

**Overall Vision of Human Resources: A Determining Factor in Curbing  
Teacher Attrition at The Ministry of Basic Education of Cameroon  
(MINEDUB)**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study explores the impact of the overall vision of human resources at Cameroon's Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB) on teacher attrition. Using a mixed-methods approach and a stratified sample of 911 staff members, the research highlights a significant relationship between these two variables, supported by theories of organizational commitment and bounded rationality. Key contributing factors include procedural opacity, the exclusion of classroom teachers from decision-making, and the discrepancy between policies and practices. The impact varies significantly across hierarchical levels, being highest among Regional Delegates (RDBE) ( $r = 0.822$ ) and lowest among classroom teachers ( $r = 0.105$ ), underscoring the substantial influence of MINEDUB decision-making governance on attrition. These findings call for HR reforms based on a clear, inclusive, and participatory vision, training for Human Resources Management professions, effective decentralization, and rigorous accountability mechanisms. The study thus contributes to a better understanding of retention dynamics in African education systems and offers concrete recommendations for Cameroon.*

**Keywords:** Human resources, Teacher attrition, Determinant Factor, Decision-making governance, Human Resources , Overall vision.

**Introduction**

A cross-cutting review of Cameroon's strategy documents reveals that here, human resources are postulated as an essential strategic lever for achieving the emergence goal by 2035 (SND30, 2020). Indeed, Cameroon's National Development Strategy 2020-2030 dedicates one of its four pillars to the development of human capital and well-being, while the Education and Training Sector Strategy 2023-2030 outline its actions.

Only, despite these promising frameworks, a permanent deficit of teachers is observed from year to year in public primary schools. Beyond absenteeism, described as chronic among certain civil servants (letter No. B 2120/SGPR of March 9, 2021, from the Secretary General of the Presidency of the Republic), many teachers are not performing their duties or are leaving their position, creating a silent but persistent crisis: the loss of teachers. This situation hinders the implementation of public education policies. It is in this context that Cameroon has adopted a Partnership Pact for Education (2024), aimed at addressing human resources challenges in the context of the transformation of education driven by the United Nations Summit on Education Transformation, held in New York in September 2022.

Therefore, human resources must be considered by education sector officials no longer as a simple administrative factor, but as the main driver of inclusive, equitable and quality education. As highlighted by Essomme and Kutche Tamghe (2020), the teacher is a vector and determining factor of the performance of the educational system. However, the effectiveness of education systems in terms of teacher retention is low in Cameroon, like many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNESCO, 2013-2014). Oyono (2024) suggests that administrative governance plays a significant role in this loss. The teachers' strikes of 2022 have also highlighted the persistence of difficulties and the fact that many policies remain at the principles and projects phase, without effective implementation (Oyono and Chaffi, 2023).

This concern is all the more relevant as the resurgence and permanence of teachers' demands is often perceived negatively in the context of human resources governance. Previous research (Oyono and Chaffi, 2023) has already highlighted the importance of the quality of management acts and their applicability to optimize this governance. The overall vision of human resources, under explored in the literature, represents a promising field of interest to analyze the dynamics of waste of these resources in the education sector in Cameroon.

The numerous actions taken by public authorities to curb the scourge of wastage (SND30, DSSEF 2023-2030, Partnership Pact for Education), are inspired by the work of African researchers (Bennell, 2003; Moleni and Ndalama (2004); Akyeampong (2007); Mpkosa and Ndaruhutse (2008); Mulkeen, Crowe-Taft et al. (2010), Mulkeen et al., 2010; Ratovondrahona and Normandeau, 2013, among others). It appears that the factors of disengagement are multiple and varied (Karsenti, Collin and Dumouchel, 2013). They are very often linked to the teaching task or person, to the social environment, but also to causes external to the profession, therefore beyond the scope of educational policies. However, governance issues, and specifically the overall vision of human resources, are not always clearly highlighted as a solution.

From this perspective, what could be the contribution of a better understanding of the overall vision of human resources on teacher retention? The present study proposes to examine the

relationship between the level of appropriation of the overall vision of human resources in the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB) and the loss of teachers. It is based on a methodological approach focused on a survey of teachers in situations of attrition and actors involved in the administrative governance of human resources at MINEDUB.

The research hypothesis formulated for this study is that "a deficient overall vision of HR at MINEDUB promotes teacher attrition". This hypothesis calls for exploring issues such as the appropriation and effective implementation of MINEDUB's Human Resources strategy as defined by strategic, legislative, and regulatory texts, on the one hand. And on the other hand, it questions the existence of a measurable relationship between HR practices and attrition among teachers. After operationalization of the independent Variable, the general hypothesis was split into a working hypothesis namely :

**Ht** : The overall vision of human resources from the stratum of MINEDUB staff promotes teacher attrition.

The study focuses on the relationship between the overall vision of human resources and the loss of teachers at MINEDUB. Within the framework of this study, two theories are used: the theory of limited rationality and that of organizational commitment. The theory of organizational commitment and the theory of limited rationality offer complementary perspectives for analyzing organizational behaviors. The first highlights the three psychological dimensions that link the individual to their organization, while the second explains how the decisions of the actors are made in a context of incomplete information and restricted cognitive abilities.

### **Methodology**

This research is descriptive, comprehensive with sociological perspectives, deductive reasoning and a mixed approach.

In view of the feasibility and according to the inclusion criteria defined for the survey, six out of ten regions in Cameroon were selected (Adamawa, Centr, East, Littoral, West and South Regions). The other four regions were excluded because of the socio-political instability, which could affect the results of the survey. The target population includes 35,950 teachers from public primary schools, associated with staff from different MINEDUB administrative layers, namely: Regional Delegates (RDBE), Divisional Delegates (DDBE), Inspectors of Basic Education (IBE), Head Teachers (HTeach) and Classroom Teachers of government schools (CTeach).

Stratified sampling was applied to ensure representativeness proportional to the population size. This was divided into homogeneous strata (RDBE, DDBE, IBE, HTeach and CTeach), with a random selection in each group. The criteria for representativeness included hierarchical

structure (regional coordination at local level), geographical distribution (urban/rural) and gender. In addition to the interview guides, data were also collected via a semi-directive questionnaire at Likert scale (5 levels of response). The final sample selected consists of 911 participants, including 901 participants for the quantitative approach, namely: 6 RDBE, 27 DDBE, 93 IBE, 171 Public Primary Head Teachers and 604 classroom teachers, and 10 interviewed for the qualitative approach defined according to the saturation threshold obtained.

## **Results**

The analysis of data related to the link between the overall vision in terms of human resources and the teacher attrition focuses on flat sorting and the analysis of thematic content on the perception of the teaching profession, access to positions of responsibility, the involvement of staff in HR management and public policies in HRM, on the one hand (III.1). And on the other hand, on the correlation analysis between the two variables on each of the strata (III.2).

### **Results of flat sorting and analysis of thematic content**

#### **1- Perception of the profession of teacher and loss of teacher attrition**

The results of the flat sorting indicate that 37% of respondents from the DDBE stratum, 43% of those from IBE, 27.5% of HTeachs and 26.6% of CTeach say they opted for the teaching profession because they needed a secure job. It thus appears that the profession of a teacher has a dual character. It is considered both a vocation and a profession, with a clearly defined objective.

However, he is also affected by a number of embarrassments. *"Despite the observed dysfunctions, we are committed to the education of youth through this noble profession"* (IDR1). The remuneration of primary school teachers is generally considered insufficient. This undermines the prestige of this profession. This is what the IE5 interviewee emphasizes: "We cannot respect this noble profession if salaries are low." At the same time, the teaching profession is a priesthood and a means of obtaining a socially useful financial income. IDE4 thus explains that "the profession of a teacher is a priesthood, but also a profession with a vocation for social integration". One understands from then that the profession of teacher is variously appreciated by all teaching staff.

The perception of the profession is a cognitive construction influenced by incomplete information and biases. When the reality on the ground (overload, lack of resources) differs too much from initial representations (vocation, social impact), there is a propensity not to do one's service properly. Moreover, the reality experienced by the respondents is indicative of a dysfunction that could affect the organizational commitment of teachers.

## **2- Access to positions of responsibility and teacher attrition**

Regarding the interpretation of promotion to senior positions, the data collected reveals that 33.3% of RDBEs, 25.9% of DDBEs, 39.8% of IBEs and 42.7% of HTeachs believe that the appointment remains a recognition of the hierarchy. 27.5% of HTeachs perceive it as access to well-being. In reality, promotion to a position of responsibility at MINEDUB is more an opportunity to contribute to the implementation of public policies in education, than a simple recognition of hierarchy. It should be accessed after a long experience, in accordance with Instruction No. 007/CAB/PM of 5 September 2001 on the criteria for appointment of officials of national education bodies to positions of responsibility. One perceives the requirement that the plenipotentiaries have domesticated the vision of the sector and learned the lessons from their journey. The reality experienced by the respondents is indicative of a dysfunction that could affect engagement.

The provisions concerning the applicability of texts relating to access to higher positions are not respected. Other practices are preferred for this purpose. According to IT5<sup>i</sup>, "*forecasts regarding access to positions of responsibility are not respected; there are practices of monetization of positions*" and even political placement. These provisions governing the ascent to positions of responsibility are not always respected.

## **3- Involvement of staff in HR management and loss of teachers**

Quantitatively, it appears from field data that 37% of the DDBE, 24.7% of the IBE and 27.5% of the HTeachs surveyed say they do not have to account to their employees. Nearly one in three managers therefore does not see the need to involve their employees in the management of the organization. However, participatory management is a factor promoting engagement. The involvement of teachers in HR reduces waste by strengthening their power to act and their commitment. This theory explains why some strata (RDBE, IBE) show a significant correlation, while others (teachers in charge of classes) have a marginal impact.

However, it is observed that personnel management here is typically horizontal and falls under the responsibility of senior managers, who make decisions autonomously. IDE4i thus believes that "in this area, personnel management is generally horizontal and falls to the senior management, responsible for making decisions according to their will." The theory of limited rationality emphasizes that teachers do not make purely rational decisions, but under constraints of information and time. One of the participatory HR management reduces decision-making biases and promotes retention.

**4- HRM public policies in education and teacher loss**

The human resources management policy is a forward-looking framework that addresses the four mandatory programs, prescribed by these provisions: recruitment and staffing, reception and integration of new staff, staff evaluation and professional development. But we notice that the public policies of HRM struggle to be respected. The discretionary is mentioned in most cases in HRM practices. Yet, according to IDD2<sup>i</sup>, "for assignments, the recent text from the minister specifies the conditions of 5 years and the opinion of the hierarchy". But, pressures of several orders are strong. To this are associated the influence peddling of politicians and above all, nepotism which considerably weakens the process. The effectiveness of public HRM policies is unfortunately impacted by various interventions.

Moreover, their implementation is full of contradictions, and very often remains at the antipodes of the orientations of the SND30. What suggests the statements of IDE4 according to which, "with regard to the prescriptions of SND 30, public policy in HRM at the Ministry of Basic Education is riddled with interventions from several levels." It should be noted that this sub-theme was unanimously supported by the viewpoints of the different interviewees, namely 100%. Regarding the determination of the content of HR responsibility, 50% of the RDBEs surveyed exclude the reduction of regional disparities in terms of staff from their scope of responsibilities. What remains a confusion of the issues that can constitute a disadvantage for the optimization of HR use.

HRM policies are perceived and implemented in a context of imperfect information and constrained cognitive abilities. The opaque transfer/advancement procedures generate dropouts due to loss of hope.

**Inferential analysis**

Referring to the analysis done under SPSS, the results are as follows:

**Table 1 Summary of the results of hypothesis verifications on all strata**

	Correlation test		ANOVA <sup>a</sup> test				
	r	p	r <sup>2</sup> ajust	ddl	F de Fisher		Standard coefficient (Béta)
					F Cal	F <sub>0</sub> lu	
<b>HtRDBE</b>	,822*	,05	,594	<b>1 - 4</b>	8,308	7,71	,822
<b>HtDDBE</b>	-,247	,05	,170	<b>1 - 25</b>	7,041	4,24	,449
<b>HtIBE</b>	-,115	,05	,494	<b>1 - 91</b>	6,432	3,95	,922
<b>HtHTEach</b>	,285	,01	,134	<b>1-169</b>	6,457	3,90	,722

<b>HrCTeach</b>	<b>,105</b>	<b>,05</b>	.090	<b>1-604</b>	6,671	3,86	<b>,105</b>
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The statistical analysis reveals a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.822$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) between the “overall vision of human resources in the RDBE stratum” and the “teacher attrition”. This relationship, confirmed by an adjusted  $r^2$  of 0.594, remains significant even in the presence of other variables. Fisher’s test ( $F = 8.308 > F = 7.71$ ;  $p = 0.045$ ) confirms the validity of the alternative hypothesis, indicating a significant influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The standardized Beta coefficient (0.822) shows that the overall vision of HR at the level of RDBEs strongly contributes to explaining teacher attrition, thus validating the research hypothesis according to which this variable represents a key factor in teacher attrition.

It also reveals a negative and weak correlation ( $r = -0.247$ ;  $p = 0.05$ ) between “the overall vision of human resources in the DDBE stratum” and teacher attrition, indicating an inverse but not very marked relationship between the two variables. The adjusted coefficient of determination ( $r^2$  adjusted = 0.170) confirms the weakness of this bond in the presence of other independent variables. However, the Fisher test ( $F = 7.041 > F = 4.24$ ;  $ddl = 1, 25$ ) allows rejecting the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypothesis. The Beta coefficient (0.449) indicates that the variable 'overall vision of human resources in the DDBE stratum' contributes up to 44.9% to the loss of teachers in the studied model, thus validating the hypothesis, although the correlation remains moderate.

Table 1 shows a weak negative correlation ( $r = -0.115$ ;  $p = 0.5$ ) between the "overall vision of human resources in IBEs" and "teacher attrition", suggesting an inverse but not significant relationship. The adjusted  $r^2$  (0.494) reveals a moderately weak binding in the presence of other variables. However, the Fisher test ( $F = 6.432 > F = 3.94$ ) leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, validating the alternative hypothesis. Despite the initial low correlation, the standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.922) indicates a major contribution of this variable, explaining 92.20% of the loss in the multiple regression model. Thus, although the direct linear relationship is weak, the variable strongly influences the loss of teachers in interaction with other factors.

The same table reveals for the HTeach a low positive correlation ( $r = 0.285$ ;  $p = 0.1$ ) between the 'overall vision of human resources' and the 'teacher wastage', indicating a direct but not very marked relationship. The adjusted  $r^2$  (0.494) confirms a moderately weak binding in the presence of other variables. Nevertheless, the Fisher test ( $F = 6.457 > F = 3.90$ ) leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, validating the alternative hypothesis. The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.722) demonstrates that this variable contributes significantly to the model, explaining 72.20% of teacher loss as part of multiple regression.

In the classroom, the table shows a very weak positive correlation ( $r = 0.105$ ;  $p = 0.5$ ) between the 'overall vision of human resources' and the 'loss of teachers', revealing a direct but not significant relationship. The adjusted  $r^2$  (0.090) confirms the extreme weakness of this linkage, even in the presence of other variables. However, the Fisher test ( $F = 6.671 > F = 3.86$ ) allows to reject the null hypothesis at the 5% threshold. The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.105) indicates that this variable explains only 10.50% of the loss in the multiple regression model, suggesting a marginal influence compared to other analyzed strata. Although statistically significant, the contribution of this variable appears negligible in terms of actual impact on the phenomenon studied. The low correlation among rank-and-file teachers ( $r=0.105$ ) reflects their difficulty in understanding policies designed 'from above' and may reflect a blurred perception by the lack of information about career prospects.

Moreover, it appears that the overall vision of human resources for service teachers in HR management positions at MINEDUB contributes more to the attrition of staff in this sector (Coef  $\beta$  IBE=,922; Coef  $\beta$  RDBE=,822; Coef  $\beta$  HTeach=,722; Coef  $\beta$  DDBE=,449; Coef  $\beta$  CTeach=,105).

#### **IV. Discussion of results**

The results of the inferential analysis, combined with content analyses, show that the overall vision of human resources at MINEDUB explains the loss of teachers. This result corroborates the conclusions of some researchers, for whom the lack of vision promotes an approximate and inappropriate management of human resources and leads to waste. Indeed, organizational commitment is also characterized by a belief in and adherence to the objectives and values of the organization (Mowday et al., 1979, p. 226). It is therefore imperative to raise awareness among human resources actors and beneficiaries about these dimensions in order to effectively act on professional commitment, often correlated with vision.

These results go in the same direction as those of Gordon (2018) which show that shared vision is an essential component of transformational leadership. This leadership transforms to attract and retain teachers. Morin (1996, p. 272) indicates to this effect that the acts of commitment must be directed towards something subliminal for them to create the desired effect. Similarly, Georgelet (2012) states that the definition of missions, values, principles and charters contributes in particular to employee retention within the company and therefore reduces voluntary departures.

Marion, Asquin, et al. (2012) insist that the absence of a minimum agreement on objectives is certainly a source of collective inefficiency and therefore loss. Arnaud and Caruso Cahn (2019) are situated in this continuum, because for them, a shared vision offers meaning and direction. It

serves as a common reference. Democratizing this vision among teachers without departing from it is one of the effective processes to improve their engagement. Ultimately, this result corroborates the predictions for primary education in Canada, as indicated by the study of Duchesne and Savoie-Zajc (2005) on the professional commitment of primary school teachers. This commitment is seen as a strong identification of the teacher with the vision, goals and values of the school and thus with the associated organization, profession, activities and tasks. Understanding the social utility of the organization is an important factor in giving meaning to work.

Thus, the result obtained is corroborated by the theory of organizational commitment, in its affective dimension, which posits that the existence of a goal, an objective or a cause has a major influence on motivation (Frank, 1969; Yalom, 1980 and Morin, 2008). One can also mention the theory of limited rationality. Indeed, an incomplete appropriation of vision can be akin to incomplete information. In this context, the decisions taken are then inappropriate. As in the approach of Simon (1978), in the absence of a comfortable mastery of vision, the actor is limited in his ability to absorb and analyze information. What influences the loss.

This result questions the level of skills of MINEDUB teachers and tends to question their training and even the existence, in a simplified form, of the vision of MINEDUB regarding HRM and, if applicable, its popularization and appropriation. In any case, it still seems necessary that the strategic managers in charge of developing the overall vision of MINEDUB in terms of HR review these operations which consist of coding, in an accessible and clear manner, the overall vision of MINEDUB's human resources. Then, proceed with its democratization among the staff of central services and those of operational structures. This democratization can be based on training, retraining and communication. A reflection must thus be conducted in the perspective of setting up a relevant system of continuing training for staff, with a view to aligning this skills development with career advancement. Beyond that, it seems necessary to make HR management a profession in education systems. HR management managers must come from a specific initial and continuing training in this field.

## **Conclusion**

This study demonstrates that the attrition of teachers at MINEDUB is also explained by a deficient overall vision of human resources, thus confirming the central research hypothesis. The analysis reveals a significant correlation between the quality of HR governance and the attrition of teaching staff, with notable variations according to hierarchical strata. RDBEs ( $r=0.822$ ) showing the most marked impact, unlike marginalized Classroom Teachers ( $r=0.105$ ). These results, informed by the theories of organizational commitment and limited rationality, highlight a double challenge: the disaggregation of teachers' affective commitment in the face of opaque

HR policies, and the cognitive limits that hinder informed decision-making in the current system. To reverse this trend, four priority areas of intervention emerge: (1) training in Human Resources Management professions, (2) the formalization and popularization of a clear and accessible HR vision at all levels, (3) the effective decentralization of decision-making processes for greater inclusion of basic teachers, and (4) the establishment of transparent accountability mechanisms. These recommendations, aligned with the objectives of SND30 and the 2024 Education Pact, call for a profound reform of HRM practices, an essential condition for stabilizing the teaching staff and achieving the ambitions of equitable education, inclusive and of quality from Cameroon. The present research also opens promising scientific prospects, notably the extension of the study to crisis regions and the evaluation of digital career management solutions, while laying the foundations for a new paradigm of human resources management in African education systems.

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