

From adaptation to ruralisation in Cameroon education policy, 1922-2002: Replacing six with half a dozen

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ABSTRACT

The British colonial policy of education in the Southern Cameroons was guided by the philosophy of adapting education to the mentality, aptitude and occupations of the local population. This policy was gradually abandoned in the 1950s when it was realized that it was serving the colonial exploitative agenda of keeping natives to a permanently rural existence instead of meeting the needs of an independent state. Surprisingly, despite the so much talked of 'need for education to rid itself of the colonial stranglehold', a few years after independence, the government of Cameroon opted for the policy of ruralisation of education. This paper, examines the basic motivation for returning to such a policy and the outcome.

Keywords: Adaptation, ruralisation, colonial, education policy.

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INTRODUCTION

After over three decades of independence, the World Bank lamented that education in sub-Saharan Africa was in crisis despite the fact that many of the countries were allocating over 20% of their budgets to education. Among the many speculations for the cause of the crisis was rapid population growths and the failure of African countries to develop country specific, comprehensive, and internationally consistent sets of policies (World Bank, 1989). The paper however attempts to see the problem from the perspective of the 'colonial matrix of power' and the illusions of an independent Africa (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:4). Exhibited through bilateral cooperation agreements and technical expatriates, the colonial matrix of power, guaranteed the proliferation of erstwhile colonial ideologies and other imported Western policies which were not relevant to the development needs of the African nations but were rather geared towards keeping the African states as the suppliers of raw materials for European industries. Also, through the kind of colonial education, the colonial matrix of power exhibited in coloniality of knowledge kept the new African elite permanently and sentimentally attached to Europe as the source of all things good (Grosfoguel, 2007:203-4). It had blindfolded them from seeing beyond the surfaces of Western education and their initiated policies.

This accounts for their inability to analyse or digest any suggested policy recommendations before adopting and committing a huge amount of national resources to them.

METHODOLOGY

The study is basically a historical analysis of educational policy trends in the colonial period and how the independent government grappled with reform efforts unsuccessfully because of the heavy influences of coloniality. The historical analytic method is a systematic process of describing, analysing and interpreting the past, based on information from selected sources as they relate to the topic of study, with significant purpose of informing about the past and using the information to influence the present. Being a study in history of education, the historical analytic method was the most appropriate as it permitted me to plot relationships between the factors and the events they occasioned in the past and how they have impacted on the present. It is within this premise that I have made use of official education policy documents and government communications from the National Archive in Buea, Cameroon, a few conversations with former education

department authorities and other secondary sources to develop the paper. However, although an elaborate consultation of sources for this study was assured, I am aware that the historical analytic process is often complicated by the fact that there is seldom a single cause and that one can never be certain that the consideration of other factors was not missed because of the fragmentary nature of historical evidences and the need for a particular ideological or theoretical orientation.

ADAPTATION AS EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY (1922 to 1954)

The Philosophy of Adaptation guided British colonial education policy throughout the colonial era in Southern Cameroons. The philosophy originated from the Foreign Missions Society of Europe and North America (FMS) which had been engaged in the development of education in some parts of Southern USA and Africa for many decades before the beginning of the 20th century. In response to complaints against imported education systems in Africa, the FMS had sponsored a commission to Africa (The Phelps-Stokes Commission) to investigate the state of education and make recommendations. The commission had suggested in 1922 that 'education should be adapted to the mentality...occupations and traditions of natives with aims of making them more efficient in their conditions of life (Aka, 2002:57).

Following these recommendations, the Colonial Office's Advisory Committee on Native Education passed the 1925 *Memorandum on Education Policy in British Tropical Africa*. Except for minor adjustments, the 1925 Memorandum and all other policy documents on the development of education in British Tropical Africa were based on Adaptation as the central philosophy. Adaptation required that any reforms should relate the education of the young to the general advance of the community as a whole 'through the improvement of agriculture, the development of native industries, the improvement of health and the training of the people in the management of their own affairs (Colonial Office, 1925).

Two areas in which the application of adaptation was evident in the Cameroons are in the curriculum and the structure of the school system. The Philosophy of Adaptation drew a distinction between urban and rural communities and accordingly recommended a two-tract schooling system; one for the rural and the other for the urban communities. In terms of the curriculum, it prescribed the Three Rs for the urban schools; Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, British and European History, Literature and Geography (Southern Nigeria 1930). For the vast majority of schools in the rural category, the school programme in addition to the Three Rs, laid emphasis on the kind of life which the pupils were expected to lead when they leave school, with agriculture

as the main economic activity. In this tract of schools, a major task of education was 'to assist in the growth of rural communities securely established on the land' and 'to create in the minds of the pupils an interest in their environment; to enable them understand it and to inspire them to improve it' (Cameroons, 1925).

In 1925, the Southern Cameroons Superintendent of Education made it clear that by an adapted curriculum, 'great stress is being laid on technical, vocational and agricultural training at the expense of more traditional subjects within the curriculum (Cameroons, 1925). These words were reiterated a year later by the Resident who instructed that:

a considerable effort [must be made] to produce a change of emphasis so that the education given may be as little as possible academic... so that education...may have instead a practical bearing on the problems and needs of the Cameroons' communities (Cameroons, 1927:93).

The implementation of adaptation could be said to be remarkable. Agriculture, Rural Science, Nature Study, Domestic Science and Arts and Craft were subjects with high coefficients as they imparted knowledge and skills which were readily beneficial to the rural community. These subjects were reported to have 'enabled the pupils to master the use of better tools, develop better school farms and even keep accurate farm accounts' (United Kingdom 1958)

Structurally, adaptation guaranteed that while Education in the urban areas was to be continuous from primary to secondary and then to higher education for the training of a small group of African elite, that of the rural communities was to be limited to the junior elementary school level, 'providing an education for life for the majority of the rural pupils, who the colonial authorities imagined, would not normally go beyond this stage'. According to the Phelps-Stokes Commission, the maximum programme should cover six years (Jones, 1925) implying that those who finished the sixth year would fall back into the village economy of agriculture and/or local crafts.

This classification affected Southern Cameroons negatively. The whole territory was classified as a rural zone (Aka, 2002). In 1954, the year when internal self-government began, only eight of the 358 primary schools in the entire Southern Cameroons were offering a complete eight years primary school course (United Kingdom, 1955). The total school going population was 37,307 pupils but only 1,753 were in Standard VI in the eight complete primary schools. By the policy of adaptation, the colonial government had carefully ensured that only 0.1% of the school pupils get to Standard VI which was the final class (West Cameroon, 1962).

The above structure of the school system under

adaptation had severe consequences on man-power development in the territory especially after independence in 1961. Opportunities for pupils to take the First School Leaving Certificate Examination, get jobs or proceed to secondary schools were significantly limited in the territory throughout the colonial period and beyond because of the scarcity of schools with Standard VI. The territory therefore faced a gross shortage of qualified manpower at independence and a complete absence of a necessary economic and political leadership. By 1961, the year of independence, there were not more than 20 Southern Cameroonian university graduates in the territory (Aka, 2002:146). By British West African standards, the Southern Cameroons was the territory with the highest level of educational wastage (Podesta, 1965:149).

After independence, the economic and political destiny of the state was left in the hands of people who at best had had less than 14 years of schooling. None of those who took up the mantle of leadership in the territory at independence had been schooled in the rudiments of government although the Mandate Agreement had emphasized the need for colonial authorities to 'ensure a gradual but steady progressive education and training of the inhabitants of the territory with a view to the development of such a system of self-government' (Mac Ojong, 2008:59). Failed projects, corruption and political miscalculations became the norm among the top circle of administration in the West (former Southern) Cameroon State (Dervish 1968). In terms of adapting schooling to the local context, the philosophy was therefore highly successful in the Cameroons.

However, this presumed success as seen above was to the detriment of the needs of an independent Cameroon. Because of this, a considerable body of prejudice against this kind of manual training was visible after 1954 when the territory gained internal autonomy which led to the indigenous government abandoning the philosophy. Within a space of five years it not only increased the number of schools to 499 but upgraded 160 rural junior schools to complete primary schools (West Cameroon, 1962:16). It also placed emphasis on the classical literacy curriculum. The government felt that an education adapted to a rural existence was not the right type of schooling for a people who were expected to pilot their own affairs and destiny.

FROM ADAPTATION TO RURALISATION AT INDEPENDENCE

At independence, many African states had come to the realization that apart from not serving the needs of the people, colonial education amongst other weaknesses, had not fulfilled most of the socio-economic and political goals of education. A consideration of this fact precipitated a change of perspective in the education at

independence. Within the years of internal self-government in Southern Cameroons (1954 to 1961), the government had reverted to the literary curriculum. The federal government established with the former French Administered sphere of Cameroons continued with it 'to train manpower to meet the gross shortages and replace expatriate civil servants (Njong and Kamguia, 2006:172).

Five years into independence, however, the government surprisingly began to talk of the need to ruralize primary education. By 1965, the school population in Cameroon had grown from 460,000 in 1960-61 to about 670,000 (Njong and Kamguia, 2006:183). The consequence of this expansion was that primary schools turned out more graduates than the number of available 'white collar' jobs at that level. The government, by 1965, found itself dealing with over 90,000 unemployed primary school leavers in the towns (Kalla and Yembe, 1981). Technical experts- a majority of whom were expatriates were quick to blame this problem on the literary education which the government had adopted at independence (IPAR, 1977). They therefore called for a return to a rurally oriented primary education. Like adaptation, it was made believe that ruralisation would 'keep the primary school leaver on the land' in order to stop their gravitation to town (Tambo, 2000).

Convinced therefore, Amadou Ahidjo, through a presidential decree, created the *Institut de Pedagogie Appliquée a Vocation Rurale* (IPAR) in Yaoundé as a research institute to study the best ways of implementing ruralisation of education. IPAR was given the elaborate mandate to draw up new primary school syllabi and prepare and produce all the instructional materials for both teacher training and primary schools (IPAR, 1977). What came out was a complete repeat of the recommendations of the Adaptation Philosophy of the colonial period in Southern Cameroons.

By 1973, IPAR Yaoundé had prepared basic curriculum materials for both the primary schools and teacher training for the Francophone sub-system. In fact, about 300 teachers had been trained by the Yaoundé institute in the new philosophy and were ready to go out into 290 selected experimental schools in the French speaking provinces of Cameroon (Kalla and Yembe, 1981). New syllabuses and textbooks had been printed waiting only for the minister's approval and seminars had been held in preparation for the take-off of the implementation phase which was scheduled for 1974.

The President of the Republic Ahmadou Ahidjo closed the year 1973, by personally launching the *Green Revolution* in Buea as the national economic policy (Ngoh 1987). It recognized agriculture as the country's major economic activity and called on all citizens to return to their farms to ensure national food-self-sufficiency. At the Garoua Congress of the Cameroon National Union (CNU) in 1974, He made the Green Revolution a major part of the educational policy of the country by stressing that;

The school of today...should not concern itself with producing bureaucrats and technocrats for whom outlets are steadily dwindling. It should draw young pupils' attention to the many opportunities open to them in the primary and secondary sectors.... In an essentially agricultural country, it is important that we must tie intellectual training to manual activities if the environment is to be effectively transformed (IPAR, 1977:7).

To make this a nationwide affair, through Presidential decree No. 277/CAB/PR of 10th October, 1974, another IPAR Office was set up in Buea, for the English Speaking Subsystem of education. This was far less a show of presidential largess than the culmination of a series of requests made by the West Cameroon government (defunct in 1972) since the creation of IPAR-Yaoundé and the seminars and workshops held in Buea to that effect. These requests had attempted to justify the fact that in the same country, the educational problems of Francophone Cameroon were similar to those of Anglophone Cameroon (IPAR, 1972:1).

The IPAR projects with bases in Yaoundé and Buea were to ensure that schools should be ruralized. The ruralized school was one that guaranteed that studies at primary levels would ensure integration into rural working life. The project in broad terms meant the introduction of curriculum materials and practical work related to life in the rural areas into the primary school programme. Just like the British colonial administration, the government was so confident that a ruralized curriculum would equip the rural youth with skills in agriculture, animal rearing, arts and craft which would lead them to taking up farming and other agricultural activities in their villages after leaving school and permanently stay there and contribute positively to its development (Tambo, 2000).

Each of the IPAR projects was created with four sections namely; Environmental Studies (also known as the Agricultural Section); Language Section; Mathematics and Village Technology (otherwise known as Intermediate Technology). The four sections were expected to work out research strategies for the ruralisation of their curriculum contents. The researchers therefore set about collecting data on which they based their recommendations for a new primary school curriculum. These recommendations, for IPAR-Buea, were published in 1977 (IPAR, 1977). The task had involved an arduous one of each research team in extensive field work throughout the country, data analysis and interpretation.

The mathematics section proposed a tentative syllabus in which "the Cameroonian child was to acquire a sound mathematics background through the problem solving approach which was based on an involvement with real rural life situations. This was to ensure that the child is better able to understand the world around him/her in concrete and abstract mathematical terms. Such an

understanding it was argued would ultimately aid him/her in being a useful and productive citizen whether he continues his/her education or had to seek employment in the rural or urban sector.

The English language section complained that the course book in use before then 'Primary English Course by J.C. Gagg contained mostly European contents. It therefore suggested the incorporation of Cameroonian 'cultural data from the local environments so as to have a relevant and meaningful language course as well as provide adequate local content with appropriate indigenous vocabulary and structures'. This section borrowed extensively from second language English courses in use in other independent African countries where local cultural data had been incorporated in the courses.

The Environmental or Agricultural studies section complained that, the current state of school farm work was inadequate and proposed a series of measures for improving it. It stressed that agriculture as a school subject 'should aim at providing the knowledge and techniques to become aware of one's environment, the problems and changes taking place within it, with a view of improving it. It also emphasized the extent to which the environment varied and spelled out the types of farming and farming practices that were suitable for the various geographic regions and suggested the setting up of demonstration farms in selected locations on which schools around could come for practical lessons.

The Village Technology team developed a programme of crafts activities relevant to the needs of individuals and the different communities and regions. It hoped to develop a more positive attitude towards craft education and its contribution to economic development and investigated the possibility of establishing small-scale village industries for school leavers. The team also recommended that Arts and Craft/technology for both boys and girls should involve not less than 120 min a week.

Resistance and futility of ruralisation

Not quite had those appointed to carry out ruralisation settled for work than resistance to the whole reform began to grow from murmuring to open and bound opposition. In fact by 1974, the opposition had become sufficiently widespread to cause the Ministry of National Education to delay the start of the Yaoundé implementation phase which was previewed for 1974/75 by one year (Kalla and Yembe, 1981). From the time IPAR Yaoundé was created in 1967, its report for that year noted the apparent hostility to the IPAR project and the scepticism that many people entertained about its possible success (IPAR, 1976). It was therefore evident from the start that ruralisation as an educational policy was headed for a rough road. For the first generation of

'white collar' workers such as civil servants and businessmen who owed their rise to power positions to the fact that they had gone beyond the rural school, years of schooling had estranged them from the land. Few of them were anxious to see their children receive an education different from what they had received, and worse still an education which would return their children back to the land where they themselves had escaped (Kalla and Yembe, 1981).

Vehement opposition also came from the rural folks who saw in the innovation, an attempt to condemn their children to a life of hardship from which only the school could save them as it had done for others; the elites. From the colonial period, bookish education followed by academic secondary and higher education seemed to be what was desirable to most African people for the simple reason that it provided a ladder to an altogether different world of increased financial and enhanced social status. To most rural communities:

Education meant reading books, writing and talking English and doing arithmetic.... At our homes we have done a lot of ploughing, planting, weeding and harvesting.... We knew how to do these things. What we knew was not education; education was what we did not know; *that which would give our children a big government office in town* (Ball, 1983:253).

The same opinion reigned within the educational sector itself. Many in this group were hardly convinced by the initial government statistics of high youth unemployment produced to justify a return to an agriculturally oriented education. Many were those school authorities who 'most earnestly wished that there was even a shadow of truth in such government proclamations' barely five years after independence (Mbiat, 2014). Moreover, teachers, who constituted the largest part of the elite class in Cameroon, criticized the new role they were expected to play under the IPAR reforms holding that they were called to serve as 'classroom actors' not as agricultural extension workers, the new role the reform aimed to give them. In fact, the IPAR Buea 1976/77 Annual report confirmed that there was a relatively low morale among the primary school teachers regarding this project (IPAR, 1976:7).

By 1977, the implementation phase of the Yaoundé project had been delayed by three years (Kalla and Yembe, 1981). As this phase kept being postponed, the IPAR trainees were posted to teach the traditional curriculum. This was causing quite a stir. They were awarded the highest primary teacher certificate in Cameroon and the highest salaries on the primary school scale. This put them in conflict with the head teachers and the older teachers (Mbiat, 2014). Here were young teachers doing exactly the same work as the older teachers and yet far better paid despite the fact that they worked with curricula for which they were not trained.

This made most of the traditionally trained teachers to despise the IPAR curriculum and stay committed to the 'ideal of a classical education (Mbiat, 2014).

The resistance to the reform therefore not only demonstrated its futility but was an indication of the fact that it was not a locally generated solution to a local problem but what the African proverb means by 'the player of the drum for a roadside dancer being in the nearby bush' with the dance being determined by the drummer's tunes and for his own motives. Even the two studies conducted in the past on the Project by Akoulouze (1984) and the National Centre of Education (MINEDUC 1984) agree that the role the school was called to play in rural development was unrealistic at that time and that the non-utilization of research in initiating the reform makes for alternative thinking regarding its origin- a western imposition.

Grosfoguel (2007) has argued that 'one of the *most* powerful myths of the twentieth century was the notion that the elimination of colonial administrations amounted to the decolonization of the world. This led to the myth of a 'postcolonial' world as we continue to live under the same 'colonial power matrix' in which erstwhile colonial masters and their Western allies have guaranteed the continuous pursuance of colonial policies of subjugation and domination which continue to keep the former colonised as the producer of raw materials for Western industries. Such an intention in Cameroon justified the insistence by the West and their donor agencies that education should be oriented towards agriculture and local crafts and further justified the huge amounts of financial, human and material resources that they put in to see such policies implemented. According to Nkrumah:

The state which is subject to neocolonialism is, in theory, independent and has all the trappings of international sovereignty. In reality, its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside-not now through the presence of troops but through economic and monetary means, as control over government policy may be secured by the payment towards the cost of running the state and by provision of civil servants in positions where they can dictate policy (Nkrumah, 1965:ix-x).

Nkrumah's position is justified by the heavy financial and human support IPAR and the ruralisation project received from Western countries in the initial years and made even more real by the gradual withdrawal of a majority of that support as it was realized that the project was being opposed from within. That is why as early as 1967, within a few months of the adoption of ruralisation as primary and teacher education policy, the Cameroon government, could quickly find human and financial resources through a number of bilateral agreements with funding agencies, notably UNDP, UNESCO, the German Agency for Technical Corporation (GTZ) and the British Council.

Less than a year after, in 1968, a team of UNESCO experts was already in the country to start IPAR on a temporary site (Kalla and Yembe, 1981).

Between 1967 and 1972, a total of over four million US dollars had already been spent from external financing sources (Kalla and Yembe, 1981:316). At the Buea office the financial estimates for 1974-75 stood at about two and half million US Dollars of which less than forty thousand was to be provided by the government as land and salaries for local IPAR staff while the rest was to be provided by UNDP, UNICEF, IBRD and other bilateral partners (IPAR, 1972:13). At this time France alone had 576 civil servants in Cameroon of which 334 were in the educational sector. In 1972 the IPAR-Yaoundé office had a personnel roll of 103 people. Out of this, 83 were foreign expatriates (Atayo, 2000:61). In 1974-75, these investments were certainly far more than doubled. That year the Buea office had a total of thirty staff members; eight were UNESCO experts, six were bilateral aid experts and 16 Cameroonian experts. Among the fourteen foreign experts were four professors and other holders of doctorate degrees in Applied Education and Sciences, the Cameroonian experts were at best holders of undergraduate degrees and diplomas (IPAR, 1972:13). The question of whose ideas would have been bought could therefore be seen from the composition of the researchers at IPAR which in Nkrumah's thinking is a clear example of foreign domination.

In another dimension, like adaptation which found its roots in the education of freed slaves in Southern states of the USA and thus failed because the two societies were not identical in standards and patterns of economic and social developments, the policy of ruralisation found its origins in a study on the use of television as mass media for the education of adult members of rural communities in Quebec, Canada by Professor Raymond Lallez (Lallez, 1972:81). Based on this study, UNESCO and the International Bureau of Education without considering the uniqueness of each of the two communities, were quick to recommend that the 'highly qualified specialist should bring such a lucid and penetrating example of the TEVEC case for the first time to Africa' (Lallez, 1974:iii). With the colonial education of the new African elite which made them to continuously see everything western as the best, it was therefore easy for such alien ideologies to be quickly adopted as policy without second thought. As Aissat and Djafri explained, the education of Africans was:

not merely that they should be able to read and write 'the English language'... *but that* whatever Africans were taught about themselves was designed to enable them to internalise their inferiority and to recognise the white man as their saviour (Aissat and Djafri 2011, 17,7)

It is therefore the continued neo-colonial presence and

the type of education that the Africans received in colonial schools that justified the initial position taken by local policy makers and the reform proposals that were adopted. It made them to fail to question the rationality of ruralisation of education as a policy option for Cameroon in the 1960s. This would have been done by undertaking a needs assessment and a local experts opinion survey.

In Cameroon as elsewhere in the world, the school as an organizational structure has always been part of a wider social system (Mbua, 2003) surrounded by powerful societal pressures as well as biological, cultural and institutional dimensions whose opinions were not to be taken for granted in times of policy reform. These would have brought together proposals for reforming the educational system from below and thereby make all stakeholders part and parcel of the reform; a kind of bottom-top-approach to curriculum development. The failure of the government in this regard contributed to the opposition, the false start and irrationality which ruralisation came to be known with in the history of education in Cameroon.

Although there was sufficient evidence to justify rural exodus and youth unemployment, there was hardly any convincing empirical data linking these problems to the primary school curriculum. Therefore in proposing ruralisation as a curriculum option to solve the problem of youth employment and urban migration, the government erroneously adopted an educational solution to a geo-economic and sociological problem. A major reason why many primary school leavers ran to the towns was that of the failure of the government to ensure a smooth transition from primary to further education and other types of employment by expanding the secondary-vocational and technical education sector to the reach of rural communities.

This was revealed by a field survey undertaken between 1968 and 1972, by K.G. Robinson, serving as a UNESCO field staff with the Ministry of Primary Education and Social Welfare in the West Cameroon Government. He observed that:

If it is felt to be desirable to slow down the exodus from countryside into the main towns, this should be done by making the country-side near these big towns an attractive place to live in. In this situation priority for any post-primary education and industrial development should be given to the rural areas surrounding these towns. The further away from the towns children live with these facilities the smaller is their attraction to town (Robinson, 1972, 10).

When the project was adopted in Buea in 1974, the field studies conducted by its various sections between 1974 and 1976 confirmed Robinson's findings and revealed the futility of the government undertaking a great leap forward with closed eyes. The evidence showed that

farming figured least on the list of job aspirations of most school leavers. Like Robinson, the 1977 IPAR Report emphasized that:

The problem of rural exodus can never be solved by a ruralized curriculum unless government action is taken to tackle wider social problems, notably the need to reduce the discrepancy in public service between the urban and rural areas, and the similarly wide discrepancy in the financial rewards and status obtained by primary school leavers on the one hand and by those who complete secondary and higher education on the other hand (IPAR, 1977:13).

The negative field impressions about a ruralized school system and the heavy opposition by the elites, the parents, the teachers and the Cameroonian youths for whom the programme was initiated were bound to shroud the entire project in heavy controversy. As a result, both the Yaoundé and Buea IPAR Stations continued to run far behind schedule. The implementation phase in which all schools in the French Speaking zone had to adopt this programme which was to start in 1974 had not started by 1978. The experimental phase in which the programme was to be tested in selected experimental schools which would have been achieved by 1973 had not taken off by 1976 when the implementation phase was previewed to start.

In fact by 1987, twenty years after the adoption of ruralisation of education as official state policy for primary schools, IPAR activities continued to be limited to producing teaching aids; publishing study manuals; proposing school syllabuses and schemes of work; working with neighbouring schools on experimental farm projects; in-service training, seminars; establishing international links and continuing education for its own personnel. The schools continued to use the 1963 school syllabuses which were revised in 1968 while the ruralisation of education remained a dream. In the 1983/84 Annual Report, the Director of IPAR-Buea Kajih John Tansam lamented the fact that up to 1984, ten years after its creation in Buea, the statute of the institute had not yet been clarified and that the tentative drawn up national syllabuses presented to government for approval since 1979 had not yet been approved. The two factors, to him, created serious uncertainty as to the role and continuity of the institutes (IPAR, 1983:9).

With such an atmosphere of desperation at IPAR, gradually, the demonstration farms began to be abandoned, the projects began to face internal management and financial problems as foreign partners began to withdraw, transportation of researchers and workers to field stations became difficult as the project could not replace damaged service vehicles (IPAR, 1983:15). Year after year little was heard of IPAR and its activities. In 1998, a new education law was adopted in

Cameroon. Although it mentioned in its general aims the need to train citizens who are deeply rooted in their culture (Republic of Cameroon, 1998), very little was said in terms of tuning the educational system towards a rural existence. In 2001 as a fall out of the 1998 law, a new syllabus for Anglophone primary schools was launched. Although it contains aspects of environmental education, arts and craft and national culture, their objectives are far from resembling the initial intentions of the ruralisation policy (Republic of Cameroon, 2000). Today, the IPAR-Buea headquarters still stands imposing; but hardly ever open. Its project sites and demonstration farms had long gone into oblivion or handed to other government services. Close to fifty year on, it is now possible to conclude that ruralisation may well have meant nothing more than new textbooks and curriculum materials, and a higher pay for IPAR trainees. This expensive project may have achieved any other objectives except, 'get the youth unto the land,' its original purpose (Kalla and Yembe, 1981).

CONCLUSION

The paper concludes that after experiencing the negative impact of adaptation as education philosophy in the Cameroons, nothing more would have motivated the independent government to suggest an agricultural and local crafts education other than the 'colonial matrix of power' which has sustained the North's presence in the South; made the indigenous leaders visible but not in power and guaranteed the entrenchment of policies which fitted more the interest of the North than that of the South. The abandonment of adaptation as soon as an indigenous government came into being in Southern Cameroons and the resistance and ultimate abandonment of the policy of ruralisation reveals how externally conceived programmes and projects of development imposed on developing societies would often fail, especially if the interest of the initiator is at cross-purpose with that of the intended beneficiary.

There is need for Cameroon and the global south to begin effecting what some decolonial theorists have termed delinking; which not only exposes the often negative effects of the monopoly of the colonial matrix of power as this study has attempted to show but also tells that there are other options looming large on the horizon. Delinking is contained in the sphere of authority; a break from the authority and influence of the World Bank, the IMF and related institutions and Western countries on policy orientations in the global south subsumed in dewesternization and decoloniality as the legacy of coloniality prevents the construction of a socio-economically and politically equitable just world and ethical future social organizations (Mattison, 2012:3). Until this is achieved, resources provided for education and socio-economic development would hardly achieve

the required goals.

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