

Empowering Teachers to Bolster Vocational Education in Cameroon

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Abstract : This research is guided by observations in the types of education offered at the secondary level in Cameroon. The secondary education system in Cameroon comprises two types of education, including General Education and Technical and Vocational Education. Although General Education and, Technical and Vocational Education are given equal importance by public authorities, General Education remains on the thriving trend, enjoying the greatest enrolment. In the meantime, Technical and Vocational Education is still to reach the adequate momentum expected to fostering the country's full-fledged development, as specified in the National Development Strategy, which is the blue print of State policies in Cameroon for the 2020-2030 decade. Vocational Education is credited for its ability to foster a country's development, since it teaches students the precise skills and knowledge needed to carry out a specific craft, technical skill or trade. Yet, formal training on Vocational Education for teachers offers a pale face in secondary education. This limits the ability of the educational system to nurture vocations and provide the country's economy with the manpower necessary to achieving development goals. This article seeks to analyse how concretely does the institutional framework spur vocational skills in secondary school teachers. It overviews the instruments instituting Vocational Education at the secondary level in Cameroon, then assesses their effective implementation on the ground. Questionnaires addressed to both active teachers and vocational education policy-makers serve to collect data which are analysed using descriptive statistics. The final objective is to contribute in the debate urging to rethink the role of teachers in bolstering Vocational Education, which is the cornerstone of industrial development. This is true everywhere in the world. In Cameroon and in Africa in general, teachers must be empowered in this field with specific sets of competencies they will need to pass on to learners. They equally need to be given opportunities to acquire and adapt their knowledge and teaching skills accordingly.

Keywords : vocational education, cameroon, institutional framework, national development, competencies and skills

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