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Evaluating the Perception of the Education Stakeholders of the South West and Littoral Regions for Curricular Intervention of Peace Education in Basic Education to Foster Peace and Social Internal Cohesion in Cameroon.

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ABSTRACT

This paper explored the perception of stakeholders on curricular intervention of peace education in Basic Education in order to foster peace and social internal cohesion in Cameroon based on the two education sub systems. The peace education curriculum will equip the pupils with the fundamental peace knowledge, skills, and values to bring about discipline and mitigate violence and foster social internal cohesion. Thus, the study sort to evaluate the perception of education stakeholders for curricular intervention of peace education in Cameroon's basic education to foster peace and social internal cohesion. The design adopted for the study was an exploratory sequential research design. The population of the study was made up of all primary school teachers, head teachers, curriculum experts, peace experts and traditional rulers of Fako and Wouri Divisions of the South West and Littoral Regions of Cameroon. A sample of 95 respondents made up the study. The instruments used for data collection was perception rating scale and an interview. The instruments were validated by experts and key informants. Reliability coefficient of the perception rating scale was calculated using Cronbarch Alpha and it was 0.77. Methods of data analysis was descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings revealed that the stakeholders of education from the two sub systems perceive a strong effect for curricular intervention of peace education in basic education to foster peace and social internal cohesion in Cameroon. We therefore recommend that peace education curriculum be introduced in basic education in Cameroon. Secondly, Teacher's training colleges should train teachers on how to effectively implement peace education curriculum in primary schools. Meanwhile teachers who are already in the field should be given in-service training on the teaching of peace education.

Key words: Curricular intervention, education stakeholders, peace education, basic education, social internal cohesion

1.0. Introduction

Peace is sacrosanct for a country to develop (Tanju, 2020), alleviate poverty, fight corruption, create employment, live in harmony and promote social internal cohesion. Education is key to changing old habits and moulding young minds. Moreover, the impact of education depends on its instruction or better still what is known as the curriculum. Oru (2021) opined that the most critical place to promote peace education in Cameroon is the school. Cohan & Howlett (2017) as cited in Tangwe (2023) added that in that light, school educators to develop instruction, curriculum, and school life as the basis for teaching peace education. According to Tambo (2012) and Abdul-Wahab (2013), education is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes for creating an atmosphere of peace within the individual or for achieving inner peace. This implies that peace education can be introduced in primary schools as a separate subject from citizenship so that a good foundation of peace knowledge, values, skills and a change of behaviour can be laid as the pupils climb the education ladder. In primary schools in Cameroon, peace education is enshrined in the citizenship education curriculum as a broad field. Due to this, it is not taught in-depth to the pupils so as to lay a solid foundation for making the pupils to develop critical thinking, creative thinking and problem-solving skills to become peace builders and peace-makers, in their schools and the communities in general.

Maria Montessori opines that "establishing lasting peace is the work of education; what politics can do is to keep us out of war". Going by this statement, for effective peace to actually gain grounds in Cameroon, it is mandatory that peace be taught effectively beginning from the basic education to the higher levels. Thus, introducing peace education curriculum in primary schools is important to lay in the minds of these pupils the spirit of peace, unity, social internal cohesion (Dze-Ngwa, 2014), conflict resolution techniques, and the habit of living together despite the differences in identities, ideologies, and backgrounds. In Cameroon today, peace has been jeopardized and it is therefore imperative to go back to the drawing board from an elementary level and construct the minds of pupils for future lasting peace.

Furthermore, Cameroonians cannot remain complacent when the world is advocating for peace through education. This is because human and material resources are wasted, indiscipline is rampant, atmosphere of insecurity is increasing, frustration, instability, moral decadence, juvenile delinquency are

rife in communities and schools in particular leading to ineffective teaching and learning processes (Ngwokabuenui, 2015). This results in learners' poor academic performance and achievement.

Despite the fact that peace education has been enshrined in citizenship education at the basic and secondary school curriculum, it has been observed that pupils and students do not have sufficient fundamental practical knowledge about peace, skills, strategies, principles, values to be able to tolerate, cooperate and collaborate to foster peace in schools and community's despite in their diversity. The main consequence of this is the rampant indiscipline in primary schools that shows full manifestation in secondary schools. Many researchers and scholars have articulated this indiscipline and other unorthodox practices by pupils and students to be the lack of effective teaching of peace education in schools in Cameroon as a subject (Dze-Ngwa, 2014). This paper therefore seeks to evaluate the perception of the education stakeholders of the South West and Littoral regions for curricular intervention of peace education in basic education to foster peace and social internal cohesion in Cameroon. Peace education equips the pupils with the fundamental peace knowledge, skills and values to curb indiscipline, deconstruct pupils' minds towards violence and joining extremism groups and inculcate the spirit of fostering social internal cohesion. The paper is informed by this fundamental research question: what is the perception of education stakeholders in Cameroon based on the two sub systems of education to equip the pupils with practical knowledge of peace, love, tolerance to curb in discipline, violence and foster social internal cohesion in Cameroon?

2.0. Review of Related Literature

2.1. Curriculum

Many scholars have different definitions and viewpoints about the word 'curriculum'. However, Curriculum according to Onwuka (1981) as cited in Agborbechem (2016) is a structured series of intended learning experiences. In that light the curriculum has a central position in the educational process. In the traditional sense, curriculum is the number of subjects such as Mathematics, English, Geography just to name a few that must be taken by students. A curriculum can be for a single subject or for all the subjects and with other extracurricular activities of an institution. Wiyono (2018) argues that the curriculum is also interpreted as an educational program that is planned and executed to achieve the goal of education in schools. In the modern sense, the curriculum is all the learning experiences provided for learners under the responsibility of the school. Thus, the development of students' competencies is determined by the curriculum (Agborbechem, 2016). If the curriculum has good contents that are relevant to the needs and development of society, it will be able to be a means for educating learners to be qualified human resources for the aspirations of the community (Endeley & Zama, 2021). In this case the peace curriculum is contextualized as a subject known as peace education which is expected that upon implementation, the pupils should be equipped with knowledge of peace, skills, values and change in behaviour that will mitigate indiscipline and bring about social internal cohesion in the school milieu and the society at large.

2.3. Peace Education

Clarke-Habibi (2019) lamented that, peace building through education should be distinguished from peace education. The expression peace education refers to particular curricula, pedagogies, and practices aimed at cultivating in students the knowledge, values, attitudes, skills, and behaviours that are conducive to peaceful and violence-free communities. Peace education is one strategy to promote a culture of peace. The social context, culture, needs and aspirations of a country greatly affect the peace education system in that place. Cultural, religious and humanitarian values are very important in peace education are equally very vital. However, any country has her own ideology, goals, curriculum, content and practice of implementing peace education.

Cameroon is a pluralistic society, comprising various tribes, languages, cultures, and diversity because it consists of various religions and beliefs. Cameroon's diversity is a potential source of friction, conflict. In varying degrees, there are often tribal, intercultural, and religious conflicts. In the school milieu learners express behaviours in the form of indiscipline and violence behaviour which requires that their minds need to be deconstructed and constructed toward peace in school and the society. This is to justify the need of peace curriculum in Cameroon starting from the primary school. Furthermore, empirical studies reveal that Cameroon needs peaceful education. It is the wish of Cameroonians that peace should return to all areas of Cameroon both schools and the society (Mbatna & Daquin, 2022). However, it is observed by these researchers that Promoting peace education and peace-building appears to be the best alternative in Cameroon to foster long lasting peace and promote social internal cohesion.

2.4. Perception of Education Stakeholders and Curricular Intervention

Educational stakeholders are those people in the society that are involved in the promotion of education activities (Gamede & Uleanya, 2021) directly or in directly. In this context, they are teachers, head teachers, parents, parent-teacher associations, traditional rulers such as chiefs or fons. These are a group people that represent the people. They can equally be referred to as the key informants. This is because whatever decision they take for their people it is considered final and will be respected and accepted by all because it is their representative. However, perception refers to feelings, opinions (Tchombe, 2019) an individual has toward something. The respondents of this gave their own opinion with respect to the introduction of peace education in primary schools as a subject to foster in social internal cohesion (cohabitation) in Cameroon.

Cameroon for the past years have suffered frequent land conflicts, such as inter and extra ethnic conflicts (the Mbororos and the local elites), chieftaincy disputes, land grabbing, cocoa famers and the Anglophone separatist conflict, Boko Haram insurgency in the far North of Cameroon, rebel attacks and

kidnappings in the North and East of Cameroon from Central African Republic, and state-civilian conflict and multiparty politics and indigene-settler squabbles. This shows that, the whole nation of Cameron needs a holistic education system that can succinctly teach peace to deconstruct and construct the minds of learners towards peace, love, unity, tolerant and promote social internal cohesion.

2.4.1. Reasons for Peace Education Curriculum at the Basic Education in Cameroon

- To develop in the pupils the disposition and confidence as agents of peace who can leave in harmony with oneself, others and the natural environment as well as promote peace, human right and democracy in the society (Akudolu, 2010 as cited in Olowo, 2016).

- To make pupils aware of the basis of conflict, violence and how to resolve conflict in anon-violence way in their daily lives in school and their communities.

- To equip the pupils with the fundamental knowledge, skills, values of peace building, peace-making, conflict resolution, avoidance of violence and inculcate in them the spirit of being agents of peace as they climb the educational ladder (Aguba, 2010).

- To start practicing love, harmony and co-existence as they grow and to foster social internal cohesion (Dze-Ngwa, 2014).

- To build in the minds of pupils that war, violence, conflict and retard human growth and development.

- To prepare the pupils to become good citizens of their communities, nations, and the world with skills to promote peace and human dignity at all levels of interaction.

2.5. Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching Peace Education in Primary Schools in Cameroon

Peace education is not supposed to be taught like any other subject in primary schools to construct the young minds about the importance and practiced of peace that lead to social cohesion, harmony and tranquillity. This pedagogic strategies of teaching peace education should be holistic, participatory, cooperative, experiential and humanistic (Subramanian, 2016). Tufon (2011) have outlined some strategies for teaching peace education in schools as follows:

Brainstorming

Brainstorming encourages a high degree of participation, and it stimulates those involved to maximum creativity.

Case Studies

Pupils in small groups are allowed to explore the in depth of the problem (Creswell, 2012) with real or fictional cases that require them to work apply peace principles. Case studies should be based on credible and realistic scenarios that focus on two or three main issues.

Discussion

Many techniques exist for stimulating meaningful discussion in pairs, small groups, paired group or the whole class. To create an environment of trust and respect, pupils might develop their own approach to the discussion. Discussions can be structured in a variety of effective ways depending on the teacher.

Problem Based Learning

This is a situation whereby the pupils are put in a problem-solving situation in the class or school or community that requires practical solution. This introduces the pupils to a structured way of resolving interpersonal conflicts that is applicable to a variety of situations. In this case the pupils are allow to identify a problem, define the problem, brainstorm on the problem, provide possible solutions, evaluate the solutions, Decide on the best solution.

Cooperative Learning

According to Lawyer (2020), it is a type of learning whereby pupils do not only learn academic subject matter but also interpersonal and small group skills. The pupils are assigning of roles in order to solve problems. Cooperative learning involves the sharing of the students in a group of at least six. Within this group pupils learn to make peace with one another and respect member's viewpoints in the learning process.

Field Trips/Community Visits

Pupils benefit from the extension of school into the community, learning from places where peace issues are developed (for example. courts, prisons, international borders, palaces, achieves and edifices just to name a few) or where people work to defend rights or relieve victims (for instance non-profit organizations, food or clothing banks, free clinics).

Projects Based Learning

Peace topics provide many opportunities for pupils' voices to be heard and observe how they make voice during independent or group investigation (Lawyer, 2020). This may be based on interviews, opinion surveys, media observations and other techniques of data gathering. Whether individual or

group projects, research develop skills for independent thinking and data analysis and deepen understanding of the complexity of peace issues. This enables the pupils to be able to gather information about peace issues analyse before taking any decision.

Role-plays/Simulations

A role-play is like a little drama played out before the class. It is largely improvised and may be done as a story (with a narrator and key characters) or as a situation where the key characters interact, making up dialogue on the spot. This will be with the help of the teacher and the rest of the class).

Use of Resource Persons

These are people who are endowed with knowledge about peace education. It is important that these persons be invited from time to time to share their experience with the pupils in class or school milieu. The class can still decide to visit these persons in their offices or homes as they give talks to the pupils on certain peace issues. These people might just be acting as role models to the pupils.

2.6. Statement of the Problem

Cameroonians cannot remain complacent when the world is advocating for peace through education. This is because large human and material resources are wasted, indiscipline is rampant, atmosphere of insecurity is increasing, frustration, instability, moral decadence, juvenile delinquency are everywhere in the national triangle and schools in particular leading to ineffective teaching and learning process (Ngwokabuenui, 2015) resulting ineffective social internal cohesion in the society. Primary school through its curriculum is the bed rock of change of every solid foundation of deconstructing and reconstructing the mind-set for a change in the society.

Despite the fact that peace education has been enshrined in citizenship education its impact is yet to be felt by the pupils and the society at large. It has been observed that pupils and students' do not have sufficient fundamental practical peace knowledge, skills, strategies, principles, values to be able to tolerate, cooperate and collaborate with one another in order to foster peace in school and community despite their identities, diversities, philosophies, backgrounds, ideologies and misunderstanding. The main consequence of this is the rampant indiscipline in primary and secondary schools, and the manipulation of the pupils, students and young Cameroonians for the destabilisation of peace and social internal cohesion in Cameroon by unscrupulous individuals. Many researchers and scholars have articulated this indiscipline and other unorthodox practices by pupils and student to lack of peace education in schools' curricula in Cameroon as a subject (Dze-Ngwa, 2014). It is against this backdrop that this study sort to evaluate the perception of the education stakeholders of the south west and littoral regions for curricular intervention of peace education in Basic Education to foster peace and social internal cohesion in Cameroon based on the two sub systems of education.

2.7. Objective of the Study

To evaluate the perception of education stakeholders for curricular intervention of peace education in Cameroon's basic education to foster peace and social internal cohesion.

2.8. Hypothesis of the Study

Education stakeholders do not have a significant perception on curricular intervention of peace education in Cameroon's basic education to foster social internal cohesion.

3.0. Methodology

This study employed a mixed methods approach. The design adopted for the study was an exploratory sequential research design. The population of the study was made up of all stakeholders of education such as primary school teachers of level 3, head teachers, curriculum designers and developers, peace experts and traditional rulers of Fako and Worri Divisions of the South West and Littoral Regions of Cameroon. The study sample was 95 respondents. Instruments for data collection were an interview and peace perception rating scale. The instruments were validated by experts and key informants. The reliability coefficient of the perception rating scale was 0.77 calculated using Alpha Cronbarch. Multistage sapling technique was used to select the respondents of the study. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

4.0. Presentation of Finding

Evaluating the perception of education stakeholders for curricular intervention of peace education in Cameroon's basic education to foster social internal cohesion.

The data collected for this objective is presented on table 1.

Table 1

Overall Stakeholder's Perception on Curricular Intervention of Peace Education as a Subject in Primary Schools to foster Peace and Social Internal Cohesion

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation
Introducing peace education curriculum in primary schools can enhance social cohesion in Cameroon.	38 (63.3%)	17 (28.3%)	3 (5.0%)	2 (3.3%)	3.52	.748
Effective teaching of peace education in primary schools can bring about social cohesion in Cameroon.	39 (56.0%)	17 (28.3%)	1 (1.7%)	3 (5.0%)	3.53	.769
Do to the fact that peace education curriculum is not in primary schools; social cohesion has been a problem in Cameroon.	41 (68.3%)	14 (23.3%)	4 (6.7%)	1 (1.7%)	3.58	.696
For future peace and living together in Cameroon peace education curriculum should not be introduced in primary schools in Cameroon.	28 (46.7%)	6 (10.0%)	12 (20.0%)	14 (23.3%)	2.80	1.260
When pupils learn to live together in schools then they can easily transfer the notion into the communities where they live.	48 (80.0%)	11 (18.3%)	1 (1.7%)	0 (0.0%)	3.78	.454
Introducing peace education curriculum in primary school will equip the pupils with skills, values and knowledge of living together despite their backgrounds and diversities.	44 (73.3%)	12 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (6.7%)	3.60	.807
Peace education curriculum in primary schools is one of the basic requirements for social cohesion in Cameroon.	46 (76.7%)	12 (20.0%)	1 (1.7%)	1 (1.7%)	3.72	.585
Peace education curriculum should not be introduced in primary school because the pupils do not know anything about social cohesion.	3 (5.0%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (11.7%)	50 (83.3%)	1.27	.710
The primary school curriculum is overloaded so to introduce peace education curriculum in primary school is a waste of time.	17 (28.3%)	9 (15.0%)	9 (15.0%)	25 (41.7%)	2.30	1.280
Introducing peace education curriculum in primary schools has nothing to do with social cohesion in Cameroon.	29 (48.3%)	6 (10.0%)	11 (18.3%)	14 (23.3%)	2.83	1.264
Introducing peace education curriculum in primary schools can help in uniting Cameroonians the more.	44 (73.3%)	16 (26.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.73	.446
Cameroonians do not freely interact with one another; everywhere in the country thus they need to be educated about peace education.	45 (75.0%)	13 (21.7%)	1 (1.7%)	1 (1.7%)	3.70	.591
All the crises, hate speech, xenophobia experience in Cameroon can be attributed to the ineffective teaching of peace education in Cameroon schools.	33 (55.0%)	25 (41.7%)	1 (1.7%)	1 (1.7%)	3.50	.624
Multiple Responses Set (MRS)	**455 (58.3%)**	**158 (20.3%)**	**51 (6.5%)**	**116 (14.9%)**	**3.22**	**0.787**

n=60

In general, cumulative findings of the items showed that a majority of the respondents (78.6%) with an overall mean of 3.22 on a scale of 1-4 accepted that introducing peace education into primary school curriculum can foster social internal cohesion meanwhile (21.4%) of them denied.

Table 2

Comparing the Stakeholders' Perception on the Introduction of Peace Education as a Subject in Primary Schools to foster Peace and Social Internal Cohesion

Education Sub Systems	Stakeholders by Position		Perception about curricular intervention of peace education in Basic Education		Total based on MRS
			Perceived to foster social internal cohesion	Do not perceived to foster social internal cohesion	
Anglophone	Teachers	N	83	47	130
		%	63.8%	36.2%	
	Head teachers	N	47	18	65
		%	72.3%	27.7%	
	Parents	N	109	34	143
		%	76.2%	23.8%	
Francophone	Teachers	N	99	18	117
		%	84.6%	15.4%	
	Head teachers	N	55	10	65
		%	84.6%	15.4%	
	Parents	N	220	40	260
		%	84.6%	15.4%	

As presented on table 2, with regards to the Anglophone sub-system, 63.8% of the teachers, 72.3% of the head teachers and 76.2% of the parents accepted the introduction of peace education to bring discipline and social cohesion. Also, in the Francophone sub-system, 84.6% of the teachers, 84.6% of the head teachers and 84.6% of parents of equal proportion accepted the introduction of peace education to bring discipline and social internal cohesion. However, respondents from the Francophone sub-system of education dominated that of the Anglophone sub system of education. Figure 1 further presents the information on bar chart for clarity.

Figure 1

Comparing Stakeholder's Perception on Introducing Peace Education as a Subject in Primary Schools According to Education Sub Systems
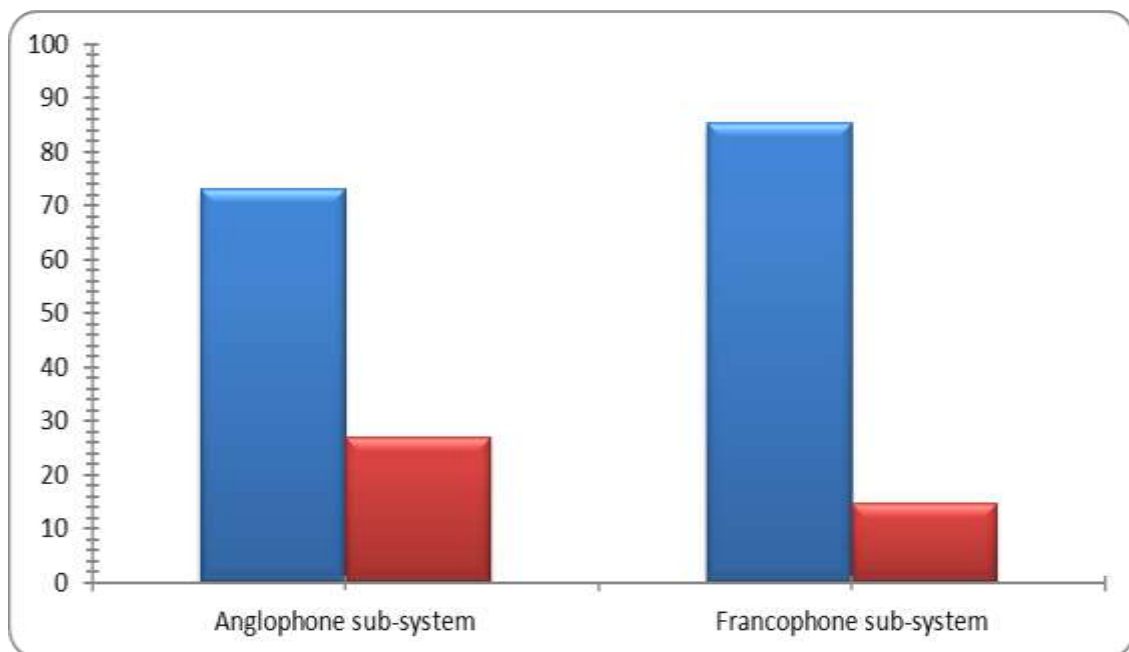
Figure 1 compares the stakeholder's perception for the introduction of peace education as a subject in primary schools to promote peace and social internal cohesion, findings show that more of the respondents from the Francophone sub-system of education (85.3%) were in acceptance to this assertion more than those from the Anglophone sub-system of education (73.0%).

Testing of Hypothesis

The hypothesis states that education stakeholders do not significantly perceive that curricular intervention of peace education in basic education can foster peace and social internal cohesion in Cameroon. Table 3 presents the statistical testing of the hypothesis.

Table 3

Likelihood Ratio Test Significantly Depicting the Education Stakeholders Perception

Model	Model Fitting Information				Pseudo R-Square
	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests			
	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	Df	P-value	
Intercept Only	53.135				
					.863
Final	**1.386**	**51.749**	**34**	**.026**	

Statistically, findings showed that the basic education stakeholders significantly do perceive that curricular intervention of peace education in basic education can significantly foster peace social internal cohesion (Chi-Square = 51.749, df= 34, P= 0.026, < 0.05) and this is also supported with a high R-squared value of 0.863. In other words, this implies that curricular intervention of peace education has a strong implication on peace and social internal cohesion.

Qualitative Data Patterning to Evaluating the Perception of Education Stakeholders for Curricular intervention of Peace Education in Cameroon's Basic Education to Foster Peace and Social Internal Cohesion

The qualitative data was obtained from curriculum experts, peace experts and traditional rulers. The qualitative findings are presented according to themes as follows:

Relevance and Feasibility of the Perceived Curriculum

The respondents (peace experts, parent teacher's association presidents, head teachers, curriculum experts) were of the opinion that introducing peace education curriculum at the basic education was relevant. Some of the respondents solicited that the topics should be relevant and explicit enough to equip the pupils with knowledge, skills, values of peace and to lay the foundation of social internal cohesion in the pupils which can be practice in the society. However, they suggested that if the following topics were injected into the curriculum it would make in more relevant to meet the challenges of today's and the future challenges of peace and security in the country:

"... Protection; protecting oneself and others, protecting school property, protecting community and the environment, importance of peace in school, at home and in the community, ... role of peace education in promoting peace, cultural heritage with respect to peace, peaceful co-existence in schools, community and society, peace and solidarity in schools, community and society, living in unity and good neighbourliness in the community and society, and communal life education; being there for one another in times of joy and sorrow...".

In relation to the attainment of the objectives of the curriculum, several opinions of the respondents came up. Respondent A, a curriculum expert outlined that:

"The curriculum should be made more practical by the teachers. For that reason, primary school teachers need to be equipped with necessary knowledge and skills in order to teach this subject; this can be done through workshops, seminars and other forms of training for effective teaching of peace education in schools".

Another curriculum expert B on her part recounted that this curriculum should be well designed just like any other school didactic material. She went further and reiterated that if the objectives of this curriculum is to be achievable:

"The government should incorporate peace education experts to train teachers on the teaching of peace for effective implementation of this curriculum; the respondent further reiterated that; we need peace education in our system more than ever before".

Respondent Y a peace expert was of the opinion that: "peace education should be included in public examinations like First School Leaving Certificate". In the same vein, Respondent X a curriculum designer and developer added that "peace education should be taught in all the classes. He further added that the implementation of this curriculum should be followed by the classroom teachers and strictly supervised by head teachers".

When this question was asked, "what other suggestions do you have for the objectives of this curriculum to be realized in primary schools in Cameroon? Another curriculum expert Y, enumerated that:

"The teaching of peace education should not take a normal teaching like other subjects in the primary school curriculum instead the approach should be more of a role play, dramatization, problem solving, project base learning, cooperative and collaborative learning and discussion…".

Another curriculum expert C on his part suggested that:

"…The curriculum in teacher training colleges should be revamped in order to train the teachers on how to teach peace education practically in primary schools. Teachers should be motivated to implement this instruction/curriculum that requires a lot of practical activities and time".

Interview with Traditional Rulers (Chiefs)

The traditional rulers (chiefs) are the liaison between the people and the government. They are the custodian of the land. Some of the major roles of traditional rulers in their area of jurisdiction is to maintain peace, justice and settle disputes between his/her subjects and foster social internal cohesion. The chiefs also represent the people that they govern in public ceremonies. These two groups of people are also part of the education stakeholders.

Based on the interview with the traditional rulers (chiefs), they had their views as far as the perception of education stakeholders for curricular intervention of peace education in Cameroon's basic education to foster peace and social internal cohesion is concern. These interviews were to corroborate with the quantitative findings of the study. The following themes where drawn from their interview:

Peaceful Cohabitation in the Community

Traditional Ruler A explained that:

"We have been witnessing all these aspect in our children and we have been wondering what the schools have been doing. In the society these children are very arrogant, disobedient and this has been worrisome to us as parent and me in particular as traditional ruler. The worse is the frequent attack of students on their fellow mates and teachers that has been alarming in secondary schools. We are all afraid if nothing is done then our future Cameroon will not be a place to live in. Elders in my community hardly freely interact with each, these is because of the type of words they used on 'strangers' ".

Traditional Ruler B further narrated that:

"The children nowadays do not respect their elders, they involve in several acts of juvenile delinquencies, drugs and unorthodox activities. I presume our society is experiencing much chaos today because our children of yesteryears were not imbibed with the fundamentals of peace making and peace building knowledge, skills and values in the primary schools. As a community leader when I witness that a child/youth is recalcitrant in my community, I summon him/her and the parents to my notables. They will invite the child and the parents in question and reprimand the child. If he/she does not listen we will hand him/her to the law enforcement officer so that law can take its course. However, elderly people in my community are friendly but one cannot say with certainty that they are leaving at peace with each other. They gossip, belittle one another and use a lot of derogatory sentences to each other. These are not the indicators of peaceful cohabitation".

Peace Education as a Subject in Primary Schools

All the traditional rulers affirm that peace education should be introduced as a subject in primary school to lay the foundation of peace at the basic level to construct the minds of the pupils who will further demonstrate that good attitude and behaviour in their various communities. They were all of the opinion that through peace education in primary schools and other levels of education, peace and internal social cohesion can be strengthened in the national triangle. According to traditional ruler A, he had this to say thus:

"… I think peace education as a subject was supposed to be introduced in our primary schools' curriculum since the colonial era. Peace education is very important just like mathematics, English and other subjects. If pupils are equipped with knowledge, skills and attitudes to make peace amongst themselves this will be extended into the society where they live and the future will be more peaceful than today. The irony is that our colonial masters did not want us to live as one and think as one and finally turned our backs against them. In my opinion, I think that introducing peace education as a subject in primary schools is laudable and timely as in future the youths will not be manipulated by politicians to settle their scores. This will bring about internal social cohesion in future. Many countries in the world are teaching peace education in their primary schools as a means to render their country peaceful why not Cameroon and Africa as a whole?"

Traditional Ruler B came up and posits that:

"I agree with the point that if peace education is introduced in primary school as a subject, it is going to minimise violence, conflict in school and the society. I believe strongly that in future the society will not experience some of these conflicts and violence we are experiencing today. This will in a nutshell enhance internal social cohesion. This is because primary school is the foundation of education and the instrument of change in a society. Furthermore, introducing peace education in primary schools is one of the means of building peace in our country and the community. Thus, introducing

peace education as a subject in primary school is very important in this era where pupils, students and youths exercise lot of indiscipline in our community".

Relationship of Cameroonians before Crises

To substantiate the opinion of these chiefs, a second question was asked to find out whether before the numerous crises there was social internal cohesion in our communities. The respondents narrated their take on that question thus. Chief A said:

"...I have work in most parts of this country, and in my opinion I observed that people segregate from each other in terms of religions, tribes and backgrounds, in the north you hear 'gadamayaus', in the centre you have 'le bamenda', in the south west you hear 'ngraffi', 'bamenda man', 'came no go' and so on. These expressions still exist in our communities and it shows that people cannot interact with others freely when other class of people look down on them and give them names. In conclusion before the numerous crises we have today, our relationship was characterized with a lot of conflicts, tribalism, nepotism and discrimination...".

Chief B on his part had this to say,

"since independent, the Cameroonian people have never freely interact with each other in many parts of this country, however, when the economic crises started in the nighty's till date, there have been a lot of violence, internal war and conflict amongst the Cameroonians people and that has been glaring in the South West, North West, Littoral, centre and the Northern Regions, this has indirectly affected internal cohesion and peace cohabitation in Cameroon...".

Hate Speech and Xenophobic Attitudes

The traditional rulers on their parts all agreed that they have witness hate speech and xenophobic attitudes portrayed by some unscrupulous individuals in their communities. Traditional Ruler B put forward that:

"As a traditional ruler, I see people speaking bad against each other, some give names to others, some even intoxicate other's minds and make lives difficult for their fellow humans through the use of treats and hate speech. As a traditional ruler, a community is a habitat for everyone who obeys the roles and regulations put in place by members of that community. I always caution people who practice hate speech or express xenophobic attitudes in the open or over the social media whenever I discover them. Cameroon government is strongly against all what you have mentioned in your question".

Based on the interview responses from the traditional rulers, we concluded that they are of the opinion that introducing peace education curriculum at the basic education and at other levels can foster peace can social internal cohesion. Secondly, they equally agreed that introducing peace education in primary school is important to equip the pupils with knowledge, skills and values of peace. This in a nutshell will enable the pupils to be able to make peace to oneself, one another, avoid violence, be able to settle disputes amongst themselves and others. In general, indiscipline, conflict and violence in schools and community might be mitigated to a larger extent as the pupils climb the education ladder. They based their point that today many children are indiscipline, delinquent, violence and need to be given the fundamentals knowledge, skills and strategies on how to maintain peace, avoid indiscipline, violence, so as not to be incise into unacceptable violence as they grow. These findings comprehend with the findings gotten from other respondents.

5.0. Discussion of Finding

Evaluating the perception of education stakeholders for curricular intervention of peace education in Cameroon's basic education to foster social internal cohesion.

The finding revealed that education stakeholders from the two sub systems in Cameroon are of the opinion that curricular intervention of peace education in basic education can foster peace and social internal cohesion in Cameroon.

Based on the perception of the education stakeholders from the two system of education, it shows that those of the French sub system were more in agreement that they should introduce peace education curriculum at the basic level more than those of the English sub system. The reason attributed to this overwhelming agreement might be due to the fact in recent years there has been a lot gross indiscipline and violence in the French sub system of education between teachers and students as well as students and students which has resulted to many lost lives at the secondary school level.

This implies that peace education has a strong implication on peace and social internal cohesion. This finding is in agreement with the opinion of Shafack & Jitzi (2019) who opined that the primary purpose of teaching and learning at any level of education is to bring about a fundamental change in the learners. They further reiterated that the change we want to see tomorrow depends on the curriculum we have today in our schools. Deutsch (2003) believes that peace education is centred on conflict resolution and typically focuses on the social behavioural symptoms of conflict, training individuals to resolve inter-personal disputes through techniques of negotiation and peer mediation is paramount. In addition to that Deutsch elaborated that peace education is the process of acquiring the core values, knowledge and the development of skills to live in harmony with others, and the natural environment. Abdul-Wahab (2013) on his study entitled "Peace Education as a Unifying Factor in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects" states that insecurity is a reproach to a nation as peace is essential to the survival and harmonious coexistence of all creatures.

Dze-Ngwa et al (2008) in their study found out that social internal cohesion in Cameroon is threatened and the peace situation in the country is just relative. Thus, if peace education is introduced as a subject in primary schools in Cameroon and well taught at all levels of education it could be a good move in the right direction to bring about social internal cohesion in Cameroon. Ebot-Ashu (2024) lamented that Cameroon educational system requires

decolonized peace education in order to inculcate in the learner crises prevention and peace management techniques at the tertiary level. This simply means that, Cameroon educational system needs the curriculum of peace education for the learners to grow in peace, live in peace and practice peace. Dze-Ngwa (2014) in another study argued that in order to reduce conflicts, improve on social internal cohesion and stability, improve on the human rights situation, encourage investments and sustainable development and reduce the poverty situation in the Cameroon, there is a dire need to practice peace and tolerance education in Cameroon schools and colleges. Thus, a curriculum of peace education in Cameroon that can be taught with equal weights in these two sub systems of education will go a long way to foster peace and social internal cohesion in Cameroon (Nji, 2020; Mbatna & Aquin, 2022; & Oru, 2021). This is because well design curriculum in school is the hub for learners' behavioural change that is practice in the family and the society to foster the culture of peace and living together in harmony and tranquillity.

Peace education according to the views of many peace scholars and experts as reviewed by literature has a positive relationship with social internal co-existence. It therefore means that if the pupils are imbibed with knowledge, values and skills of peace-making and peace building, conflict resolution, mediation and management their attitudes and behaviour towards each other in school and community will also be changed positively. In this light speed booms of social internal cohesion will be neutralized and everyone will live in harmony with each other irrespective of their backgrounds, ideology and diversity. Everybody will feel free to associate and live with each other. Indiscipline and moral decadence in schools to some extent will also be mitigated. This in a nutshell might just be another strategy of educating the population on how to make peace and live with each other in the society using the participatory approach. In this light people will avoid hate speech, discrimination tribalism in the community. This can only be well championed by the pupils and students of Cameroon in their respective localities. The people will exercise love and be at peace with each other.

This finding is also supported by the theory of functionalism by Emile Durkheim and Spencer, M (1981) with respect to the view to education. They advocated that education promote social and political integration as well as maintaining social control. Thus, schooling is essential in the society as it has a very crucial function to play in promoting social internal cohesion. The functionalist also view education as an aspect of socialization which in turn is the process of learning the attitude, values and behaviour expected of individuals as members of a particular culture or society. This practice will bring about social internal cohesion, love, tolerance, integration as well as unity in diversity among the pupils.

6.0. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the perception of the stakeholders of education for introducing peace education curriculum at the basic education level as a subject to bring about social internal cohesion, the findings revealed that stake holders of education such as the teachers, head teachers, parent teacher's association presidents, traditional rulers (chiefs) where of the opinion that introducing peace education as one of the subjects in primary school to be taught peace to the pupils holistically to bring about social internal cohesion is very timely and is a lofty idea. They reiterated that this will go a long way also to inculcate in the minds of pupils the knowledge, values and skills to prevent conflict, how to resolve conflict, mediate conflict, and avoid violence in school and the community in which they belong. Furthermore, this will lead to a change of behaviour in the pupils to live in peace to mitigate indiscipline and moral decadence in schools thus fostering peace in the society as a whole.

7.0. Recommendations

- Based on the findings of this study we recommended that peace education be dissociated from citizenship and be introduced in basic education as a subject so that the pupils should be effectively equipped with knowledge of peace, values, strategies and principles. This will go a long way to reduce indiscipline and moral decadence among pupils in school and promote social internal cohesion from the base.

- Peace education should be evaluated at the level of First School Leaving certificate examination in Cameroon practically in the form of a project.

- Peace curriculum should be introduced in teacher training colleges so that teachers graduating from these institutions should be able to implement effectively peace education curriculum in their respective primary schools. In addition to that, pedagogic inspectors at all levels of the basic education ministry should organized refresher courses, seminars, in service courses and workshops for the teachers in the field for the teaching of peace education in primary schools. This is because the teaching of peace education requires more practical approaches such as; problem base, cooperative learning, project based, role play, dramatization, field work and so on and so forth.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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