

# To Investigate the Challenges for New Teachers in Cameroon Secondary Education and Coping Strategies

**Dr. Mbonteh Vivian Mbole Nkong**

Department of Didactics of Disciplines, Sciences of Education,  
Pedagogy and Bilingual Training Enset University of Ebolowa

**Dr. Ojong Angela Ojong**

Department of Curriculum Studies and Teaching University of Buea

**Abstract:** This article examines the challenges for new teachers in Cameroon secondary education and their coping strategies. The study was carried out through descriptive survey. The study population included newly recruited secondary school teachers in Cameroon. From this population. Samples of 100 new teachers that are 10 from each region were drawn using purposive sampling technique from the Center Region, Littoral and Southwest Region and the rest of the seven regions of Cameroon. The instruments used for data collection were: a questionnaire and classroom observation checklist. Descriptive statistics namely: frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the data. The findings of the study showed that, majority of the new secondary schools teachers teaching in Cameroon secondary schools lack the competency of teaching first year of a teacher's career and can determine their longevity within the field of education. The issues of first year teachers were analyzed through a grounded theory qualitative research analysis. The results of this study indicate that a first year teacher may feel stress, lack appropriate support, and may feel unprepared to handle behavioral and academic issues among their students. Based on the literature review, the implementation of mentoring programs between new and experienced teachers not only benefited novice teachers but guided them to cope and face the anxieties during the first year in the classroom. Further implications are presented in the regarding some mentoring programs and the impact for first year teachers when not implemented due to limited funding and/or lack of administrative support.

**Key points:** Stress, Attrition, Coping, Teaching practice, First Year Teacher, Challenges.

## Introduction

In the past decade, educational environments have drastically changed over time and have become more diverse and complex. The rapid influx of pluralistic populations from a variety of different societies contribute to the diverse student population. Student diversity creates challenges to new teachers if they are not familiar with culturally responsive teaching (CRT) (Gay, 2002). Entering the field of education with unrealistic expectations of what teaching is about can yield negative experiences for new educators. For the purposes of this research analysis, a first year teacher will refer to an individual who entered the field of education and is teaching for the very first time in their career. As such the inexperience of a first year teacher leads to high level of stress. Based on the literature, first year teachers leave the field of education due to the lack of administrative support, inability to manage personal and professional expectations, limited teaching resources, lack of professional development, and difficulty handling behavioral problems in the classroom.

In addition, different studies also show that new teachers face challenges in dealing with classroom management, curriculum planning and implementation, conducting assessments, and workload issues. The result is that many leave the profession after only a few years (Grossman & Thompson,

2008; Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007; Roehrig, Pressley, & Talotta, 2002; Scherff, 2008). Hence, knowing that culturally responsive teaching, classroom management, and classroom assessment are some persistent issues that new teachers face in their own classroom, this project is designed to investigate the preparedness of a cohort of new teachers in dealing with those challenges through their teacher education programs and professional development provided by their school districts.

According to Le Maistre & Paré, 2008, there is an increased rate of attrition by as much as 50% of teachers leave teaching within the first three to five years. According to Le Maistre & Paré, 2008, the current state of first year teachers also referred to as novice teachers, choosing to leave the field at such high rates has provoked administrators to devise a number of coping mechanisms. These mechanisms can be utilized by teachers as they begin their careers in the field of education. The concern of attrition and lack of coping mechanisms is apparent in a specific sub-section within the education field.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2000), first year teachers, to design schools materials or lesson plan that promote what is best to help learners to achieve greater equity, to create a system of continuous improvement and learning during their transition into next level, and to foster deeper learning during post-secondary education. According to Richards and Rodgers (2000) cited in (Pauline P 2016), The strategies used by secondary school teachers in response to improves on exams including delivering grade-level, curriculum regardless of what students know, exposed the limitations of the traditional system for what it is and how it reinforces inequitable achievement.

The traditional system is simply not designed to produce the goals we have set for it, or that our children, communities and nation so desperately need and deserve. There are 10 primary flaws in the traditional system that perpetuates inequity and low achievement. They can be corrected by redesigning the system for success in which all students achieve mastery. These flaws of the traditional system are listed as follows. The traditional system is focused on a narrow set of academic outcomes emphasizing academic skills, memorization and comprehension of content. It fails to recognize that student' success is dependent on more than academic knowledge. Success requires a full range of foundational skills including social and emotional skills and the ability to transfer knowledge and skills to new contexts. Experienced teachers are designed to help students learn academic knowledge, the skills to apply it and lifelong learning skills that are needed to be fully prepared for college, career and life.

According to Darling-Hammond, Furger, Shields, and Sutcher (2016) attrition does have variations specifically with regards to teacher preparation. The less preparation a teacher has received prior to entering the field, the more likely this will lead to a rate of two to three times as high of attrition than with candidates who finished their preparation program before teaching. There is also an increased attrition rate in high-poverty, high-minority schools. Students that attend a high-poverty, high-minority school, tend to be taught by teachers who are underprepared, inexperienced, or teaching outside their licensed area (Darling-Hammond, 2010). The credential issues of underprepared teachers by the Education Department have increased from just 98 in 2010-2011 to more than 900 by 2015-2016 (Nix, 2015).

Thus, struggling teachers when unsupported leave teaching. Specially, as 82%<sup>[1]</sup> of special educators across the nation state that there is lack of support when trying to meet the needs of students with disabilities (Hale, 2015). Consequently, 51% of school districts and 90% of actual schools, report having difficulty recruiting highly qualified special education teachers (Hale, 2015).

### **Historical Background**

After a decade, Siegel and Wissehr (2011) reported that, almost similar findings in their research. They used a content analysis method to explore novice teachers' knowledge of assessment based on the assessment pieces that are mentioned in their reflective journals, teaching philosophies and lesson plans. Analysis of these documents indicated that novice teachers recognize the need to align assessments with learning goals and instructional strategies. It also revealed that they are using a variety of assessments. However, the assessments contained within the science units lesson plans

did not fully align with the views of assessment the novice teachers presented in their teaching philosophies or journals. The findings implied that novice teachers have not applied their assessment knowledge into practice, which was reflected in their lesson plans.

According to Onwuka (1981) cited in Agborbechem (2019) Curriculum is a structured series of intended learning experiences. It is the means by which educational institutions endeavor to realize the hopes of the society. Through this process schools set out to determine and pursue the objectives and goals of the society in which the schools are and serve. Thus the curriculum embraces purposeful experiences provided and directed by educational institutions to achieve predetermined societal goals. He also mentioned that, Curriculum is therefore the offering of socially valued knowledge, skills and attitudes made available to learners through a variety of arrangements during the time they are at school,

Planning a teaching class lesson involves making choices as to the learning experiences which are appropriate and desirable for the learners in a given society. In Part 11 section 11 of Law No 98/004 of 14 April 1998 Biya stipulates that « the state shall ensure the constant adaptation of the educational system to the national and sociocultural realities, and also to the international environment, especially through the promotion of bilingualism and the teaching of national languages ». Curriculum planners such as Leke Tambo have therefore set themselves to a task of achieving this and other tasks that are enshrined in the policy statements made in that law since it came to being in 1998. Many school subjects now taught tilt towards their relation to their utilitarian aspect of the curriculum. One therefore has to bear in mind this utilitarian aspect of the curriculum before examining the curriculum structure and the Cameroonian teachers' recruitment considering their competency and teaching skills.

The law laying down guidelines for education in Cameroon states amongst others in part 1 section 4 that the general purpose of education shall be to train children for their intellectual, physical, civic and moral development and their smooth integration onto society bearing in mind prevailing economic, socio-cultural, political and moral factors. One of the means to attain this as stipulated in section 5 article 7 is that the learner should be able to develop creativity, a sense of initiative and the spirit of enterprise. The quality of instruction should therefore be oriented towards attaining this objective at all levels of the educational

In addition, according to the Education Strategy for Africa (2016) opined that the vision of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016-2025), reorienting "Africa's education and training systems to meet knowledge, competencies, skills, innovation and creativity required to nurture African core values and promote sustainable development at the national, sub-regional and continental levels" has carefully been addressed in this curriculum. This reform has brought about profound changes in teachers quality as the teacher becomes a true mediator between the learner and the knowledge. According to Tchombe M (2019) who emphasis on her book Psychological Parameters in Teaching which explains the law of mediated mutual reciprocity in teaching and learning the learner plays an active role while the teacher controls abnormal behaviors in the classroom.

### **Learning and Copying Strategies**

Coping is perceived as an integral part of a process in which the human organism adapts to his or her living environment (Yiu-Chung Ko et al., 2000). Ko et al. (2000) determined that these coping aspects and stress behaviors often serve the purpose of expressing and/or communicating that a novice educator is under stress; as well enabling teachers to respond to the stressful situations in the work field. Offering a myriad of mechanisms to new teachers may help and support them to better assimilate to their new school cultures and roles. Implementation of these mechanisms have proven to be approaches, which significantly reduced the number of first year teachers who experienced frustration, unrewarding and intolerable difficulty throughout the school year, and desire or decided to leave the profession. Various literature exposed that those who do not find a coping mechanism ultimately increase the risk of becoming an overwhelmed educator with responsibilities that while are part of the educational field cannot be properly dealt with (Fantilli & McDougall, 2005). In

addition to the lack of support reported by first year teachers, another reason for high attrition rates among beginning teachers is the difference between expectations in the job of novice teachers versus what the training programs exposed each teacher to prior to graduation (Le Maistre & Paré, 2009).

### **Seek Administrative Support**

According to Darling-Hammond, Furger, Shields, and Sutchter (2016) attrition does have variations specifically with regards to teacher preparation. The less preparation a teacher has received prior to entering the field, the more likely this will lead to a rate of two to three times as high of attrition than with candidates who finished their preparation program before teaching. There is also an increased attrition rate in high-poverty, high-minority schools. Students that attend a high-poverty, high-minority school, tend to be taught by teachers who are underprepared, inexperienced, or teaching outside their licensed area (Darling-Hammond, 2010). The credential issues of underprepared teachers by the Education Department have increased from just 98 in 2010-2011 to more than 900 by 2015-2016 (Nix, 2015). Thus, struggling teachers when unsupported leave teaching. Specially, as 82%<sup>[1]</sup> of special educators across the nation state of Cameroon that there is lack of support when trying to meet the needs of students with disabilities (Hale, 2015). Consequently, 51% of school districts and 90% of actual schools, report having difficulty recruiting highly qualified special education teachers (Hale, 2015).

### **Seeks Outside Sources of Support**

According to (Hale, 2015), this first year teacher expressed specific frustration regarding the perceived lack of support from other teachers and the administration. She described feelings of being overwhelmed and stressed at times; “right now I would prefer the support, the brainstorming, and the help that is supposed to accompany a first-year teacher” (December 2008). Written in one of her entries she attempted to speak to her department chair about materials and ways to teach her Spanish course. She was confronted with a department chairperson who offered little to no help at all. Her director responded that she had not taught that particular course in approximately fifteen years. Additionally, her department chairperson expressed her displeasure with the textbooks the participant used and recommended that she use other materials. This type of reaction from school administration added to the participant’s level of frustration and intensified feelings of stress

### **Seek Staff and Administrative Support**

According to Gay (2002) explained that majority of new teachers frustration to date is creating lessons from scratch; perhaps I would actually have support; according to the respondents perhaps I would have a life outside of SCHOOL” (December 2008). Finding the proper time and balance between work and family duties, were the next major issues observed. These factors are a few of the challenges that are faced by first time teachers. This first year teacher was taught in her teacher preparation program not to “reinvent the wheel” but to beg, borrow, and steal from her colleagues whenever possible. This would have allowed her to better manage other aspects of her classroom. The major problem identified during this stage in school year, was that this first year teacher was the only individual teaching this particular Spanish course in the entire school and had no one to rely on to obtain any necessary information.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Research has yet to be conducted on how the lack of having common standards in how an induction program should be structured, which allows for variability in the type of support from these programs especially from first year teachers, can reduce the ratio of 3 in 10 teachers moving to a different school or leave the teaching profession once they have completed their first year In addition many teachers finds it difficult to cope within the first year of teaching. When a teacher preparation program is properly funded, it can be very successful for new teachers in the field rather unfortunate little or no attention is given to the preparation program. As in other countries, where there is more funding allocated to mentoring programs, in the United States, school districts have little funding for such programs leading to the concerning amount of teachers parting from the field.

While many programs are intensifying to prepare more effective teachers, there are limited systemic policy supports for subsidies and programmatic funding that other countries receive. New teachers would be able to receive proper training and would be able to cope with the difficulties of the first year of teaching in areas where pre teaching training is not being practiced the teaching results will be divested and academic outcomes will be slow Chemagosi (2020) on his part, found out that teachers do not well know how to effectively assess large classes within the limited time and resources available which turn to affected the academic performance negatively. It was for this reason that the researcher decided to investigate the challenges for new teachers in Cameroon secondary education and coping strategies.

### **Objective**

The General objective of this study is to investigate the challenges for new teachers in Cameroon secondary education and coping strategies.

### **Specific Objectives**

- To explore the extent to which secondary school teachers implement Various Coping Mechanisms
- To examine, the Measures Taken by Preparation Programs among secondary school teachers.

### **Specific Research Questions**

From the main objective, the following specific research questions were elaborated.

- To find out to what extent secondary school teachers implement Various Coping Mechanisms?
- To what extent does adequacy of available Measures Taken by Preparation Programs

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Introduction**

Literature review looks at the work of others and how it is related to this work. The literature examines the conceptual and theoretical review. The conceptual review looks at the different concepts of copying strategies, the theoretical looks at different theories and how they are related to this work.

### **Conceptual Review**

The following concepts are reviewed; Copying, Challenges, Mentoring Programs, Strategies and Teacher Education.

### **Collaborative Thoughts on Mentoring Programs**

It is imperative to amend the attrition rates within new teachers in the field. One way to ameliorate this problem is through the implementation of mentoring programs. Le Maistre and Paré (2009) explains that when programs resembling a mentoring and/or induction programs can serve as the bridge between those who are in need of gaining knowledge and those who are certified in various areas with expertise. A mentoring program allows a first year teacher to work with an experienced teacher to improve upon their techniques and pedagogical approaches. A new teacher is also able to develop a personal relationship with a more experienced educator; they are able to share emotions and experiences with one another.

### **Work overload**

As mentioned by Samantha L. Dias-Lacy<sup>1</sup> & Ruth V. Guirguis<sup>2</sup> in 2017, an induction program aims to facilitate and increase teaching effectiveness of new teachers through the expertise of veteran teachers (Moir, 2009; Goldrick, 2016). A mentor is experienced and is able to share a plethora of thoughts and ideas related to education. There are a number of benefits of mentoring programs for new teachers, these benefits include: higher retention rates; considerable professional development, improved ability to problem solve in the classroom, adoption of strategies and practice techniques from their mentors, higher confidence and self-esteem, decreased sense of isolation, and an overall improved attitude towards teaching (Fantilli & Mc Dougall, 2009; Sun, 2012). Despite the implementation of a mentoring program few state policies meet common key aspects that would

make mentoring programs high-quality programs (Goldrick, 2016). Utilizing mentoring programs might have been a solution to not only high attrition rates, but also assisted first year teachers with their ability to cope with work overload, stress, and lack of support from superiors. Darling-Hammond (2006) expressed the need to enter the field already knowing how and when to implement a variety of teaching practices to accomplish learning goals and meet set Common Core Standards.

### **Lack of support from teachers**

A novice teacher has to be able to multitask and cope with a myriad of dilemmas that take place in the classroom with all students (Darling-Hammond, Furger, Shields, & Sutchter, 2016). First year teachers throughout the review of the literature primarily stated the amount of stress they endeavored on a daily basis. A quantitative and qualitative analysis of stress and coping of teachers revealed, work overload and paperwork in the special education field to be the most stressful (Ko et al., 2000; Goldrick, 2016). While stress comes to all educators in the field with curriculum changes and/or policy changes, new teachers have a greater difficulty handling such stress. The adjustment of transitioning from a teacher candidate to teacher a can be rather overwhelming.

Another source of stress reported is caused by the lack of support directly from administrators. The participant in this case study experienced similar sources of stress during the first year of teaching. The participants noted feelings of disappointment when turning to her director for advice on how to teach her course. Particularly, in the way the director responded to with statements of not being able to help but also suggesting changing the textbook so the participant would better understand the material alone. Responses such as these make new teachers feel underappreciated and disappointed in the leadership of schools• Practice of lifelong learning and the four broad-based competences

### **Lack of support from administration**

According to Leke Tambo (1995) opines the fact that although teacher education is recognized world-wide as a key component in educational improvement efforts, the models and practices for producing quality teachers may differ from one country to another in terms of such factors as resources available and also further explain the fact that, teacher supply needs in the schools, policy guidelines and goals of training, and whether initial teacher education is monopolized by one institution or shared by many intuitions which might influence the implementation of the CBC during their delivery in English language. Curriculum as viewed by Alebiosu (2005) is an instrument that dictates the affairs of every educational system. It is the vehicle through which knowledge and other learning activities are disseminated.

New Teachers Curriculum implementation involves the dissemination of the structured set of learning experiences, the provision of resources to effectively execute the plan, and the actual execution of the plan in the classroom setting where teacher-learner interactions take place (Ivowi, 2009). In curriculum implementation, the learner for whom the programme is being planned interacts with the contents and materials in order to acquire the necessary skills, attitudes and abilities (Mkpa and Izuagba, 2009). They went further to define curriculum implementation as the actual engagement of the learner with the planned learning opportunities. This means that curriculum implementation is that stage of the curriculum process where the learner through the guide of a teacher interacts with learning activities so as to maximize learning as will be noticed in the learners new behaviour/new approach to issues. Another name for the teacher is curriculum implementer.

### **Curriculum challenges**

The teacher is one who translates the curriculum document into operating curriculum through a joint effort of hers/his, the learners and other interest groups as viewed by Mkpa (1987). This implies that the task of implementing the curriculum lies on the teacher. The teacher does not just implement the content as it is, rather he breaks the content into teachable units. Precisely what comes to the teacher is not the curriculum plan rather the syllabus which he breaks down to get the scheme of work, down to the unit of plan and finally to the lesson plan which is being used daily in

his/her teaching. Pedagogic supervision is one of the administrative tools which individuals as well as groups of people employ in the day-to-day administration of their work or organisations (Nyarko, 2009) and for Segun (2004), the importance attached to school supervision in modern educational systems requires a lot of attention because many people are currently more conscious than in the past about the essence of education. As a result, there is a great interest in the day-to-day operations of the school system (Bessong and Ojong, 2009). The ineffective curriculum implementation can also be as a result of the ineffective present of the head teacher in school and the use of old supervisory techniques. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) argue that no matter how capable supervisors are, as long as supervision is viewed as nothing of value to teachers, its potential to improve schools will not be fully realized (Tesfaw and Hofman, 2012).

According to Rudolf N. (2020) who postulated that, English languages teachers in Cameroonian intuitions have varied profiles. Many researchers such as one of the prominent in curriculum in Cameroon Leke Tambo have admitted that not all teachers in these settings are trained (Chu, 2019), and even many trained teachers are not conversant with the CBA, the new approach to teaching (Nkemleke & Enama, 2019) and while Tambo (1995) noted that in teacher-training colleges in Cameroon, learning is more theoretical than practical. Speaking is one of the most neglected skills in teacher-based tests and examinations in Cameroon; when a little attention is given to the skill in assessment situations, it is either an indirect or an informal assessment. Tambo (1995) cited in other interesting articles however, admit that the speaking skill is not only different but also challenging to assess and must also be assessed differently.

According to Luoma, (2004) the feature of interactive role-switching distinguishes good oral tests from other language tests; listening, reading or writing tests which present a set of questions and elicit a set of answers are clearly not interactive in this way” (Underhill, 1987). Although the assessment of speaking has often been neglected classrooms in Cameroon, this trend should no longer continue with the coming of the CBA. Inattention to a direct assessment of speaking in English tests is, within the framework of competency based education, a brutal misunderstanding or savage neglect of a major tenet of the approach. But the CBA places a premium on the formative character of assessment, the use of authentic tasks, the provision of useful feedback and the involvement of learners in assessment (Chu et al., 2018).

It is important to highlight the fact that the formative character of assessment within the framework of the CBA does not mean informal assessment, nor does it mean unreliable or invalid assessment. Instead, formative assessment has to do with an assessment which aims at improving students’ understanding, and by extension, teaching methodology. Woodford (1980) stated that “The improvement of quality teachers' testing skills should be focused in two areas; in teacher training institutions and in-service training programs”. This emphasis on pre-service and in-service training of teachers on testing does not only guarantee that trained teachers get adequate knowledge in primary schools curriculum but also ensures that this knowledge is dovetailed with their experiences in the field and that there is a continuing upgrade of knowledge to meet the challenges of our ever-growing information age.

## **Theoretical Review**

### **Social Learning Theory by Bandura**

Since Bandura intension was to explain how new teachers copying strategies during instructions learn in a social context through observation, imitation and modeling the behavior of a teacher in a classroom context. Therefore, Nabavi (2010) says that it is clear that social learning theory is based on three concepts which are learning through observation (observational learning), reinforcement and modeling. Also, psychologist and teachers alike have found that such models are able to explain the differences found in learners’ speaking performance and receptivity to various forms of instruction (Schunk, 2012; Sousa, 2011). Furthermore, the practical application of social learning theory can rightly work with the following principles, attention, retention, reproduction and motivation of students so this work will use this theory because it has a very powerful tool in the implementation of new teachers copying strategies

Graf, Kinshuk & Liu (2009) agreed that incorporating the three aspects of the social learning theory (attention, retention, reproduction and motivation) into teaching as the potential to facilitate effective learning for pupils. Therefore, teachers can incorporate this model by constantly using English language as medium of instruction; this will facilitate understanding and speaking by learners.

In observation learning, students pay attention to real-time teachers commenting and collaborating as well as using technology to achieve their goal. In addition, gamification and stimulation help teachers turn their classroom into a more interactive experience. Teachers take assignments and activities and put them into a game; creating rewards for winners and creating that unique and novel spark that attract the interest of students.

To improve performance simulation in the classroom, help to add interest and fun to a classroom. Teachers who apply this method (simulation options are great ways to enhance a classroom setting and make students feel more engaged.

Also gamification and simulation connect to social learning allows students to make real observation for rewards and punishment in an engaging way in the classroom. Students can win a game or see someone succeed in the simulation and emulate that behavior.

Furthermore, for retention of information in classroom the teacher explore effective use of storytelling technique to make learning memorable. It is also believed that both the academic achievement and self-confidence of students increase self-confidence of students (Reid, 2005; Sadeghi, Tan & Abdullah, 2012). If students know their own learning styles and apply them to the learning process, these students should learn both more rapidly. There is therefore a high degree of probability that the students will be more successful in the learning process as learning would be encourage and students would be engaged and motivated (Bennett, 2013; Daghani & Akkoyunlu, 2012).

Making students aware of their learning styles and showing them their individual strength and weaknesses can also help students to understand why learning is sometimes difficult to them (Graf et al., 2009). Furthermore, knowledge of learning styles can also equip students for a life-long learning (Bostrom, 2012; Reid, 2005).

Another positive influence identified in this theory is that if students are expected to learn, retain complex information, become academically successful, be motivated to learn and approach learning appropriately, identification of and responsiveness to their learning style preferences is necessary. This is especially true when the teachers teaching styles do not match the learning styles of the students (Allcock, Hulme, 2010; Hawaty, 2009; Romanelli, Bird, & Ryan 2009).

Moreover, although school districts and teacher preparation programs agree that through some degree of mentoring or induction program, the attrition rate among novice teachers can reduce significantly (Fantilli & McDougall, 2005). Attrition rates are still high and many novice teachers still have to cope with the lack of support that exists in many schools. Since many schools tend to implement their own type of an induction program, there exist very large variations among different schools specifically in the types of induction programs that are set and offered to beginning teachers (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). These variations are apparent in several schools, which have been closely associated with the high turnover rates of beginning teachers (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The results from Smith and Ingersoll's (2004) quantitative research indicated and supported that when new teachers participated in a well-constructed type of induction program with accountability on the mentoring teacher, and where the mentoring teachers assisted newer teachers of the same subject and had common planning time, these programs and thus, reduced the stress factors in new teachers.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study was carried out in all Secondary schools in Cameroon; Cameroon is a rich cultural and agricultural region where crops like maize, potatoes and vegetables are grown. Dairy farming is also

widely practiced. It covers an area of 475,442 km<sup>2</sup>. The area of study in which the study will be carried out will be in South West Region, Centered Region and Littoral Regions of Cameroon. This study will be carried out in Yaounde 3 subdivision in the center region, Douala 3 in the Littoral region and Molyko in the Southwest region of Cameroon. Moreover, the Centre region is one of the most important centers for the Bantu group known as the Beti-Pahuin, the Fang-Betis or simply the Fang. The region is the intellectual capital of Cameroon comprising of variety of primary schools, secondary schools and universities having similar characteristics with the two other regions. Design is used to study a sample drawn from the population of teachers in English primary schools in Yaounde III subdivisions in the Centre region of Cameroon. The description of Buea Municipality in which the study will be carried in South West Region of Cameroon, Buea Municipality and the South West Regional Head quarter of Cameroon. Created on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 1977 by presidential decree No: 77/203, Buea Municipality has a surface area of 87Sq km, 67 villages, four distinct identified urban space as per outlined criteria (Buea station, Soppo, Molyko/Mile 17 and Muea) it is of a highly complex community caught between a blend of urban, semi urban, rural and traditional settings. Buea municipality is bounded to the North by tropical forest on the slope of mount Cameroon (4100m above sea level). The mountain range extends to the beautiful sandy beaches of the Atlantic Ocean. the town also shares boundary with other major town like the city of Limbe to the South West, Tiko Municipality to the South East, Muyuka Municipality to the East and Idenau District to the West with an equatorial Climate temperature are moderate with a slight seasonal variation ( rainy and dry season) Buea has moderate economy with agricultural, administrative business, tourism the financial sector taking the central stage of the town above all Buea is the center for education due to the presence University of Buea and other private Universities like the Catholic University HIMAT, Pan African Institute. Buea has an estimated population of about 200000 inhabitants (2005) BUCREP figures and annual growth rate of 5 us per united Nation projections for urban population growth rate for Africa constituting essentially of the Bakweri (the indigenes) in the villages and highly cosmopolitan population within the urban space putting the indigenes at the minority. The Bakweri language spoken by the natives is equally written and documented. English and French are two official languages used for general interaction while pidgin is the Lingua Franca. Buea is one of the fastest growing towns in Cameroon today with a mix cosmopolitan setting and a constellation of about 67 villages. These villages are inhabited by the Bakweri who according to social scientists, have lived around mount Cameroon for at least 4,000 years. Its urban rims now include Molyko, Buea station, Muea, GRA, Mile 16 Clerks and Federal Quarters, Great Soppo, Likoko membea, Bokwaongo and Bunduma.

**Population of the Study**

The target population of the study comprised of all secondary school teachers found in the ten Regions of Cameroon. Descriptive Survey Design is used to study a sample drawn from the population of teachers in all secondary schools in Cameroon

**Table 1: Population of the Study**

Title	Primary School Teachers		
	Male	Female	Total
Centered Region	75	125	200
Littoral Region	57	100	157
South West Region	77	135	213
East Region	71	124	195
West Region	57	100	157
Far North Region	75	125	200
North Region	57	100	157
North West Region	76	125	201
South Region	61	125	186

*Source: National Delegation of Secondary Education (2023)*

### Target Population

The target population of this study will be made up of all secondary school teachers from any four Government secondary Schools The target population of this study includes all the private and public teachers in four secondary schools in some selected regions

### Sample and sampling technique

The sample size will be made up of 50 secondary school teachers from the ten regions of Cameroon. The questionnaire will be distributed to all 50 secondary school teachers. The simple random technique will be used to select the sample size. Simple random sampling is one in which each member in the sample has equal chance of being selected.

### Data Collection Instruments

Instruments for data collection will be questionnaires, interview schedule, and documentary analysis. The researcher divided the questionnaire into three parts: The socio-demographic *items* included sex, age, and educational qualification, year of teaching experience and years in the present position concerning teachers

The researcher used interview schedules to compliment the questionnaire because interviews allow the researcher to consider another person’s view point, to better understand his/her experience (Patton, 1990). Interview also allows a wide range of participants understanding to be explored and can reveal important aspects of the phenomenon under study. In-depth interviews will be conducted with Headmasters of the various primary schools

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### ➤ To explore the extent to which secondary school teachers implement Various Coping Mechanisms?

**Table-1. The extent to which secondary school teachers implement Various Coping Mechanisms**

Item	$\bar{X}$	S	Dec
1. Work overload	3.33	0.68	A
2. Seek administrative support	3.33	0.32	A
3. Lack of support from teachers	2.01	0.93	D
4. Seeks outside sources of support	3.01	0.54	A
5. Lack of support from administration	2.78	0.21	D
6. Re-evaluation of teaching	3.21	0.92	A
7. Discipline challenges	2.03	0.68	D
8. Accept situation Curriculum challenges	3.33	0.32	D
9. Seek within school support	3.33	0.93	A
10. Work demands and family demands	2.01	0.54	D
11. Time Management	3.01	0.21	A
12. Wanting to meet self-expectations	2.78	0.92	D
13. Re-evaluation of teaching	3.21	0.68	D
14. Lack of set routines Seek staff and administrative support	2.36	0.32	A
15. Mentor support Not having clear expectation	2.03	0.92	D
<b>MRS</b>	<b>2.41</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>A</b>

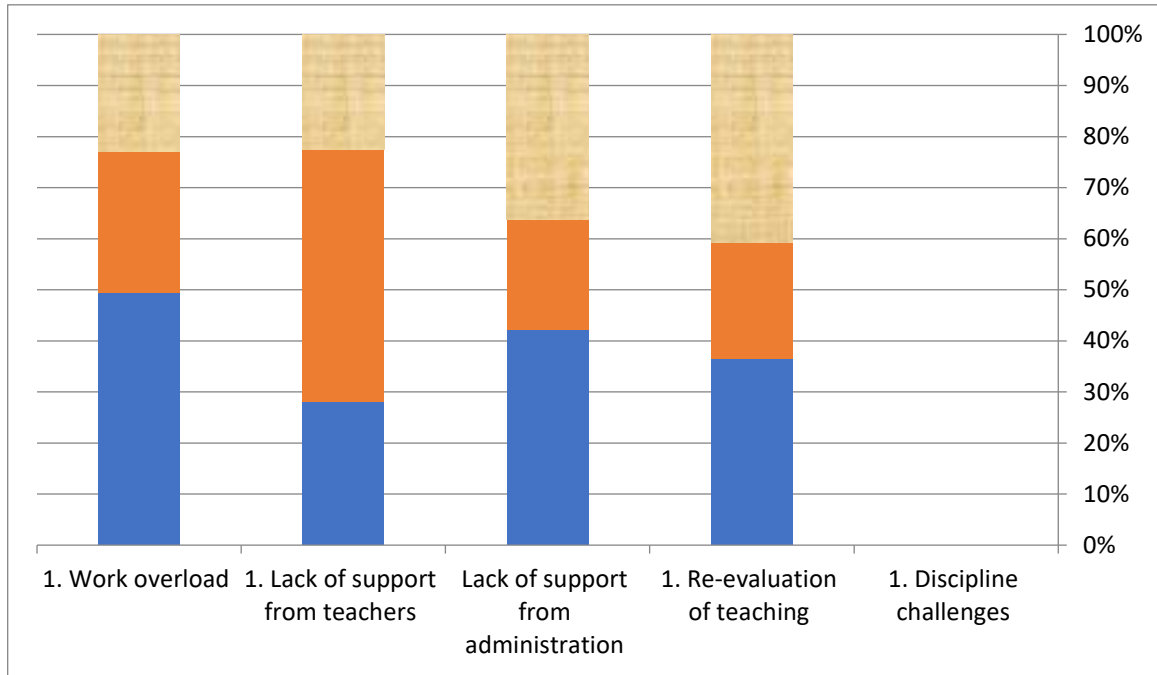


Table 1 and figure 1 above presents, secondary school teachers' responses on the availability of different coping mechanism implemented during their first early teaching. The data analyzed in the table above shows that teachers quality improve over time, majority of the respondents with an average mean of 2.37(0.54) accepted to the fact teacher quality improves over time and to the fact that, newly recruit teachers face numerous challenges during teaching. This study analyzed the challenges and the coping mechanisms a teacher developed in order to complete the first teaching year. The findings indicated that as a first year teacher, support needs are very high. Throughout the data and from the previously cited studies, there appears to be an inadequate amount of support from surrounding teachers and administrators, which leads to a higher level of stress and frustrations. Majority of the respondents agreed to the fact that other mechanism that led this first year teacher to feelings of stress were curriculum challenges, time management/balance between personal and work demands, overload of responsibilities and discipline challenges. From the analysis above, it was observed that with each challenge faced, two common coping mechanisms were set into place to "get by". First, for this teacher as in many new teachers, the perception that one is overworked and having a high sense of responsibility attributed to feelings of anxiety and stress.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOM M ENDATIONS

This study was conducted to investigate new teachers' challenges and coping strategies. According to different authors who had similar findings on the same subject matter, majority of their findings were in line with the above results. Although experts agree and support that having some degree of mentoring or some type of induction program for new teachers, can reduce attrition rates and increase teacher effectiveness (Moir, 2009). The need to establish common standards for all schools when offering and implementing support services such as induction programs to novice teachers, is crucial in the reduction of great variations in mentoring and/or induction programs and in the development of coping mechanisms as a result of the developed feelings of stress (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). It is difficult to determine from the studies cited in the literature review the degree of creating teacher effectiveness from these types of programs, since there are vast differences among the structures that each school chooses to implement.

According to (Moir, 2009). Teachers go through a process of teacher development. It takes a few years before teachers reach a level of effectiveness that will promote student motivation and achievement (Fantilli & McDougall, 2005). Through the execution of effective induction programs in which a teacher development process can be facilitated may perhaps reduce the number of teachers that exist the field before reaching this level of effectiveness (Fantilli & Mcdougall, 2005). An

effective induction program assigns mentees with mentors who are on the same grade level in elementary schools or teach the same subject in the middle and secondary grades (Moir, 2009). Choosing mentors who can empower educators are not just accountable, but should be properly trained through professional development and the “tools to advance a new teacher’s practice” is key in increasing teacher effectiveness (Moir, 2009). A well-established program does not only assist the first year teacher but it also allows for veteran teachers to reflect on their own teaching styles through the questionings of novice teachers, creating a mentoring dyad between the two (Le Maistre & Pare, 2008). It is important that a school principal creates an atmosphere that supports new teachers through their collaboration with time to assist new teachers in instruction (Moir, 2009). It is also essential to show new teachers that their efforts as educators are valued and encouraged (Moir, 2009).

Conclusively, lack of Support from Other Teachers and Administrations this first year teacher expressed specific frustration regarding the perceived lack of support from other teachers and the administration. She described feelings of being overwhelmed and stressed at times; “right now I would prefer the support, the brainstorming, and the help that is supposed to accompany a first-year teacher” (December 2008). Written in one of her entries she attempted to speak to her department chair about materials and ways to teach her Spanish course. She was confronted with a department chairperson who offered little to no help at all. Her director responded that she had not taught that particular course in approximately fifteen years. Additionally, her department chairperson expressed her displeasure with the textbooks the participant used and recommended that she use other materials.

## References

1. Anita. (2008, August). First year teacher experiences [Web log message]. Retrieved from [http://nclrc.org/teachers\\_corner/teachers\\_diaries/anita.html](http://nclrc.org/teachers_corner/teachers_diaries/anita.html) Behnke, G., Labovitz, E. M.,
2. Bennett, J., Chase, C., Day, J., Lazar, C., & Mittleholtz, D. (1981). Coping with classroom distractions. *The Elementary School Journal*, 81(3), 135-155. <https://doi.org/10.1086/461217>
3. Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Constructing 21st century teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 57(3), 300-314. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487105285962>
4. Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). *The at world and education: How America’s commitment to equity will determine our future*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
5. Darling-Hammond, L., Furger, R., Shields, P. M., & Sutcher, L. (2016). *Addressing California’s emerging teacher shortage: An analysis of sources and solutions*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.
6. Everhart, B., & Hogarty, K. (2009). Supporting the preparation of beginning teachers with online assessment products. *Education*, 400-412. Retrieved from <http://web.ebscohost.com>
7. Fantilli, R. D., & McDougall, D. E. (2005). (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
8. Fitchett, P. G., Starker, T. V., & Salyers, B. (2012). Examining culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy in a pre-service social studies education course. *Urban Education*, 47(3), 585-611.
9. Gay, G. (2002). *Preparing for culturally responsive teaching*. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53(2), 106-116. Gay, G. (2010).
10. McClellan, J.E. (1976). *Philosophy of Education*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
11. McClintock, R. (1971). Toward a place for study in a world of instruction. *Teachers College Record*, 73(2), 161-205.
12. Nordenbo, S.E. (1997). *Fagdidaktik. En p³dagogisk diskussion af undervisning i filosofi*. K)benhavn: Gyldendal.
13. Paschen, H. (1979). *Logik der Erziehungswissenschaft*. Dusseldorf: Pädagogischer Verlag Schwann.
14. Tibble, J.W. (Ed.). (1966). *The Study of Education*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
15. Wilson, S., Shulman, L., & Richert, A. (1987).” 150 different ways” of knowing: Representations of knowledge on teaching. In J. Calderhead(Ed.), *Exploring Teachers’*