

Leadership and Management Development Programmes in Cameroon for primary school leaders

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Abstract

In both developed and developing countries poor performance of head teachers is detrimental to school effectiveness, with consequent economic costs amounting to billions of dollars every year. These costs are perhaps particularly keenly felt in developing countries, where demand for a workforce that is proficient in globally relevant competencies is especially acute, but where the effective school leadership that can help to deliver this educated workforce is especially patchy. One of the contributing factors to this poor performance is a lack of structured leadership development programmes. The paper, therefore, explored the factors pertinent to effective school leadership development programmes in Cameroon. This paper is based on the results from a Leadership and Management Development Questionnaire (LMDQ) survey that was done in Cameroon as part of a bigger research project. The results indicate that the central educational agencies, schools and school leaders in Cameroon recognised the importance of ensuring that central policies and support, schools' internal policies, and their continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities for aspiring head teachers, are closely aligned with international best practice, particularly through the establishment of a structured leadership development programme for aspiring head teachers.

Keywords: School leadership development; Head teachers; Continuous Professional development (CPD)

Introduction

The last fifty two years since the independence of Cameroon have seen an increasing international interest in leadership development courses and programmes for school leaders. The idea of intervening to develop the leadership and management ability of school leaders derives from two core beliefs which now have wide international currency. The first of these is that the quality of leadership makes a significant difference to the effectiveness of both schools and educational systems by deepening the knowledge, expertise and behaviours of school leaders (Brungardt, 1996; Collins, 2002; Rhodes et al., 2009).

This belief that schools require effective leaders if they are to provide the best possible educational opportunities is common across both developed and developing countries and goes hand-in-hand with a concern about perceived leadership inadequacies amongst school leaders. The model for addressing these inadequacies is underpinned by the second core belief, namely, that the personal professional learning of leaders (Sammons et al., 1995; Hallinger and Heck, 1999) is a fundamental precondition for the creation of a learning community (Day, 2001; Weindling, 2003; Lumby, 2003; Lumby et al., 2008; Harris and Spillane, 2008).

This study will explore, this belief that schools require effective leaders if they are to provide the best possible educational opportunities (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1996; Bush and Jackson, 2002; Lumby et al., 2008; Bush, 2008). Indeed, a 1996 report by the Commonwealth Secretariat showed that there is broad international agreement about the need for schools and educational systems to enhance their capacity to improve the development of schools and school leaders. Proponents of investment in leadership and management development in an education context, however, especially in developing countries where needs are most acute and yet resources and global engagement are most scarce, often lack direct empirical evidence for the effectiveness of such training.

This study provides an overview of current scholarship in respect to the importance of school leadership and management training, and draws in particular on a recent study in Cameroon which seeks to address this issue of evidence, to consider how the need for the central educational systems, communities (different educational systems) to enhance their capacity to improve the development of schools and school leaders. There has been a clear trend, therefore, towards the adoption of formal management and leadership training programmes for school leaders and, as Bush (2008) has recently predicted, expenditure on school leadership development will continue to grow throughout the next decade as still more educational systems recognize the shortage of talented leaders and the requirements to broaden viewpoints in order to compete globally (Brundrett, 2002; Hallinger and Heck, 1999). In respect to Cameroon and many other African countries, however, the provision of leadership education still lags far behind the demand for that education among aspiring school leaders (Akoulouze et al., 1999, Republic of Cameroon, 2005; Bush and Oduro, 2006; GESP, 2010; MINEDUC, 2011).

Aims of the Study

The purpose of this study is two-fold, namely to survey Cameroonian educators' beliefs about the *elements* that should be in a preparation programme for school leasers, and to survey Cameroonian educators' views about the *importance* of having effective preparations programmes in place. The above aims translate into two research questions. These research questions will inform the framework of the paper and guide the methodological approach and structure of the research study itself. These research questions are as follows:

What are the Cameroonian educators' beliefs about the elements that should be in a preparation programme for schools leaders?

What are the Cameroonian educators' views on the importance of having effective preparation programmes in place?

Importance of the Study

This study is a first attempt in scholarship to employ a Leadership and Management Development Questionnaire (LMDQ) method in a Cameroonian (and African) context – providing valuable data on the elements needed in leadership development programmes and why educators think it is important to have effective leadership development programmes in place. The questionnaire was developed using the pioneering work done by Akoulouze et al (1999); Rhodes et al.(2009) and Singh (2009).

In the next section a focussed literature review will be provided to indicate what is already known about the elements of leadership development programmes and their importance in a schooling system. With this as a theoretical back drop the findings from the questionnaire data analysis will be presented.

Focussed Literature Review

Leadership and School Effectiveness

There is ample literature on the importance of high quality school leadership and management in relation to educational outcomes, as demonstrated by studies such as Bush and Jackson (2002) and Lumby et al. (2008). Recent research has emphasised the importance of high quality school leadership in creating effective schools (Bush and Glover, 2003; NCTL, 2008). In these literatures the quality of school leadership is related to the initiatives taken to prepare school leaders through management and leadership learning.

Tchombe (1998) summarised the characteristics of effective schools in a developing country context as:

(L)evel of performance, infrastructure, teacher/pupils ratio, community involvement, financial autonomy, progress rate of students, healthy competition between male and female students and attendance. While, government tries to ensure access, its policy recognizes and protects the diverse educational heritage from the different colonial culture and educational values. It attempts to make the beneficiaries of education to be more involved in the management of education and reduce cost, encourage efficiency, transparency and quality education (p.2).

This point emphasised by Bush and Jackson (2002), highlights that the quality of leadership and management training is likely to be a significant factor in ensuring school effectiveness as it plays an important and integral part in human learning and development. That said, there is certainly also a recognition that the leadership factor is most important. Bush (2005, 2008), for example, points out that there is an increasing realisation in the 21st century that headship is an expert profession that requires particular preparation.

Leadership Development Programmes

Formal educational leadership training programmes have been established for some time in a variety of countries around the world. Dering *et al.* (2005), described the French centralised system of educational leadership development, but within an increasing agenda for regionalisation. The French Government has established, Ecole Supérieure des Personnels d'Encadrement" (ESPEMEN) or Higher School for Managerial Staff in Education. Before school leaders in France take up a position as a principal or head teacher they must first go through twenty weeks of practical training experience at a college or high school as well as undertaking a theory programme. This theory programme (taking over three weeks) consists of gaining an in-depth understanding of school administration and management.

In the UK Bush and Jackson (2002) and Rhodes *et al.* (2009) discuss the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL); a professional training institution that is envisaged as playing a pivotal role in the coordination of a national framework of programmes of school leadership training. Through the NCTL, NPQH training has become an important national programme to prepare school leaders (Earley *et al.*, 2002).

A similar programme has been launched in Malaysia, named The National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) programme for secondary school Head teachers (Singh, 2009). In Cameroon for example in-service training typically includes a variety of management development experiences, such as school leader's teacher training experience, on-the-job instructional learning programmes for both aspiring heads and head teachers; mentoring and coaching of aspiring heads in various aspects of educational management and administration (Akoulouze *et al.*, 1999). Leadership training programmes are similarly offered in annual seminars but there are no leadership standards or leader competences governing them. Also, unlike the UK's NPQH, there is no certification requirement in Cameroon and no clear set of standards, expectations or essential prior experience for the headship position.

The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards in the United States (USA) contributed to the development of standards that are guiding initiatives to reshape principal preparations programmes in many states.

Bush and Jackson (2002) indicate in their international survey of school leadership development programmes that these have considerable similarities across different countries, leading to the hypothesis that there is an international curriculum for school leadership preparation. This literature is important in that it reveals that a number of countries are placing significant emphasis on leadership development programmes, but there is a need to study the impact of programmes in contexts such as that in Malaysia and also their potential in a developing country like Cameroon in Africa (Huber and Davies, 1997; Bush and Oduro, 2006). This is an ongoing concern in developing countries that what works in developed countries do not always translate into similar benefits in their schooling systems.

Leadership development that emphasises team development derives from 'transformational leadership' or 'distributed leadership' theories in which it is assumed that leadership takes place at all levels of a school and educational system and with a greater emphasis on teamwork (Gronn, 2000, 2002; Lumby, 2003; Weindling, 2003; Lumby *et al.*, 2008). It is argued that leadership development which focuses more on work-based learning, on the individual and the work team and on processes as opposed to content tends to result in more effective and sustainable leadership learning, i.e. learning that will be more likely to be transferred into leadership practice (Kolb, 1984; Lewis & Murphy 2008, Brundrett, 2002; Bush *et al.*, 2007).

Lumby et al. (2008) and Day (2001), however, point to the tension in leadership development literature between the idea that leadership is a group of components, of which the individual leader is just one unit, and the idea that leadership development necessarily involves the personal and professional development of individual leaders (Goleman, 2011; Collins, 2002).

Evaluating Leadership and Management Learning

There have been attempts to evaluate professional development programmes for head teachers in both developed countries (e.g. France, United Kingdom, USA; Canada, and developing countries (e.g. Malaysia; South Africa and Cameroon). While these studies revealed an interesting diversity of professional development models, a key conclusion concerned the scarcity and methodological limitations of research on such programmes (Kirkpatrick, 2005). Nonetheless, these studies suggested strongly that attempts to evaluate these programmes in a methodologically rigorous way can provide insights that could be useful in informing the development of new programmes.

Continuous professional development (CPD) in Cameroon

The preceding sections of this paper have tried to set out some of the elements of a ‘classical’ view of leadership. They have shown how commentators have emphasis about the importance of high quality school leadership in creating effective schools and how, as a consequence, new approaches to leadership development have emerged – such as on-the-job training, 360-degree feedback and CPD (Akoulouze et al, 1999; Collins, 2002; Weindling, 2003). In some studies leadership has been shown to be a complicated enterprise, and as up-to-date studies emphasise, vision, communication, teamwork and distribution leadership are significant characteristics of leadership development (Day, 2001; Collins, 2002; Weindling, 2003; Bush and Glover, 2003; Lumby *et al.*, 2008).

Formal educational leadership training programmes have been established for some time in a variety of countries around the world. This literature review will now conclude with an assessment of the literature in relation to school leadership and management in the developing world, specifically in Cameroon, which will be the main focus of the paper.

Cameroon, like many other African countries, has little formalised procedures for preparing and developing school leaders. This does not however mean nothing is going on it only underline the importance of more effective procedures. Most educational systems in Africa seem to work on the belief that a successful classroom teacher essentially makes an effective school administrator (Oduro, 2003; Bush and Oduro, 2006). As a consequence, heads are frequently appointed on the foundation of a successful record as teachers, on the assumption that this offers a sufficient starting point for school leadership (Oduro, 2003, Bush, 2005; Bush and Oduro, 2006; Lumby *et al.*, 2008). The selection and recruitment of head teachers is, therefore, mostly based on a teacher’s seniority in rank and teaching experience (Oduro, 2003; Bush and Oduro, 2006).

The Commonwealth Secretariat (1996) and Bush and Jackson (2002), whilst they stress the importance of school leaders in Africa, also point to the difficulties of managing schools and educational systems in such a difficult context. Bush and Oduro (2006) note that little is known about school leadership in developing countries and are critical of the current inadequate arrangements and resources to support the development of aspiring heads. Despite the importance of school leadership, the means by which most school leaders in developing countries like Cameroon are trained, selected and inducted are ill-suited to the development of effective and efficient school managers (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1996; Bush and Jackson, 2002; Oplatka, 2004; Bush and Oduro, 2006; Bush, 2008; Lumby *et al.*, 2008).

There is little evidence about the quality of school leader’s informal training in Cameroon. One of the few sources is Akoulouze et al.’s (1999) guide for primary head teachers which provides a detailed in-service training resource for head teachers. The guide gives pragmatic advice in relation to several aspects of in-service-training, notably:

- pedagogical management
- functions of head teachers
- management of teaching and learning
- human resource management
- resource management
- personnel management
- financial management

- learning and assessment
- school relationship management
- learning development
- the school within its environment
- performance management
- self-development of leaders
- health and safety
- research in education
- leadership in education

The authors highlighted how skills in the management of physical facilities and financial management need to be improved, especially in the context that the central education authority has devolved a significant proportion of such tasks to the school level, including budgeting, fund-raising and fee setting (MINEDUB, 2001; Bush and Oduro, 2006; MINEDUC, 2011).

Method

The overall research question aimed to bring together evaluative data concerning the compulsory leadership and management training programmes in Cameroon that enhance prospect leaders to become effective school leaders will utilize the Leadership and Management Development Questionnaire (LMDQ), which is a self-assessment form, completed by both aspiring heads and head teachers, documenting perceptions of leadership and management development attainments. For the collection of data I have employed a paper self-administered LMDQ in the form of checklist. The LMDQ is an effective tool for aspiring head teacher's self-evaluation and development.

Questionnaire Design

A person-to-person LMDQ with closed-ended questions was designed in order to establish valid and reliable data with which to describe teachers, aspiring head teachers' and head teachers leadership and management development in regard to their preparedness for headship. This research method was adopted since it represents an efficient method of obtaining data from a reasonably large population. There were two major sections of questions in the LMDQ and considerable attention was paid to designing the sequence of questions so as to make it easy for respondents to understand the flow of questions (Denscombe, 2003, Stogdill, 1963).

Section one comprised five questions on respondents' demographic data and background information, whilst section two comprised a further thirty questions identifying areas of study in school leadership and management development programmes and asking for responses rating the extent to which these areas of study contributed to respondents' own perception of their leadership and management development.

This second section of the LMDQ (adapted from Akoulouze et al, 1999; Rhodes et al., 2009; Singh, 2009) utilised a 5-point Likert scale in which respondents were asked to tick the box that on the whole precisely mirrored their judgement for each of thirty statements (option: 1= Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree). This approach required teachers and head teachers to reflect on each of the elements of leadership and management development programmes and how much respondents had benefited from their informal on the job training as an indication of why it is important to have effective leadership development programmes in place. The questions were devised making sure that a number of specific issues such as the necessity to keep away from using 'leading' questions, keeping the questions brief and simple, the need to keep away from asking the same question twice in a diverse fashion, and not creating any unnecessary assumptions in the questions (Denscombe, 2003). At the end of this section there was an opportunity provided for respondents to write more on the topic which allowed for some discursive analysis.

The LMDQ was also pilot-tested with head teachers in Cameroon, in request to acquire feedback on the subject of clarity, content validity and ease of completion. The amended version of the LMDQ, based on expert opinion and pilot testing, was administered to 190 school leaders in Cameroon. The researcher ensured on the LMDQ participant information guide that the aim of the project was clearly articulated and that all answers were anonymous and confidential.

The Sampling Process

Opportunity' or, as it is sometimes called, 'convenience' (Cohen, Manion and Morrisson, 2003, p.102), sampling was employed for the LMDQ.

Extensive communication with staff from the Cameroon Minister of Basic Education enabled the researcher to obtain a research permit to visit primary schools in selected regions in Cameroon to encourage broader participation. Age, job role, experience in role and type of school were not be taken into account in the analysis since the researcher considered that, due to the nature of the research topic, school leaders' responses to the 30 units of study in leadership and management development programmes in preparing them for their headship were far more important. Indeed, it was also felt that if age, job role, experience in role and type of school were taken into consideration in the selection of the sample, then they also must be taken into account when analysing the data and this would ultimately widen the overall focus of the research project. However, Table 1 shows the aspiring and incumbent heads' gender, age, experience in role and type of school.

Table 1
LMDQ Returns

Job Role	Gender		Age			Experience in Role			Type of School		
	Male	Female	Under 30yrs	30yrs-45 yrs	45yrs+	Under 5 yrs	5 Yrs-15 yrs	15yrs +	State	Private	Faith
Aspiring Heads	48% (69)	52% (74)	28% (40)	58% (83)	14% (20)	36% (52)	56% (80)	8% (11)	37% (53)	47% (67)	16% (23)
Head Teachers	49% (23)	51% (24)	15% (7)	55% (26)	30% (14)	34% (16)	53% (25)	13% (6)	49% (23)	45% (21)	6% (3)

Table 1 shows that a total of 190 completed LMDQ were received comprising a random national sample of 143 aspiring head teachers (75%) and 47 head teachers (25%) at primary school level. The majority of the respondents were female (52%). 57% of the respondents were in the 30-45 age bracket, and there was little difference between aspiring and actual head teachers in this age distribution (58% compared to 55%). Amongst younger age groups, however, the proportion of aspiring head teachers was greater than the proportion of actual heads, whereas among older age groups the proportion of aspiring head teachers was less than the proportion of actual heads. Thirty six percent (36%) of the sample had been aspiring school leaders for under five years; 55% of the sample had been school leaders for between 5 and 15 years and 9% had been school leaders for more than 15 years. Nearly 40% of the school leaders worked in state schools, 46% worked in private schools and 14% worked in a faith school setting.

The initial identification of schools in which suitable participants were likely to be found was through data provided by the Cameroon Ministry of Basic Education. The size of the sample for the questionnaire was determined by the degree of accurateness required for the sample and the degree of difference in the population in respect to the key features of concentration. It was considered that a sample size of 250 would be required to enable understating of the development of aspiring heads, an actual sample of 190 schools was randomly generated from the Cameroon Ministry of Basic Education register.

Following consent from the Cameroon Ministry of Basic Education, and with their support to contact regional educational delegates in each province in Cameroon, the researcher contacted the head teachers of the randomly targeted schools in the first instance, and, given the subject matter of the research it was anticipated that the head teacher, in most cases, would also be a participant in the research. Five copies of the questionnaire was included with the assumption that head teachers would request deputy heads and other aspiring school leaders would complete the questionnaire. The head teacher, however, was invited to advertise the research within his or her school and support the researcher in identifying further participants within the school (aiming for an average of 2-4 participants in total from each school). In particular, the researcher sought respondents from a cross-section of the school leadership team, taking in aspiring leaders across a range of school functions and levels. It was also planned that if the number returned from the initial LMDQ was deemed to be insufficient then a smaller second round of LMDQ would be sent out. In practice, the study achieved a return rate of 76% of the schools provided by the department (190 out of the 250 schools the department gave the researchers access to), however, this was deemed to be sufficient to meet the objectives of the project.

LMDQ Data Analysis

Prior to analysing the data, completed LMDQs were checked to ensure that respondents had complied with instructions for completing each LMDQ. Each respondent was allocated a unique code that identified their gender, age, job role, experience and type of school and entered into an excel spreadsheet.

The extent to which the expectations of the few leadership development programmes were met was assessed in order to gain an indication of informal on the job training outcomes. Participants' views regarding the leadership and management development programmes, and further opportunities for headship development, were analysed with the use of mostly descriptive methods (frequencies and mean). Although the main aim was not to go into too much detail about the demographic differences, differences in teachers and head teachers' views according to personal features (such as job role, gender, age, experience in role and type of school) were also looked at in the analysis.

Descriptive statistics were used to identify any emerging differences between the main variables and key issues that emerged from the analysis in line with the research question. The leadership and management learning attainments data were analysed in order to evaluate the extent to which:

- School leaders were able to achieve leadership and management development targets.
- The possibility of the LMDQ to be an effective tool for aspiring head teachers' self-evaluation and development.

For the analysis of the LMDQ data, Rhodes et al.'s (2009) Rating Scale Model, which applies to Likert scale surveys, was used to analyse the data regarding the usefulness of the 30 units of study in the context of respondent informal on the job training. In the Likert scale, each unit of study was accompanied by a five-position scale and the respondent had to mark a response for each item on the provided continuum in order to show its perceived degree of attainment.

Findings

This section presents the findings based on quantitative data collected from case study schools in Cameroon. The findings are broken down into themes, each relating to the main research question.

Leadership and Management Development Programmes

This section provides statistical information derived from the data collected in the LMDQ from 190 school leaders (47 head teachers and 143 aspiring head teachers). The LMDQ serves to provide background data on perceptions of leadership and management development processes which can in turn be broken down by variables related to the sample characteristics e.g. role type, gender, age, experience in role and type of school.

The 30 aspects of management and leadership covered in the LMDQ are a composite from typical areas of study in both international school leadership and management development programmes and from the Cameroonian context of in-service training for aspiring school leaders.

Table 2
Mean Score Interpretation

Mean Score	Interpretation – Level of Agreement
1.00-1.49	Strongly disagree
1.5-2.49	Disagree
2.5-3.49	Neutral
3.5-4.49	Agree
4.5+	Strongly Agree

The following table (Table 2) illustrates the interpretation of the level of agreement in respect to each of the 30 leadership development aspects, according to the mean of the scores assigned by respondents on the 5-point Likert scale.

Aspiring Heads and Head Teachers: Background Factors

Findings from the LMDQ (by mean score in descending order) are presented separately to enable some comparisons to be made between aspiring heads and head teachers' assessment of each aspect of leadership development (see Table 3 and 4).

It should be noted, however, that 75 per cent of the sample were aspiring head teachers: this will be accounted for in the analysis.

Table 3 shows that aspiring heads broadly agreed that they had been prepared with respect to the 30 aspects of leadership development.

Table 3
Mean Scores of Aspiring Heads Respondents Views

Units of Studies	Aspiring Heads Respondents	Mean Scores	Mean scores Interpretations
Human Resources Management	143	4.7	Strongly Agree
Improving Learning	143	4.7	Strongly Agree
Improving Teaching	143	4.6	Strongly Agree
Health and Safety in School	143	4.5	Strongly Agree
Research in Education	143	4.5	Strongly Agree
Learning and Assessment	143	4.5	Strongly Agree
Accountability	143	4.4	Agree
Quality Management in Education	143	4.4	Agree
Learning Development	143	4.3	Agree
ICT Management	143	4.3	Agree
Sharing Vision	143	4.3	Agree
Strategic Planning	143	4.2	Agree
Financial Management	143	4.2	Agree
Self Development of Leaders	143	4.2	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	143	4.1	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	143	4.1	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Skills	143	4.1	Agree
Managing Professional Development	143	4.1	Agree
Distribution Leadership	143	4.1	Agree
Leadership in Organisation	143	4.1	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	143	4.1	Agree
Performance Management	143	4.1	Agree
Working With other Agencies	143	4.1	Agree
Strategic Management in School	143	4.1	Agree
Career and Counselling Management	143	4	Agree
Introduction to Public Policy in Cameroon	143	3.9	Agree
Change Management	143	3.9	Agree
Using Data to Raise Achievements	143	3.9	Agree
Policy Creation	143	3.8	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	143	3.6	Agree

Particularly strong levels of agreement were registered for curriculum and pedagogic management practices (e.g. on improving learning, improving teaching, learning and assessment) and organisational leadership practices (e.g. on health and safety, research in education, human resources management), indicating that these were seen as the most useful areas of development for their everyday roles and responsibilities as prospective head teachers. The fact that these developmental aspects of their role were given high priority by aspiring heads might suggest that they are often mainly responsible for administrative issues with limited wider leadership responsibilities.

In the last, more discursive, section of the LMDQ, aspiring heads suggested that additional areas that could be included in their training were: leadership skills in education, professional ethics in education, moral education and human rights, and the management of extra-curricular activities.

Table 4 summarises the results from the head teachers and indicates that they hold a slightly different range of views regarding the usefulness of the 30 aspects of leadership development, with curriculum and pedagogic management emotional intelligent (e.g. on learning development) were extremely relevant to their leadership development.

Table 4
Mean Scores of Head teachers Respondents Views

Units of Studies	Head teacher Respondents	Mean Scores	Mean scores Interpretations
Improving Learning	47	4.6	Strongly Agree
Learning and Assessment	47	4.6	Strongly Agree
Learning Development	47	4.5	Strongly Agree
Improving Teaching	47	4.5	Strongly Agree
Leadership in Organisation	47	4.4	Agree
Research in Education	47	4.4	Agree
Health and Safety in Schools	47	4.3	Agree
Accountability	47	4.3	Agree
Quality Management in Education	47	4.3	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	47	4.2	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	47	4.2	Agree
Strategic Planning	47	4.2	Agree
Using Data to Raise Achievements	47	4.2	Agree
Managing Professional Development	47	4.2	Agree
Human Resources Management	47	4.2	Agree
Performance Management	47	4.2	Agree
Working with other Agencies	47	4.2	Agree
Change Management	47	4.1	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Relationships	47	4.1	Agree
Distribution Leadership	47	4.1	Agree
Financial Management	47	4.1	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	47	4.1	Agree
Strategic Management in School	47	4.1	Agree
Self-Development of Leaders	47	4.1	Agree
Introduction to Public Policy in Cameroon	47	4	Agree
Sharing Vision	47	4	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	47	4	Agree
ICT Management	47	4	Agree
Career and Counselling Management	47	4	Agree
Policy Creation	47	3.7	Agree

The head teachers also identified that the aspects of leadership development related to personal management (e.g. the self-development of leadership skills), organisational leadership practices (e.g. on financial management, strategic management in schools, and the introduction to public policy in Cameroon), and community management practices (e.g. on school community relationship management) were less useful in preparing them as effective head teachers. This may reflect that these form a significant part of head teachers' responsibilities and that they felt under-prepared to operate effectively in these areas.

Gender Factors

The sample of school leaders was 48% male and 52% female, and of aspiring school leaders, 49% male and 51% female. Nationally, in Cameroon, 65% of primary school leaders are female and 35% male, although the overall gender division in the country is the same as in the sample at 49% male and 51% female.

Table 5, shows that male school leaders broadly agreed that they had been prepared with respect to the 30 aspects of leadership development.

Table 5
Mean Scores of Male Respondents Views

Units of Studies	Male Respondents	Mean Scores	Mean Scores Interpretations
Improving Learning	92	4.7	Strongly Agree
Improving Teaching	92	4.6	Strongly Agree
Learning and Assessment	92	4.5	Strongly Agree
Health and Safety in Schools	92	4.5	Strongly Agree
Research in Education	92	4.4	Agree
Accountability	92	4.4	Agree
Quality Management in Education	92	4.4	Agree
Strategic Planning	92	4.3	Agree
Leadership in Organisation	92	4.3	Agree
Learning Development	92	4.3	Agree
Career and Counselling Management	92	4.2	Agree
Strategic Management in School	92	4.2	Agree
Self-Development of Leaders	92	4.2	Agree
ICT Management	92	4.2	Agree
Human Resources Management	92	4.2	Agree
Financial Management	92	4.2	Agree
Using Data to Raise Achievements	92	4.2	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	92	4.2	Agree
Sharing Vision	92	4.2	Agree
Managing Professional Development	92	4.2	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	92	4.1	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	92	4.1	Agree
Performance Management	92	4.1	Agree
Working with other Agencies	92	4.1	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	92	4.1	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Relationships	92	4	Agree
Distribution Leadership	92	4	Agree
Policy Creation	92	4	Agree
Introduction to Public Policy in Cameroon	92	4	Agree
Change Management	92	3.9	Agree

Male participants strongly agreed that the curriculum and pedagogic management aspects (e.g. on improving learning, improving teaching, learning and assessment) and the organisational management aspects (e.g. on health and safety in school) of their development were the most useful in terms of the development of their day after day roles and responsibilities as school leaders. Male participants, however, indicated that the following organisational management areas of practices were less useful in their preparation to be effective school leaders (distributed leadership, policy creation, introduction to public policy in Cameroon and change management) and one unit of emotional intelligent (on managing interpersonal relationships).

Table 6, meanwhile, shows that female school leaders also broadly agreed that they had been prepared with respect to the 30 aspects of leadership development.

Table 6
Mean Scores of Female Respondents Views

Units of Studies	Female Respondents	Mean Scores	Mean Scores Interpretations
Managing Interpersonal Relationships	98	4.7	Strongly Agree
Self-Development of Leader	98	4.7	Strongly Agree
Improving Learning	98	4.6	Strongly Agree
Improving Teaching	98	4.5	Strongly Agree
Learning and Assessment	98	4.5	Strongly Agree
Research in Education	98	4.5	Strongly Agree
Learning Development	98	4.4	Agree
Health and Safety in Schools	98	4.3	Agree
Accountability	98	4.3	Agree
Quality Management in Education	98	4.3	Agree
Sharing Vision	98	4.2	Agree
Managing Professional Development	98	4.2	Agree
Working with other Agencies	98	4.2	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	98	4.1	Agree
Strategic Planning	98	4.1	Agree
Distribution Leadership	98	4.1	Agree
Financial Management	98	4.1	Agree
ICT Management	98	4.1	Agree
Performance Management	98	4.1	Agree
Strategic Management in School	98	4.1	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	98	4.1	Agree
Change Management	98	4	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	98	4	Agree
Career and Counselling Management	98	3.9	Agree
Human Resource Management	98	3.9	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	98	3.8	Agree
Using Data to Raise Achievements	98	3.8	Agree
Introduction to Public Policy in Cameroon	98	3.8	Agree
Leadership in Organisation	98	3.7	Agree
Policy Creation	98	3.5	Agree

The female participants, however, particularly strongly highlighted that aspects relating to the development of emotional intelligence (e.g. on managing interpersonal relationship, self-development as a leader), curriculum and pedagogic management practices (e.g. on improving teaching and learning, learning and assessment) and their organisational management practices (e.g. on research in education) were the most useful areas of development in their everyday roles and responsibilities as school leaders.

There was little significant difference evident in the results between male and female participants, therefore, except that female participants generally afforded higher scores to the aspects of leadership development associated with emotional intelligence than did their male counterparts.

Age Group Factors

The age groups of the total sample of aspiring head teachers and head teachers was (n=190) are shown (in percentages) in Table 1 of the three age groups (under 30, 30-45, over 45) aspiring heads (AHs) n=143 (28%, 58% and 14% respectively) and head teachers (HTs) n=47 (15%, 55%, 30% respectively). The aspiring head teachers, therefore, tended to be younger than the head teachers, although the most common age range for both aspiring heads and head teachers was 30-45 years.

Table 7, 8 and 9 show that respondents in all the age groups identified curriculum and pedagogic material, especially aspects relating to improving teaching and learning and learning and assessment, as particularly useful areas in their leadership development experiences. In relation to organisational management practices, however, there were some differences between the age groups with the oldest group identifying health and safety as a particularly important area for them, the middle grouping focusing on research in education and the youngest group including research in education, health and safety, and quality management in as the most useful areas in their development experiences.

Table 7
Mean Scores of Respondents less than 30 yrs of Age Views

Units of Studies	Under 30 yrs old Respondents	Mean Scores	Mean Score Interpretation
Improving Teaching	47	4.7	Strongly Agree
Improving Learning	47	4.7	Strongly Agree
Research in Education	47	4.7	Strongly Agree
Learning and Assessment	47	4.6	Strongly Agree
Health and Safety in Schools	47	4.5	Strongly Agree
Quality Management in Education	47	4.5	Strongly Agree
Learning Development	47	4.4	Agree
Financial Management	47	4.4	Agree
Working with other Agencies	47	4.3	Agree
Accountability	47	4.3	Agree
Strategic Planning	47	4.3	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	47	4.2	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	47	4.2	Agree
Sharing Vision	47	4.2	Agree
Managing Professional Development	47	4.2	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	47	4.2	Agree
Leadership in Organisation	47	4.2	Agree
ICT Management	47	4.2	Agree
Career and Counselling Management	47	4.2	Agree
Strategic Management in School	47	4.2	Agree
Self-Development of Leaders	47	4.2	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Relationships	47	4.1	Agree
Human Resource Management	47	4.1	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	47	4.1	Agree
Performance Management	47	4.1	Agree
Introduction to Public Policy in Cameroon	47	4	Agree
Using Data to raise Achievements	47	4	Agree
Distribution Leadership	47	4	Agree
Change Management	47	3.8	Agree
Policy Creation	47	3.6	Agree

Table 8
Mean Scores of Respondents who are 30-45 yrs of Age Views

Units of Studies	30 yrs-45 yrs Respondents	Mean Scores	Mean Scores Interpretations
Improving Learning	109	4.6	Strongly Agree
Improving Teaching	109	4.5	Strongly Agree
Learning and Assessment	109	4.5	Strongly Agree
Research in Education	109	4.5	Strongly Agree
Accountability	109	4.3	Agree
Quality Management in Education	109	4.3	Agree
Learning Development	109	4.3	Agree
Health and Safety in Schools	109	4.3	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	109	4.2	Agree
Performance Management	109	4.2	Agree
Working with other Agencies	109	4.2	Agree
Self-Development of Leaders	109	4.2	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	109	4.1	Agree
Sharing Vision	109	4.1	Agree
Strategic Planning	109	4.1	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Relationships	109	4.1	Agree
Managing Professional Development	109	4.1	Agree
Human Resource Management	109	4.1	Agree
Leadership in Organisation	109	4.1	Agree
ICT Management	109	4.1	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	109	4.1	Agree
Strategic Management in School	109	4.1	Agree
Distribution Leadership	109	4.1	Agree
Financial Management	109	4	Agree
Career and Counselling Management	109	4	Agree
Using Data to Raise Achievements	109	3.9	Agree
Change Management	109	3.9	Agree
Introduction to Public Policy in Cameroon	109	3.9	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	109	3.8	Agree
Policy Creation	109	3.8	Agree

Table 9
Mean Scores of Respondents above 45 yrs of Age Views

Units of Studies	45 yrs + Respondents	Mean Scores	Mean Scores Interpretations
Improving Teaching	34	4.7	Strongly Agree
Improving Learning	34	4.7	Strongly Agree
Health and Safety in schools	34	4.6	Strongly Agree
Accountability	34	4.5	Strongly Agree
Learning and Assessment	34	4.5	Strongly Agree
Leadership in Organisation	34	4.4	Agree
Quality Management in Education	34	4.4	Agree
Learning Development	34	4.4	Agree
Research in Education	34	4.3	Agree
Self-Development of Leaders	34	4.3	Agree
Financial Management	34	4.3	Agree
Sharing Vision	34	4.2	Agree
Using Data to Raise Achievements	34	4.2	Agree
Performance Management	34	4.2	Agree
ICT Management	34	4.2	Agree
Strategic Planning	34	4.1	Agree
Change Management	34	4.1	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Relationships	34	4.1	Agree
Managing Professional Development	34	4.1	Agree
Distribution Leadership	34	4.1	Agree
Human Resource Management	34	4.1	Agree
Strategic Management in School	34	4.1	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	34	4	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	34	4	Agree
Working with other Agencies	34	3.9	Agree
Career and Counselling Management	34	3.9	Agree
Introduction to Public Policy in Cameroon	34	3.9	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	34	3.9	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	34	3.9	Agree
Policy Creation	34	3.8	Agree

These findings would seem to indicate that younger and mid-career leaders are more aware of the contribution that educational research can make to their practice but they also show, however, a relative lack of concern or engagement across all age groups with issues such as public policy, organisational management ideas such as distributed leadership or change management and core educational values and such as inclusivity and community engagement.

Experience in Role Factors

Table 1 categorises the aspiring heads and head teachers by time in post (less than 5 years, 5-15 years and more than 15 years). Among aspiring heads these figures were 36%, 56% and 8%, respectively and among head teachers' 34%, 53% and 13%, respectively. Over 25% of the sample had held the position as aspiring heads *before* becoming a head teacher, with 75% serving as aspiring head teachers.

Prior to taking up headship in their current schools the majority (56%) of school leaders had not been appointed as head teachers despite having served between 5 and 15 years in schools (these were likely to be primary aspiring heads). Very few aspiring heads (8%) had worked outside of the educational sector before employed as a teacher and none outside of education for more than 15 years, compare to 13% of head teachers.

Table 10, 11 and 12 show that respondents with more than 15 years' experience and between 5 and 15 years' experience were satisfied that they had been prepared for leadership in all 30 of the aspects of leadership development listed in the questionnaire.

Table 10
Mean Scores of Respondents with less than 5 yrs Experience Views

Units of Studies	Under 5yrs Exp. Respondents	Mean Scores	Mean Scores Interpretations
Improving Teaching	68	4.6	Strongly Agree
Improving Learning	68	4.6	Strongly Agree
Health and Safety in Schools	68	4.5	Strongly Agree
Learning and Assessments	68	4.5	Strongly Agree
Research in Education	68	4.5	Strongly Agree
Learning Development	68	4.4	Agree
Strategic Planning	68	4.3	Agree
Financial Management	68	4.3	Agree
Accountability	68	4.2	Agree
Working with other Agencies	68	4.2	Agree
Self-development of Leaders	68	4.1	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	68	4.1	Agree
ICT Management	68	4.1	Agree
Leadership in Organisation	68	4.1	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Relationship	68	4.1	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	68	4.1	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	68	4.1	Agree
Sharing Vision	68	4	Agree
Human Resource Management	68	4	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	68	4	Agree
Performance Management	68	4	Agree
Career and Counselling Management	68	4	Agree
Strategic Management in School	68	4	Agree
Introduction to Public Policy in Education	68	3.9	Agree
Managing Professional Development	68	3.9	Agree
Distribution Leadership	68	3.9	Agree
Using Data to Raise Achievements	68	3.8	Agree
Quality Management in Education	68	3.7	Agree
Change Management	68	3.7	Agree
Policy Creation	68	3.3	Neutral

Table 11
Mean Scores of Respondents with 5-15 yrs Experience Views

Units of Studies	5-15 yrs Exp. Respondents	Mean Scores	Mean Scores Interpretations
Improving Learning	105	4.7	Strongly Agree
Improving Teaching	105	4.6	Strongly Agree
Learning and Assessment	105	4.5	Strongly Agree
Research in Education	105	4.5	Strongly Agree
Health and Safety in Schools	105	4.4	Agree
Accountability	105	4.4	Agree
Quality Management in Education	105	4.4	Agree
Sharing Vision	105	4.3	Agree
Strategic Planning	105	4.3	Agree
Learning Development	105	4.3	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Relationships	105	4.2	Agree
Human Resource Management	105	4.2	Agree
Leadership in Organisation	105	4.2	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	105	4.2	Agree
Working with other Agencies	105	4.2	Agree
Strategic Management in school	105	4.2	Agree
Self Development of Leader	105	4.2	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	105	4.1	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	105	4.1	Agree
Using Data to Raise Achievements	105	4.1	Agree
ICT Management	105	4.1	Agree
Change Management	105	4.1	Agree
Managing Professional Development	105	4.1	Agree
Distribution Leadership	105	4.1	Agree
Performance Management	105	4.1	Agree
Financial Management	105	4	Agree
Career and Counselling Management	105	4	Agree
Introduction to Public Policy in Cameroon	105	3.9	Agree
Legal aspects in School Management	105	3.9	Agree
Policy Creation	105	3.8	Agree

Table 12

Mean Scores of Respondents with more than 15 yrs Experience Views

Units of Studies	15 yrs + Exp. Respondents	Mean Scores	Mean Scores Interpretations
Improving Learning	17	4.6	Strongly Agree
Improving Teaching	17	4.5	Strongly Agree
Accountability	17	4.5	Strongly Agree
Learning Development	17	4.5	Strongly Agree
Self-Development of Leaders	17	4.5	Strongly Agree
Strategic Planning	17	4.4	Agree
Leadership in Organisation	17	4.4	Agree
ICT Management	17	4.4	Agree
Quality Management in Education	17	4.4	Agree
Learning and Assessment	17	4.4	Agree
Strategic Management in Schools	17	4.4	Agree
Using Data to Raise Achievements	17	4.3	Agree
Health and Safety in Schools	17	4.3	Agree
Career and Counselling Management	17	4.3	Agree
Sharing Vision	17	4.2	Agree
Managing Professional Development	17	4.2	Agree
Financial Management	17	4.2	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	17	4.2	Agree
Performance Management	17	4.2	Agree
Research in Education	17	4.2	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	17	4.1	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	17	4.1	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	17	4.1	Agree
Change Management	17	4	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Relationships	17	3.9	Agree
Distribution Leadership	17	3.9	Agree
Introduction to Public policy in Cameroon	17	3.9	Agree
Policy Creation	17	3.8	Agree
Human Resource Management	17	3.8	Agree
Working with other Agencies	17	3.6	Agree

Those with less than 5 years' experience agreed with respect to 29 of these aspects but were neutral with respect to 1 aspect (policy creation). Once again, aspects relating to improving teaching and learning and learning and assessment were cited as particularly useful, as were health and safety and research in education.

Types of School Factors

Of the questionnaire sample, just over 47% of aspiring heads and 45% of head teachers worked in private schools; 37% and 23%, respectively, in state schools and 16% and 6%, respectively, in faith schools (i.e. Catholic, Baptist, Presbyterian or Islamic).

Table 13, 14 and 15 break down the LMDQ findings by type of school and once again show a broad unanimity of response with a general level of agreement that the 30 identified aspects of leadership development were covered in their leadership training.

Table 13
Mean Scores of State school Respondents Views

Units of Studies	State Schools Respondents	Mean Score	Mean Score Interpretations
Improving Learning	76	4.6	Strongly Agree
Improving Teaching	76	4.5	Strongly Agree
Health and Safety in Schools	76	4.5	Strongly Agree
Learning and Assessment	76	4.5	Strongly Agree
Research in Education	76	4.5	Strongly Agree
Accountability	76	4.4	Agree
Quality Management in Education	76	4.4	Agree
Learning Development	76	4.4	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Relationships	76	4.3	Agree
Leadership in Organisation	76	4.3	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	76	4.3	Agree
Performance Management	76	4.3	Agree
Sharing Vision	76	4.3	Agree
Managing Professional Development	76	4.2	Agree
Distribution Leadership	76	4.2	Agree
Financial Management	76	4.2	Agree
Working with other Agencies	76	4.2	Agree
Self-Development of Leaders	76	4.2	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	76	4.1	Agree
Introduction to Public Policy in Cameroon	76	4.1	Agree
Strategic Planning	76	4.1	Agree
Change Management	76	4.1	Agree
Using Data to raise Achievements	76	4.1	Agree
Human Resources Management	76	4.1	Agree
ICT Management	76	4.1	Agree
Strategic Management in School	76	4.1	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	76	4	Agree
Policy Creation	76	3.9	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	76	3.8	Agree
Career and Counselling Management	76	3.8	Agree

Table 14
Mean Scores of Private School Respondents Views

Units of Studies	Private Schools Respondents	Mean Score	Mean Score Interpretations
Improving Teaching	88	4.7	Strongly Agree
Improving Learning	88	4.7	Strongly Agree
Learning and Assessment	88	4.5	Strongly Agree
Performance Management	88	4.5	Strongly Agree
Research in Education	88	4.5	Strongly Agree
Health and Safety in Schools	88	4.4	Agree
Accountability	88	4.4	Agree
Quality Management in Education	88	4.4	Agree
Learning Development	88	4.4	Agree
Strategic Planning	88	4.3	Agree
ICT Management	88	4.3	Agree
Self-Development of Leaders	88	4.3	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	88	4.2	Agree
Human Resources Management	88	4.1	Agree
Financial Management	88	4.1	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	88	4.1	Agree
Leadership in Organisation	88	4.1	Agree
Working with other Agencies	88	4.1	Agree
Career Counselling Management	88	4.1	Agree
Strategic Management in School	88	4.1	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	88	4.1	Agree
Sharing Vision	88	4	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Relationships	88	4	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	88	4	Agree
Managing Professional Development	88	3.9	Agree
Distribution Leadership	88	3.9	Agree
Using Data to Raise Achievements	88	3.8	Agree
Introduction to public Policy in Cameroon	88	3.8	Agree
Change Management	88	3.7	Agree
Policy Creation	88	3.7	Agree

Table 15
Mean Scores of Faith School Respondents Views

Units of Studies	Faith Schools Respondents	Mean Score	Mean Score Interpretations
Improving Learning	26	4.8	Strongly Agree
Improving Teaching	26	4.7	Strongly Agree
Health and Safety in Schools	26	4.7	Strongly Agree
Accountability	26	4.4	Agree
Sharing Vision	26	4.3	Agree
Strategic Planning	26	4.3	Agree
Change Management	26	4.3	Agree
Distribution Leadership	26	4.3	Agree
Research in Education	26	4.3	Agree
History of Education in Cameroon	26	4.2	Agree
Using Data to Raise Achievements	26	4.2	Agree
Leadership in Organisation	26	4.2	Agree
ICT Management	26	4.2	Agree
Learning and Assessment	26	4.2	Agree
Working with other Agencies	26	4.2	Agree
Career Counselling Management	26	4.2	Agree
Function of Headship in Education	26	4.1	Agree
Managing Professional Development	26	4.1	Agree
Financial Management	26	4.1	Agree
Learning Development	26	4.1	Agree
Strategic Management in School	26	4.1	Agree
Self-Development of Leaders	26	4	Agree
Quality Management in Education	26	4	Agree
Performance Management	26	4	Agree
Human Resources Management	26	4	Agree
Introduction to Public Policy in Cameroon	26	4	Agree
Managing Interpersonal Relationships	26	3.9	Agree
School Community Relationship Management	26	3.9	Agree
Legal Aspects in School Management	26	3.9	Agree
Policy creation	26	3.7	Agree

The curriculum and pedagogic aspects of improving teaching and learning and learning and assessment, and the organisational spheres of health and safety and research in education were again scored most highly by respondents when the results were broken down by type of school for developing their leadership qualities and school within the educational system.

The only real difference in LMDQ results by school type was that state school participants seemed to view organisational management factors (e.g. on strategic management in schools, history of education in Cameroon, policy creation, legal aspects in school management and career counselling management) more favourably than their counterparts in private and faith schools, perhaps reflecting their closer engagement with public policy demands.

Summary

In many respects the results from the LMDQ, however they are broken down, present a consistent picture. Each of the 30 aspects of leadership development contained in the questionnaire is recorded as useful, to greater or lesser degrees, by respondents, however those respondents are categorised. That said, if we investigate a little deeper some interesting conclusions can be drawn. Consistently the most highly ranked leadership development aspects were those relating to teaching and learning, learning and assessment, health and safety and research in education.

In this regard, both head teachers and aspiring head teachers appeared to particularly value training that they saw as developing their skills in direct teaching activities and in obvious pastoral responsibilities (e.g. health and safety responsibilities). In contrast, a range of other leadership development aspects appeared to be less highly valued. These aspects included distributed leadership, change management, policy creation, using data to raise achievement, quality management in education, financial management, career and counselling management, introduction to public policy in Cameroon and legal aspects in school management.

What is striking about these findings is that although Cameroon's school system is operating in a time of fast-changing resources, responsibilities and expectations, many current and aspiring school leaders apparently retain a relatively narrow understanding of the role of a school leader. In this respect the findings from the LMDQ suggest that it would be worthwhile exploring through the more qualitative research tools the extent to which school leaders recognise that modern school leadership requires a much broader portfolio of skills than simply good teaching and pastoral skills, and how this broader portfolio might be developed in a context such as in Cameroon.

Discussion of the Findings

Leadership and Management Development Programmes

The findings from the LMDQ will be discussed briefly in respect to the individual variables highlighted in the previous section before a more extended conclusion exploring the validity of this aspect of the study.

Aspiring Heads and Head Teachers Background Factors

If the LMDQ results are broken down by job-role (i.e. head teachers and aspiring head teachers) it is evident that there was a clear progression in the results from the more practically orientated areas of teaching practice (curriculum and pedagogic management) to the more policy orientated areas with those that were progressively more policy orientated (organisation management), scoring progressively lower (Table 3 and 4).

This tends to conform with the other evidence presented in literature regarding the prominent role of on-the-job-training as a mechanism for leadership development in Cameroonian schools (Akoulouze et al., 1999). Scholarly research suggests that on-the-job-training tends to favour the development of practical skills and that, while African educational systems tend towards an on-the-job-training model, higher level organisation skills tend to suffer in this approach (Akoulouze et al., 1999; Kolb, 1998; Collins, 2002; Lewis and Murphy, 2008; Brundrett, 2002; Bush and Oduro, 2006; Bush et al., 2007). Similarly, Lumby et al. (2008) suggest that there is a need for schools and educational systems in African countries to encourage more distributional leadership and these areas of practice also scored relatively less well compared to the rest of the study units .

Gender Factors

If the LMDQ results are analysed according to the gender of the respondents the major difference evident in the responses relates to the extent to which leadership training in Cameroon supports self-development and the management of interpersonal relationships. Female respondents consistently ranked these aspects of leadership development more highly than their male counterparts (see Table 5 and 6). As Earley et al. (2002) and Rhodes et al. (2009) have pointed out; understanding gender differences in respect to leadership can allow for a better understanding of school leaders' leadership development and thus enable development programmes to be better tailored to different needs. In the case of the evidence from Cameroon, it would seem that any new leadership development framework needs to take fuller account of how male school leaders understand and process the role of training in regard to enhancing their own self-development practices and enhancing their management of interpersonal relationships in a school context. Further research needs to be conducted to understand these differences more completely.

Summary

Although the above discussion has shown that some useful insights could be gathered from the LMDQ survey, overall, the survey proved to be of limited value. In general, the results showed little distinction when analysed according to most of the analytical variables. In other words, there were relatively few significant differences in outcomes in the assessment of the 30 units of study (i.e. a relatively small range of results) and, with the exceptions discussed in the preceding two sections, there were no significant differences when the data was analysed by the other targeted factors (i.e. by age group, by experience in role and by school type). The LMDQ was modelled on a questionnaire used in the context of a functional leadership development training programme in Cameroon (Akoulouze et al, 1999); the UK (Rhodes et al., 2009) and Malaysia (Singh, 2009) – i.e. seeking feedback from participants in programmes with a defined programme of study.

It may be that this format did not transfer well to the less structured leadership development context in Cameroon, where, as we have seen, there is no such structured programme (GESp, 2010). In this context, respondents may not have identified clearly with the units cited in the questionnaire and this may explain the lack of clarity or variation in the results. It may also be the case that cultural factors played apart (Huber and Davies, 1997; Bush and Oduro, 2006). The similarity in outcomes across all the possible analytical groups and the fact that units were consistently ranked highly are particularly striking aspects of the questionnaire findings and it is reasonable that this was due, in part, to a reluctance to be seen to be critical (even though every effort was made to ensure that respondents understood that the questionnaires were anonymous). To the author's knowledge the survey undertaken in this study was the first attempt to apply systematic LMDQ survey methods to understand attitudes to school leadership development programmes in sub-Saharan Africa. Although some suggestive findings were brought together in relation to a greater identification with practical outcomes as opposed to organisational and policy outcomes, and in relation to gender differences, it is clear that, overall, further research is required to explore how best to conduct this kind of survey in an African educational context.

Conclusions and Recommendation

The case-study has generated information that contributes to the existing body of knowledge pertaining to the assessment of the leadership preparation and management development programmes in preparing aspiring heads for successful school leadership. In particular, it greatly extends the current knowledge relating to school leadership preparation in Cameroon and makes recommendations as to how aspiring heads and head teachers in Cameroon could be better developed. Limitations of this study will be made explicit and areas for further research will also be explored in this chapter.

Contributions to Knowledge

Leadership and Management Development Programmes

This study represents a first attempt in scholarship to employ a LMDQ methodology in a Cameroonian (and African) context – providing valuable lessons as to the benefits and flaws of this approach in this cultural context. The outcomes of the LMDQ demonstrated relatively few significant differences in the data when it was analysed by age group, experience in role and school type factors. Overall, although there were limitations in the use of the particular LMDQ design employed in this study (which we argue was a consequence of the cultural context) the LMDQ results do contribute to overall knowledge in that they show the need for central agencies to design, deliver and administer structures that engage school leaders into a leadership culture, and that the needs of the participants of those programmes may vary according to their experience and gender. In particular, the LMDQ showed that in Cameroon currently, most school leaders identified more with practical outcomes as opposed to organisational and policy outcomes in leadership development programmes and this suggests that consideration needs to be given to how the latter elements could be made more relevant to participants.

Limitations of the Research

As with any piece of research this study has a number of limitations. One inevitable limitation lies in the choice of participants – both in terms of the mix of representatives of different school leader respondents. A different mix in each case could potentially influence the outcomes. Also, the research did not attempt to solicit responses from external stakeholders (parents, children, community figures, educational experts or commentators). While to do so would have significantly complicated the methodology (beyond what could be sustained by a single researcher) the possibility that such external stakeholder input might have influenced the outcomes cannot be discounted.

The LMDQ data should act as a more anonymous and quantitative counterbalance to the qualitative aspects of the research. In retrospect, this did not fully succeed. The use of a model for assessing leadership development programmes that was developed in a context of a Western country with a functioning leadership development programme did not transfer seamlessly into the educational context in Cameroon. Responses to the questions did not show much differentiation, which made useful analysis very difficult. This may have been because respondents did not identify with the different categories of leadership learning (i.e. the categories chosen did not “mean” much in a Cameroonian context and in a situation where there was no existing formal training programme).

Suggestions for Further Research

The final section suggests potential avenues for further research. This research project is essentially groundwork – in the sense it is trying to establish a basis of understanding about what the situation is in Cameroon in order to begin to develop a way forward.

Of course, at a later stage, there will be a need for research into the details of how a Cameroonian leadership development process is implemented and what its content might be; right now though that is a very long way off; therefore the immediate future research needs are more related to clarifying outstanding issues with this “groundwork” basis of understanding, issues that have been thrown up by this research or which have not been fully addressed in this research. These include:

- Research taking account of views from other stakeholders;
- Research into the extent to which school leaders in Cameroon experience the full range of leadership development opportunities (i.e. what the proportions of current leadership development opportunities are);
- Research into how to tailor LMDQ methodologies to contexts such as in Cameroon.

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