisions in how to enhance teaching and learning. Formative assessment enables students to learn through the process of feedback and opportunities to practice and improve.

As students reflect on and monitor their progress this process effectively becomes assessment as learning and contributes to students planning future learning goals. Summative assessment – is assessment of learning. It is used towards and at the end of the instruction period. Teachers document the culmination of students' learning achievements through tasks that invite students to demonstrate their mastery and knowledge of the course content. Summative assessment data provides teachers with information about how effective teaching strategies have been, time

needed for instruction and how to improve teaching for future students [12].

In 2002 the Assessment Reform Group (Cambridge University, School of Education) produced ten principles that are foundational to assessment for learning.

Assessment should be regarded as a key professional skill for teachers, be part of effective planning of teaching and learning, promote commitment to learning goals and a shared understanding of the criteria by which they are assessed, be recognized as central to classroom practice, focus on how students learn, provide constructive guidance about how to improve, develop learners' capacity for self-assessment so that they can become reflective and self-managing take account of the importance of learner motivation, be sensitive and constructive because any assessment has an emotional impact, recognize the full range of achievement of all learners.

McNergney and Aylesworth (1983) characterized the criteria for evaluating pre-service education as explicit, implicit and null evaluation.

Explicit evaluation constitutes the public purposes and methods of appraisal by examining learners' general knowledge and verbal abilities.

Implicit evaluation is based on inquiries on subject matter knowledge and professional attitudes.

Null evaluation includes any highly subjective evaluation, in which there are not any intentional or no intentional evaluation criteria to measure pre-service teachers' teaching performance.

The beginning teachers, similar to the student-teachers to some extent, are assessed according to ratings of professional trainers on a set of subject-specific rubrics that evaluate: Planning, instruction, assessment, reflection and academic language (Darling-Hammond, Newton, & Wei, 2013).

The challenges encountered by student-teachers during practicum may influence the performance of the student-teachers negatively.

Student-teachers are sometimes too much stressed about the way they are assessed, which might, in return, result in a poor teaching practice performance and negative evaluation by the cooperating teachers (Canh, 2014).

Student-teachers also complain about having a limited degree of opportunity to implement in the school, not understanding the requirements by the supervising teacher, extra workload of writing lesson plans, time limits about completing the task, inadequate/late feedback (Allen, 2011) [13].

#### 4. TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

Traditionally, teachers were the 'holders of information' and their role was to impart this knowledge and skill to students. The internet has changed all that as information can now be obtained anywhere, any time on anything. Thus, the role of teachers has changed to developing the skills and tools to assist students in critically analysing the plethora of information available.

Effective teaching is more than just the successful transference of knowledge and skill or application around a particular topic. Effective teaching ensures that this surface approach to learning is replaced by deeper, student driven approaches to learning that analyses, develop, create and demonstrate understanding. Students need to initiate learning and maintain engagement during learning in their development as independent lifelong learners.

Teacher effectiveness is therefore referred to in terms of the focus on student outcomes and the teacher's behaviours and classroom processes that promote better student outcomes.

However, many authors have a deeper perspective of teachers teaching effectively. They adopt criteria that seek to encompass the duties that are seen to be part of the wider role of teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century because the role of a teacher is rarely restricted to instruction only.

In many countries a teacher's work has extended beyond the instructional or pedagogical role in the classroom. He/she may be facilitating his/her colleagues' teaching, engaging in broader leadership roles in the school, enhancing the quality of his/her teaching through his/her own reflection or engaging in professional development [2].

Aggarwal (2007) has outlined the roles of effective teachers in a child's development. According to him, an effective teacher is considered as a confident, a democrat, a detective, an ego supporter, an equalizer, a learning facilitator, a friend, a philosopher, a group leader and an initiator.

An effective teacher is a role model, a moral educator, a parent surrogate, a referee, a reformer, a resource person, a secularist, an implementer of curriculum and an upholder of norms and values. He gives information about his subject or course, influences the development of learners' character and personality and provides learning activities, materials and conducive environment for learning.

Onocha (2013) considers effective teachers as managers of the teaching/learning process who facilitate learners to acquire appropriate habits, values, ideas, knowledge and skills.

Teaching is the paramount work of a teacher. Ololube (2007) affirms that effective teaching is multidimensional. It is a complex and diverse activity. In performing his role of teaching, a teacher is demanded to teach effectively. An effective teaching is an intelligent knowledge-based activity because it draws on a multiplicity of cognitive, affective and interpersonal elements.

Adeyanju (2013) asserts that the foundation laid by teachers as Ambassadors to the future is of great importance to economic growth and political stability. Ajileye and Orji (2012) claim that a teachers 'effectiveness is based on the proper account of his professionalism. According to Rao (2007), teachers are the most expensive inputs of the instructional system. It is when there are calibre of professional teachers who have good educational background and relevant teaching skills and attitude that educational aims and objectives can be realized.

There is need for highly competent teachers for imparting knowledge. Before teachers can face the challenges of teaching, they need capability to perform their task efficiently. It is important for them to acquire requisite competencies for discharging of their duties. Only the competent, professionally skilled, vibrant and well-coordinated teachers can meet the challenges of educational crises that have bedevilled education sector especially in Cameroon [14].

## 5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper made use of the system theory of Von Bertalanffy in which he proposed that a system is characterized by the interaction of its components and the nonlinearity of those interactions.

The theory postulates that a system includes: (1) energy inputs into the system; (2) the transformation of those inputs within the system; (3) energy outputs; and (4) recycling (Katz and Kahn, 1978).

The school is an example of an open system (Mbua, 2003: 130); whose inputs include students, teachers, administrators, money and materials to name but a few. Its transformation processes include teaching, learning, assessment and policy-making, while their outputs include graduates who will be absorbed by the society and expected to contribute toward its growth and development. The environment is also expected to send feedback into the system. Feedback constitutes how the environment or society evaluates the functioning of the system.

A teacher education programme operating within this system consists of a sequence of structured learning opportunities provided to pre-service teachers within the system. The sequence and structure of the learning opportunities constitute an environment where the learning of pre-service teachers is situated in a gradually growing participation in teaching practice (Korthagen, 2010). The active use of these opportunities leads to the development of competences required for effective teaching. The use of learning opportunities by pre-service teachers is labelled as, in open system terms, patterned activities of individuals and describe the core of the interplay between system and pre-service teachers (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Thus, what happens within the teacher-education system is seen as an active developmental process, rather than just a transmission of declarative knowledge (Zeichner, 1983) [15].

This open system theory is very much relevant and related to this study in that a teacher training institution is made up of parts which are interrelated and functions in a division of labour relationship to achieve the training of quality teachers for the educational system as stated in the law of orientation of basic, secondary and teacher education in Cameroon (Law no 98/004 Of 14 April 1998). In the case of this study, the shared purpose is the training of quality pre-service teachers for the educational system. There are many stakeholders involve in this process and they include, managers, administrators, lecturers, legislation/policy makers, students, cooperating administrators and teachers in the teaching practice schools, the syllabus for training pre-service teachers,

among others. Each of these parts has a contribution to make and the influence of teaching practice on the geography teaching performance of pre-service teachers will depend on the effectiveness of each part. Teaching practice is an inevitable component of the process loop of the open system within the school, since together with theoretical knowledge acquired at the level of the Faculty/schools of education, helps the pre-service teachers acquire relevant skills that qualify them as quality products in the labour market.

It will require a comprehensive strategy to overcome the inconsistencies in the teacher training programmes and the seeming insurmountable challenges being faced by geography teachers and more specifically those teaching the physical part of geography. The provision of quality teachers must be part of such a strategy. Teachers have to be well trained so that they would in turn ensure that students are provided quality education. This is necessary to maximize the use of scarce educational resources by reducing educational wastage through high rates of repetition and dropout which plaque the educational system (Report of the Sector-Wide Approach/ Education, 2005). However, effective training of teachers cannot be obtained without quality teacher-training institutions and programmes. Teaching practice done by teacher-training institutions is an essential component of the training model adopted by that departments of teacher education and its influence on the teaching effectiveness of pre-service geography teachers is very critical to the overall attainment of a successful geography teaching as well as the teacher training goal and that of teaching practice in particular [16].

## 6. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Geography as a subject is a very important aspect in building the economy of every nation. Having studied geography for so many years, we have realized that most teachers of geography find it very difficult to handle some particular aspects of this field of study like physical geography thus putting their effectiveness to question. In some cases, they complain of the unavailability of appropriate teaching aids, broadness of the field of study, students' inability to purchase text books and practical equipment, lack of resources to carry out field work, large class sizes, little time allocated to the teaching of geography, among other related problems. On

the other hand, students' performance in this subject both at the level of secondary and tertiary education has been very low.

Worthy of note is the fact that Cameroon's vision 2035 has highlighted geography -related problems that need to be handled as a matter of urgency. Among these are urban and regional development challenges, environmental and climate change protection and mitigation, space control, indiscriminate distortion of the ecosystem, extension of plant and animal species, infrastructural development and African and geo-political management. Despite these high stakes and expectations in the management of the earth's natural gift and the expectations from our government prior to Cameroon's emergence by 2035, students' interest to further studies in this very important field of study is diminishing as they advance in the academic levels (specifically physical geography) as well as their performances in public examinations. For instance, during the 2016/2017 school year, 63,935 students registered for the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary level geography and only 36,711 students were able to make it through. During the 2017/2018 school year, 66,853 registered for General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary level and only 10,209 candidates succeeded to have a pass. Meanwhile for the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced level, the number that registered during the 2016/2017 school year dropped drastically as compared to those of Ordinary level in the same year. That is 14,086 registered during this year and only 7,945 passed. Meanwhile, in the 2017/2018 school year, 14,929 students registered and only 2,785 students were able to make it through. This is thus a very worrying issue that threatens Cameroon's emergence vision and other developmental agenda. Worthy of note is the fact that there is a diversity of factors that can affect the seemingly insurmountable problems of students' interest and performance in a subject such as geography. The teachers' competence is critical in bringing about an intended outcome in students' performance [3].

Teaching practice is expected to equip student/pre-service teachers with knowledge, skills and attitudes for effective teaching. Teaching practice is an important or a key parameter in this exercise as well as in the achievement of this goal. Given the rapid political, economic, technological, and social



changes that are now commonplace in virtually every society, any attempt to identify the relationship between "what is" and "what should be" good practice in teaching, learning, and assessment of geography should receive much attention in the teacher-training programme due to the broadness of the subject. It is therefore necessary to make a continuous assessment of teaching practice as a component of teacher effectiveness [17].

**Objective:** To determine how the assessment of teaching practice influences geography teachers' teaching effectiveness in secondary schools in Anglophone Cameroon.

**Research question:** Does the assessment of Teaching Practice influence geography teachers' effectiveness in the teaching of geography in English speaking secondary schools in Anglophone Cameroon?

**Hypothesis:**

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between teaching practice assessment and geography teachers teaching effectiveness in secondary schools in Anglophone Cameroon

**Ha:** There is no significant relationship between teaching practice assessment and geography teachers teaching effectiveness in secondary schools in Anglophone Cameroon

**7. METHODOLOGY**

Since this study sought to examine the link between teaching practice assessment and effectiveness in the teaching of geography in secondary schools in Anglophone Cameroon, a descriptive research design has been employed.

This study is carried out in the North West and the South West Regions of Cameroon.

Cameroon is a country found in Central Africa. It has ten regions.

The Anglophone region of Cameroon has a surface area of 43,000 sq. km and a current population of about 6 million people. It is located in the 'armpit' of Africa; it is sandwiched between Nigeria and the other regions of Cameroon. It has frontiers to the west and north with Nigeria, and to the south with the Equatorial Guinean Island of Bioko.

These Anglophone regions today have many educational institutions ranging from primary to university. Teaching practice takes place in many of the secondary schools found here and it is carried out by student teachers from teacher training institutions within the regions [18].

The population of this study was made up of all the geography teachers in public secondary schools in Anglophone Cameroon as well as all the students being taught by these teachers. The population is distributed in Table 1.

The Table 1 shows the distribution of the various schools and their population used in this study.

As presented on table above, out of a target population of 165 Geography teachers within Fako and Menchum Divisions, 60 of them were considered for this study which gives a proportion of 36.4%.

For the selection of the sample (Fako and Menchum Divisions), the deliberate or purposive sampling technique was used. The justification here is that the researcher carried out the collection of this data in the midst of the on-going socio-political impasse in the North West and South West Regions and it was relatively very difficult to access most areas in Anglophone Cameroon. Since Fako and Menchum Divisions were relatively calm during this period and considering the fact that the researcher has a relatively good knowledge about the terrain of these two divisions, they were therefore considered as sample for this study [19].

**Table 1. The distribution of the population for this study (Teachers)**

S/N	Institution	No of schools	Population
1	Government High schools	147	599
2	Government Bilingual High Schools	34	170
3	Government Secondary Schools	213	619
4	Government Bilingual Secondary Schools	21	56
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>415</b>	<b>1444</b>

*Source: Regional Delegations of Secondary Education for NW and SW Regions, Teacher Resource Centre Bamenda and Pedagogic Inspectors for Geography*

**Table 2. Sample distribution**

Institution	Target population of teachers	Sample size	
		Teachers	Students
GHS BUEA	06	02	10
GHS BONJONGO	05	02	10
GHS LIMBE	05	02	10
GHS BATOKE	04	02	10
GHS IDENAU	04	01	05
GHS BUEA RURAL	03	02	10
GHS EKONA	03	02	10
GHS BAFIA	03	01	05
GHS BUEA TOWN	04	01	05
GHS GREAT SOPPO	03	00	00
GHS BOMAKA	04	02	10
GHS BOLIFAMBA	04	01	05
GHS BONADIKOMBO	05	01	05
GHS MBONJO	05	02	10
GHS MOTOMBOLOMBO	04	01	05
GHS MALENDE	04	01	05
GHS MUNYENGE	04	02	10
BGS MOLYKO	07	03	15
GBHS MUEA	06	02	10
GBHS LIMBE	05	02	10
GBHS TIKO	05	03	15
GBHS MUTENGENE	04	01	05
GBHS MUYUKA	05	00	00
GBHS MUDEKA	04	01	05
GSS BWIYUKU	03	02	10
GSS WOKEKA	02	01	05
GSS MABETA	02	01	05
GSS LIONGO	02	01	05
GSS OWE ROAD –M'KA	03	01	05
GSS DIBANDA	03	02	10
GBHS WUM	04	02	10
GHS WUM	05	03	15
GSS BU	02	01	05
GSS UPKWA	01	00	00
GSS BANGWE	02	01	05
GHS BAFMENG	04	02	10
GHS ESU	03	01	05
GHS ZHOA	02	00	00
GHS WEH	03	00	00
GSS ISE	02	01	05
GSS AKANG	02	01	05
GSS ABAR	01	00	00
GSS KUK	02	01	05
GSS BEKULANG	02	00	00
GHS BENAKUMA	04	01	05
GHS BEFANG	03	02	10
GSS MODELLE	02	01	05
GSS MBAMBA	01	00	00
GSS BAWORO	02	00	00
GHS FURU-AWA	03	00	00
GSS UPKWACK-AKUM	02	01	05
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>300</b>

*Source: Table adapted from the Regional delegations for Secondary Education for the North West and South West Regions as well as information obtained from teachers' resource centres*

**Table 3. Teachers' perception of teaching practice assessment**

Teaching practice assessment	Stretched				Collapsed		
	Very often	Often	Rarely	Never	Often	Rarely	Never
I was examined on knowledge of subject matter	21.7%(13)	66.7%(40)	10.0%(6)	1.7%(1)	88.3%(53)	10.0%(6)	1.7%(1)
Appropriateness of teaching methods was checked	21.7%(13)	70.0%(42)	5.0%(3)	3.3%(2)	91.7%(55)	5.0%(3)	3.3%(2)
I was assessed on classroom management	25.0%(15)	66.7%(40)	6.7% (4)	1.7% (1)	91.7% (55)	6.7% (4)	1.7% (1)
I was assessed on the drawing of lesson plan	21.7%(13)	68.3% (41)	8.3% (5)	1.7%(1)	90.0% (54)	8.3% (5)	1.7% (1)
The use of instructional aids was assessed	35.0% (21)	60.0%(36)	3.3% (2)	1.7% (1)	95.0% (57)	3.3% (2)	1.7% (1)
I was assessed on lesson time management	25.0% (15)	68.3% (41)	5.0% (3)	1.7% (1)	93.3% (56)	5.0% (3)	1.7% (1)
Dressing was examined	31.7% (19)	61.7% (37)	5.0% (3)	1.7% (1)	93.3% (56)	5.0% (3)	1.7%(1)
I was assessed on professional ethics	35.0% (21)	55.0% (33)	6.7% (4)	3.3% (2)	90.0% (54)	6.7% (4)	3.3%(2)
I was assessed on communication skills	28.3% (17)	60.0% (36)	0.0% (0)	11.7% (7)	88.3% (53)	0.0% (0)	11.7%(7))
I was assessed on relationship with one another within the teaching-learning environment.	31.7% (19)	61.7% (37)	5.0% (3)	1.7% (1)	93.3% (56)	5.0% (3)	1.7%(1)
MRS	27.7% (166)	63.8% (383)	5.5% (33)	3.0% (18)	91.5% (549)	5.5% (33)	3.0% (18)

*N=60; Responses=600*

For the selection of teachers, the purposive sampling technique was used. This could be justified by the fact that the study intended to use only teachers of geography in general secondary education public schools who have not taught for more than two years. This group of geography teachers is considered appropriate in this study because they are new graduates and experience will not be able to influence the study. Statistics from the regional delegations of secondary education was used for the identification of the population.

As for geography students, the simple random sampling method was used to choose the sample five (5) out of the known population within their classrooms. Five students were randomly selected from each class being taught by a geography teacher who was part of the study.

Data collection for this study was done using a questionnaire of the structured type. That is close ended questions which followed the quantitatively oriented approach.

Two different sets of the questionnaire were used. That is a questionnaire for geography teachers and another one for students of geography in secondary schools within the area of study. Items for the questionnaire were derived from the review of related literature.

All survey questionnaires and observations were entered into a pre-designed Epi Data Version 3.1 (Epi Data Association, Odense Denmark, 2008) database which had in-built consistency and validation checks. Further consistency, data range and validation checks were also performed in SPSS version 21.0 (IBM Inc., 2012) to identify invalid codes. The validated data base was then analyzed following statistical standards. Other validation tests included missing value analysis and reliability analysis to measure the internal consistency of responses. The sample flow table also enables us to make sure that the return rate does not drop below the 80% threshold of the initial calculated sample size. The questionnaire was made of categorical variables and data were analyzed using counting techniques namely frequency and proportions while Multiple-Responses- Analysis was used to calculate the aggregate score for conceptual components [17,20].

## 8. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Below are analyses of data and findings of teachers' views on the influence of the

assessment of teaching practice on the effectiveness of geography teaching in secondary schools in Anglophone Cameroon.

Based on the table above, the feedback from teachers was to an extent positive on the contributions of assessment on teaching effectiveness. 95.0% of the respondents were satisfied with the fact that their instructional materials were assessed, 93.3% were satisfied that their lesson time management, dressing code and relationship with one another in the teaching and learning environment. They equally expressed a satisfied level of 91.7% on the assessment of the appropriateness of teaching methods used and classroom management, followed by the drawing of lesson plan and professional ethics 90.0%, knowledge of subject matter and communication skills 88.3%.

## 9. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

### 9.1 The Assessment of Teaching Practice

The effect of assessment of teaching practice on teaching effectiveness was appraised using Logistic Regression Model. The variability explained by this model was not significant as yielded by the Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficient ( $\chi^2=13.418$ ;  $df=10$ ;  $P=0.0.201$ ). This is supported by the Wald Statistics (Wald =0.241;  $P=0.201$ ). This therefore implies that though of teaching practice predicts teacher effectiveness at a rate of 26.8% given an Explanatory Power (EP) / Predictive Power of 0.268 (Nagelkerke R Square=0.268), this effect was not significant. The null hypothesis stated above is then accepted therefore implying that assessment of teaching practice considered alone does not significantly predict teaching effectiveness [6].

Among the 10 predictive indicators that make up the conceptual component – assessment of teaching practice, none of them demarcated itself as significantly predicting teaching effectiveness ( $P>0.05$ ). As such, assessment of teaching practice alone cannot bring about the expected teaching effectiveness in the teaching of geography in secondary schools in Anglophone Cameroon.

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P=0.201). This therefore implies that though of teaching practice predicts teacher effectiveness at a rate of 26.8% given an Explanatory Power (EP) / Predictive Power of 0.268 (Nagelkerke R Square=0.268), this effect was not significant. The null hypothesis stated above is then accepted therefore implying that assessment of teaching practice considered alone does not significantly predict teaching effectiveness [21].

Among the 10 predictive indicators that make up the conceptual component assessment of teaching practice, none of them demarcated itself as significantly predicting teaching effectiveness (P>0.05). This implies that the Predictive Effect depicted by the model is a synergic contribution from all the predictors without domination.

However, the outcome of this clearly recognizes the contribution of assessment of teaching practice toward effective teaching of geography.

This study ties with another study carried out by Ononcha (2012). The study assessed teaching performance of 222 student-teachers from the Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University-Nigeria, posted to various secondary schools in Ekiti State for a six-week teaching practice during 2010/2011 academic session. The findings showed satisfactory teaching performance of the student-teachers while gender and previous teaching experience had no significant influence on teaching performance of the student-teachers. It was recommended that supervisors (of teaching practice/raters) should be thoroughly

trained on the use of assessment instrument for reliable measurement of student-teachers' teaching performance [22].

In a similar study, Al-Mutawa and Al-Dabbous (1997) in their study with Kuwaitian student-teachers found that personal qualities, language/linguistic knowledge, inter-personal relations, planning, and implementation as the components of the teaching practicum assessment were significantly correlated with each other serving hand in hand for a successful assessment.

Leshem and Bar-Hama (2008) investigated how Israeli EFL teacher trainees desire to be assessed by their counsellors and which criteria they saw as useful or impractical by means of questionnaires, interviews, personal diaries, and documents that included minutes from meetings and assessment forms. The findings revealed that teacher trainees preferred a criteria-based assessment, which is objective and explicit. They also favoured numerical grading over a pass/fail grading. Moreover, the majority of teacher trainees preferred a holistic approach to an analytical approach for the evaluation of their practice teaching performance. According to the researchers, trainees need "explicit criteria for effective teaching in order to identify the quality of their teaching. Their preferences for assessment show that they regard the observation lesson as both a test and a means for reflection and professional development" (Leshem & Bar-Hama, 2008, p. 264) [23].

**Table 4. Model fitting information**

Omnibus tests of model coefficient			Wald statistics			Explanatory/predictive power of the model (Nagelkerke R-Square)
Chi-Square	df	Sig.	Wald	df	Sig.	
13.418	10	0.201	0.241	1	0.201	0.268

**Table 5. Likelihood Ratio Tests depicting the perceived predictive level of indicators of assessment of teaching practice on teaching effectiveness**

Indicators	Likelihood ratio tests		
	Chi-square	d.f.	Sig.
I was examined on knowledge of subject matter	.020	1	.888
Appropriateness of teaching methods was checked	1.758	1	.185
I was assessed on classroom management	.601	1	.438
I was assessed on the drawing of lesson plan	.008	1	.931
The use of instructional aid was assessed	1.558	1	.212
I was assessed on lesson time management	.549	1	.459
Dressing was examined	.416	1	.519
I was not assessed on professional ethics	.001	1	.981
I was assessed on communication skills	.020	1	.888
I was assessed on relationship with one another within the teaching-learning environment.	.416	1	.519

Assessment is a fundamental aspect of the teacher training programme. It is very important to give a proper attention to the methods and instruments to be used for this purpose.

The open system theory talks about interactions amongst inputs into a system, processes within the system and outputs within that very system. Assessment is one of the processes in the teaching practice programme. It is this aspect that informs student-teachers of their performance in the teaching practice programme. Equally, the self-efficacy theory can be seen in this study. The outcome of assessment can help student-teachers to believe in themselves or built up negative feelings about their teaching. The way feedback is given should be done in such a way that it should not discourage student-teachers but rather build confidence in that subsequently, they can make it. Thorndike's classical conditioning theory can also be used to spur up their performance in the course of assessment. Continuous practical exercises given to them will spur up performance [24].

## 10. CONCLUSION

Teacher education is a key aspect in ensuring quality teaching and learning as well as subsequent quality services and production in our societies.

This paper has examined the influence of teaching practice assessment on the effectiveness of geography in English speaking secondary schools in Cameroon.

It is perceived without doubt that assessment of teaching practice is an integral component of the process of grooming quality and effective teachers, however, it can be very rewarding if all factors regarding teacher education work in synergy to bring about the effectiveness and quality as desired for our schools.

## 11. RECOMMENDATIONS

**To the Government:** A professional teacher with creative imagination for nurturing healthy and responsible citizenry could also become a respectable scholar, administrator and a good human being. Hence, teaching practice should be highly professionalized with necessary infrastructure and laws to give it the honour and dignity it deserves. It is informed by the fact that functional education is a potent tool to inject competent manpower resources into the

economy to improve the general wellbeing of the populace.

The government should encourage and make it possible that student teachers upon graduation should have the opportunity to receive their salaries immediately and for those who went through private training should equally have the opportunity to be recruited. With this, internal seminars and workshops should be constantly organized to empower them.

**To the Schools of Education:** Schools of education could assign more courses on the timetable that focuses on the subject area of the students. In the same light, the work scheme per such course should be widened and deepened with associated lesson hours expanded. This would equip the student-teachers with a wide and deep knowledge of the subject area.

Student-teachers need to be well informed of the nature of assessment. They need to know beforehand the role of the university as well as that of the teaching practice assessment process.

Only lecturers with deep knowledge in teacher education should be considered in the supervision of student-teachers. Also, supervisors need to endeavour to spend time with student-teachers.

An effective collaborative relationship with cooperation schools will enhance effective presence of student-teachers during teaching practice. Students who did not put in maximum time as per the specification of the teacher training institution should be obliged to carry over the exercise.

Schools of education should organize seminars at least twice per teaching practice session that focuses on teaching practice expectations such as strict respect of professional ethics, dynamism and creativity. Student-teachers should be constantly reminded of their professional expectations and the implication it would have on their profession. This would raise the level of awareness and help ensure professionalism [25].

It is largely impossible for an individual to engage seriously in less motivating and unprofitable study. Student-teachers receive training, become professionals, graduate from school and stay unemployed (those train in private schools and the faculty of education in the University of

Buea). Schools of education could carry on negotiations with the government that would integrate the best graduating students into the public service. This would act as a motivator for effective teaching practice.

**To Cooperating Schools and Teachers:** Cooperating schools should place student-teachers only under teachers that have received formal training and have graduated from a teacher-training institution with at least three years of professional experience [26].

Student-teachers should be given multiple tasks in the class room that will need the diversity of teaching methods.

Cooperating teachers should be welcoming and communicate love to student-teachers. They should have a sense of pride and demonstrate love for the teaching profession. This would create a sense of admiration in the student-teachers for the teaching profession and help them take teaching practice seriously.

**To Student-Teachers:** Student-teachers should develop self-efficacy toward their chosen careers.

Theoretical knowledge is a key to practice. In this light, student-teachers need to pay serious attention toward course work if they must be effective and efficient in the field.

Mentorship is an important aspect in self-realization. Student-teachers should always try to hook up with a senior person in their field of specialization for mentorship [27].

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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