

**An Assession of the Applicability of Shared Leadership Tenets
in Cameroon: The Case of Buea Municipality.**

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ABSTRACT

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Leadership is considered very pivotal in institutions and no single leader can boss of executing leadership alone. In spite of the fact that shared leadership ideology can be dated as far back as 1920s, there has been multitude of supposition regarding shared leadership tenets and how it can be enacted in institutions.

The intent of this quantitative study is to assess the applicability of shared leadership, by unlocking the key enablers and barriers of shared leadership needed for school improvement in Cameroon. The study makes use of a questionnaire for data collection and samples the opinions of 207 school professionals from secondary and high schools in Buea Municipality, Cameroon.

After computing the means, standard deviations, and reliability of the various shared leadership tenets, most of the school professional's views were tilted towards school principal development of collaborative culture. Also participants recognized that formal school heads need to orchestrate for teachers involvement in essential decision making and also given opportunity to initiate change in school. Personnel also exercised strong hold of social support, common vision and goals and highlight that shared personal practice is weak.

In conclusion, the void in this piece of art can be filled via alternative route which is carrying out a qualitative exploratory study approach on how impediments of shared leadership can be uplifted.

Keywords: Educational leadership, leadership styles, shared leadership, school professionals, Buea, municipality, Cameroon.

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1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

A plethora of leadership research studies affirms that leadership occupies a pivotal position in our society today, the rationale being that leadership act as a tool through which the society evaluates different institutions. Rinne, Kivirauma and Simola (2002, p.43) acknowledge that in the past decade, numerous changes have occurred in the world which many educational researchers consider profound. Similarly, Shriberg, Shriberg and Kumara (2005, p.207) affirm that, in this present society, where there are persistence changes in information technology, and also increasing diversity in the world's population, leadership should be disseminated and shared throughout organizations. In a similar vein, Hyypiä (2013, p.35) acknowledges that "leadership changes over time, as does the organization and individuals". Shriberg, Shriberg and Kumara (2005, p.207) recommend that leadership today should be shifted from a male-like model of leadership where power runs down vertical to rational system of leading where leadership is more horizontal.

Harris (2003, p.10) highlights that "school leadership is more than the effort of a single individual". She further elaborated that people in designated leadership positions and those who are followers need to let go the traditional top down system of leadership and embraced participatory or shared system of leadership. Northouse (2007, p.190) extending the works of Harris (2003) and Shriberg, Shriberg, Kumara (2005) assert that leadership is not the exclusive responsibility of a designated solo leader; it is something that emerges from the interplay between leaders and collaborators. Lang (2011, p.265) holding striking similar views with Northouse (2007) asserts that when leadership is highly centralized, and the leader or principal in position is transferred, promising programs often lose impetus and fade away. As a result of this and other weaknesses, the old model of leadership has not met the fundamental challenges of this ever changing society.

1.1 Statement of the problem

From the advent of the classification of territories, some areas in sub-Saharan Africa including Cameroon were described as developing countries. Since then, Cameroon's status as a developing country has remained static. Kange (2012, p.4) attests that this is due to leadership inadequacies coupled with cultural, traditional and structural impediments. Forka (2012, p.7) in his dissertation on transformational leadership in sub-Saharan Africa shed more light on leadership in Cameroon by attesting that some external issues may account for Cameroon's inability to transcend the barriers of a developing country, researchers should pay more emphasis on transformational leadership. Forka (2012) further illustrates that leaders should focus on creating a shift from a more malevolent, autocratic style of leadership which results to social, economic, and political inequality to a more innovative and shared system of leadership that will promote creativity, collaboration and equal distribution of power and resources. Kange (2012, p.4) recognized that Cameroon being a developing nation, for her to go beyond the barriers into a developed nation, Cameroon has to re-examine her leadership style and try to restructure it from the grass-root. It is from this leadership void that this researcher seeks to enhance the literature of shared leadership in Cameroon through a quantitative study of some four shared leadership tenets.

1.2 Purpose of the study

As a result of increase in technology and globalization of world's population, secondary and high school principals encounter numerous challenges in leadership despite the training they have received Printy & Marks, (2006). These challenges encountered cannot be overlooked. The primary motive of this study will be to assess the applicability of some four tenets of shared leadership projected by Jackson (2000), Carson, Tesluk &

Marrone (2007) and Alava, Halttunen, & Milka (2012). The research will sample the views of teachers and support staff on the proceeding attributes of shared leadership: shared decision making, sharing a common vision and goals, social support and shared personal practice. It was in exposing some of the issues confronting shared leadership that Greenburg and Baron (2003, p.474) posit that, "in shared leadership, the leader gives the subordinate a certain degree of autonomy in decision making and in completing routine work". In the context of schools in the Buea municipality, and Cameroon in general, the validity of this assertion will be looked into.

1.3 Research questions

The goal of this study was to assess how some shared leadership tenets are applied in Cameroon secondary schools. In doing so, the aim was translated into one general question and four specific research questions.

General research question

What evidences and impediments of shared leadership can be found in Cameroon?

Specific research questions

1. What perceptions do school professionals hold about shared decision making?
2. What observations do school professionals have with regard to shared vision and goals?
3. What opinions do school professionals hold with regard to social support?
4. How does school professionals exercise shared personal practice?

1.4 Delimitations

The center of attention of this study is on shared leadership in Buea municipality Cameroon. The shared leadership terminology might limit the objective assessment of the concept under study as most participants might be unfamiliar with this concept. The research focuses on formal school heads which are school principals for reasons being that a growing body of research has found a significant link between school leadership and academic success of students. Age and gender was also utilized in the study, as previous studies have demonstrated that these two variables might influence school professionals' perceptions of shared leadership.

1.5 Related concepts

This part discusses the concepts of leadership, school leadership, distributed leadership, collaborative leadership, teachers' leadership and participative leadership.

1.5.1 Leadership

Metcalf (1935, p.20) posits that "leadership is the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward some goal which they come to find desirable". Also, Session & Stevenson (1983, p.23) suggest that leadership is an "activity of ideas or behavior of one or more persons in a group, that affects the ideas or behavior of one or more persons in a group". Likewise, Burns (1978, p.18) defines leadership "as leaders inducing followers to act towards certain goals that represent the values and motivations - the wants and the needs, the aspirations and expectations - of both leaders and followers". Furthermore, Kousez and Posner (1995, p30) describe leadership as "the art of mobilizing others who want to struggle for shared aspirations" Northouse (2003, p.3) define "leadership as a process of influencing individuals towards a common goal".

Again, Sessoms & Stevenson (1983, p.22) assert that the term leadership was derived from the two Greek words *archein* meaning "to begin", "to lead", and "to rule" and *prattein* "to pass through" and "to finish". Based on this supposition, Sessoms and Stevenson (1983) view leadership as an art that is divided into two parts "the beginning" which is set by a single individual and "achievement" which is performed jointly. Hord (2003, p.17) "envisage a leader as a person who plant the seeds, nurture the plant, lead by following, lead by serving and also invite others to share in his or her triumph and burden".

1.5.2 School leadership

School leadership has been extensively studied and documented by many researchers. Despite the vast body of literature in stock, all effort to bring about a universal way of leading and what makes a good leader is still unknown. Printy & Marks, (2006, p.125). These limitations have given rise to a wealth of school leadership concepts such as distributed leadership, collaborative leadership, teachers' leadership and participative leadership all of which stresses lateral as well as vertical leadership relationships. A few years back, the major tasks of most formal school heads was to administered and manage the daily operations of the school, meanwhile other school professionals focus on student learning and disciplined. Scholars have considered this way of leading as being outdated. Prestine (1993) identify three essential role of a school principal which are ability to shared authority, ability to work collaboratively with other school professionals and the ability of participative decision making without dominations. In a similar manner, Mendel (2012, p.55) took a step further and came up with five essential role of a school principal which are "creating a common vision and goals for academic improvement, creating a hospitable environment which promotes collaborative spirit and fruitful interaction, cultivating leadership such that others school professionals and other stakeholders assume their part in realizing the school vision and goals, handle the data of school professionals and also ensure that professional development is foster".

Sailing across similar vein Hoy and Miskel (1996, p.376) came up with what they term school leadership schema depicted in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The School leadership schema.

School Leaders' trait	Leaders' behavior	Effectiveness of leaders'	Situational factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personality self confidence • Stress tolerance and emotional maturity • Building of interpersonal conceptual administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building person relationships • Motivating through recognizing and rewarding academic success • Deciding and joint planning of problem solving • Effective communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal perceived reputation self-assessment • Institutional goal attainment • Individual and group satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders should motivate subordinates • Use position power to lay down rules and regulations in order to seek for solution • Invite internal and external stakeholders

1.5.3 Distributed leadership

Distributed leadership or division of leadership means that leaders give subordinate the possibility to lead at some stage of organizational management. Duignan and Bezzina (2006) define "distributed leadership as a form of leadership that is distributed to key stakeholders throughout an organization" Bennett, Crawford and Cartwr (2006 p.7) define it as "as a network of interaction of individuals in which varieties of expertise are widely distributed". Gonn (2002, p.429) view distributed leadership as dispersal of leadership responsibilities to some or almost all members of an institution. I see distributed leadership as that type of leadership where leadership tasks are widely distributed among students, teachers, and stakeholders but power and authority remain the responsibility of the leader.

1.5.4 Collaborative leadership

Harris (2003 p.75) defines collaborative leadership as the ability of persons within a school to work collectively and collaboratively in order to generate and transmit knowledge. Turning point (2005) defines collaborative leadership as “processes by which people with different views and perspectives come together, put aside their narrow self-interests, and discuss issues openly and supportively in an attempt to solve a larger problem or achieve a broader goal”. I see collaborative leadership as a process of social influence, where people actively and genuinely work together not by imposing ideas or voting ideas but in an interactive relationship, for the benefit of all the members of the institution.

1.5.5 Teacher leadership

Hilty (2011, p.116) defines teacher leadership as the process through which teachers individually or collectively impact other teachers and other members of the school communities as well as principals in order to improve teaching and learning practices and hence improving students’ learning and academic achievement. Such team leadership work involves three development foci; Individual development, collaborative or team development and organizational development”. Wasely (1991) defines teacher leadership as “the ability to encourage colleagues to change, to do things they would not ordinarily consider without the influence of the leader”. Based on the above mentioned definitions, I see teacher leadership as a process of empowering teachers to lead professionally and administratively.

1.5.6 Participative Leadership

Greenberg and Baron (2003, p.474) define participative leadership as a model of leadership where, the leader permits subordinate to take part in decision making and also give subordinate a considerable degree of autonomy. Tompkins (2005, p.19) caution school professionals that participation in school, should not be such that people

come together to compare ideas, or vote ideas but coming together to create a common idea through the involvement of everybody. She added that when individuals participate in collaborative deliberations, it helps produce the best possible solutions for the group.

1.6 Geographical and historical description of Cameroon and the Buea Municipality

Cameroon is a sub-Saharan African country and bounded by six other nations namely Nigeria to west, Chad to the North, Central African Republic to the East and the Republic of Congo, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea to the South. The population of Cameroon was estimated in January 2015 23.234 007 inhabitants living on a surface area of about 475,442km². Cameroon is sometimes described as “African miniature” because its exhibits all the major climates and vegetation of the continent ranging from dense tropical rainforest of the south, to the spare and dry vegetative climate of the central region, and the semi-arid Sahel of the north (Ndive, 2008, p.3). Besides the different climatic regions, Cameroon has rich ecological systems of beaches, lakes, forests, savannas, and a volcanic mountain that serves as a great touristic site. Cameroon is linguistically diverse, although English and French are the official languages. The country is also ethnically diverse and has over 250 ethnic groups. This has led to the proliferation of other local languages (Ndive, 2008).

Historically, Cameroon was discovered in 1472 by a Portuguese sailor called Fernando Pa. Fernando Pa was sailing along the river Wouri and noticed that this river had a lot of prawns and gave the area the name *Rio dos Cameroes* (meaning rivers of prawns). During the German colonial era this name was modified to Kamerun and later to Cameroun and Cameroon during the French and the British era, respectively. In 1884, German colonized Cameroon with its capital first at Buea. In the course of the First World War, Germany was defeated in Cameroon (1916) and Cameroon was partitioned

between Britain and France. Cameroon was administered as a mandated territory under the supervision of the League of Nations and subsequently as a trusteeship territory under United Nations. France who got the lion shared (80%) of the country, administered hers as an independent territory (called French Cameroon). Britain, who got a bite of the elephant (20%), administered her two disconnected part of north and south as an integral part of Nigerian (called British southern and northern Cameroon). On the 1st of January 1960, French Cameroon got her independence and on the 11th of February 1960 British southern Cameroonians voted to unite with their brothers and sisters in French Cameroon and a federal state was created in 1961. The Federal system of government was later abolished, and on the 20th of May 1972 a unitary state was formed (Cameroon National Day) and seven provinces were created. Ngoh (1987, p.112). The provinces were later increased to 10 by a presidential degree in 1984. Cameroon is headed by a president; Cameroon currently has ten regions with its Capital in Yaounde. These ten regions are subdivided into divisions, subdivisions, districts and municipalities. Each region has its capital and it is headed by a governor.

1.7 What makes this study noteworthy

This study will be significant based on a number of reasons. To begin, generally, the notion of school leadership in Cameroon warrant attention and the quality of relationships between school leaders and followers needs to be critically examined. Hence it is logical to evaluate the need for shared leadership in Cameroon schools in general and the Buea municipality in particular in order to produce a strong bond between leaders and followers. Also this study is pivotal in that it evaluates the evidence of shared leadership in Cameroon focusing on shared decision making, and social support. In addition, the study assesses the evidence of the absence of shared important decision making with regard to school leadership and its impact on the country's development. Furthermore the findings of this study will supplement

alternative opinions refuting the presence of some shared leadership tenets. The study will also help to enhance recorded history of shared leadership in Cameroon and Buea Municipality. Moreover the finding of this study will be noteworthy to Cameroon educational stakeholders and policy makers as it will better informed them on how to formulate policies with regards to the training of formal school heads (principals). Finally to teachers and support staff, it will benefit them to improve on their shared personal practice and also act as payment to principals and teachers understanding of the concept of shared leadership. In brief, some scholastic articles and educational research such as Poff (2008, pp.35-54) attest that there is a void in the application of shared leadership in Cameroon. This account for the repeated political and social unrests prevailing in the country and political godfathers found at all levels of administration.

1.8 An overview of the study

The intent of this quantitative study was to provide readers with some knowledge of shared leadership in Cameroon. In an effort to do so, the study briefly extract literature on some four tenets needed for the comprehension of shared leadership. The study should be noteworthy, in the in-service training of school professionals, contribute to the enhancement of shared leadership literature and heighten school personnel sensitivity of shared leadership. In chapter one, the researcher looked at the art of leadership, followed by the problem statement, general and specific research questions, delimitation of the study, some attention was given to some related leadership concepts, geographical and historical description of Cameroon and finally the importance of the study. Chapter two deals with literature review and some attention have been focused on shared decision making, common vision and goals, social support and shared personal practice. Having developed literature on these tenets, chapter three was devoted for the description of research design, methodology and the process of

data collection. Ensuing, chapter four concentrated on data analysis meanwhile chapter five was devoted to findings, discussion, conclusions, limitations and recommendations for further study.

2 SYNOPSIS OF LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Multitudes of writers have lamented on different leadership theories throughout recorded history. The earliest writers emphasized on attributes of a superior leader. Sessoms and Stevenson (1983, p.24) assert that, in the "Great man theory" the leader possess certain superior qualities that need to be admired and followed. Similarly, Northouse (2003, p.15) holds that, the innate qualities that differentiate leaders from non-leaders need to be identified and taught to aspiring leaders. In addition, Horners (2006, p.270) also believed that leaders "were born as leaders and not made", therefore they need to be obeyed almost to the point of worship. Another thrust of writers discarded these ideas that leaders are born and came up with the situational leadership theory. This group of intellectual argued that leadership resides in a situation rather than in a person. They hold that event creates leaders and not the other way round Sessoms and Stevenson (1983, p.25). Furthermore, they explained that the situation, not the person makes leadership happens.

Again, Northouse (2003, p.287) supplement that, situational approach to leadership is a combination of leader's personality traits, the ideas of employees, and the problem confronting the institution. These ideas inspired some group of notables to think outside the box and came up with the path-goal theory. This theory emphasizes on leader's behavior, path to success, supportive environment, active participation of subordinates in decision making and finally good interpersonal relationships between leaders and subordinates. Although these different ideologies brought into lamp light classic ideas, Northouse (2007, p.33), concluded that leadership resides between essential features of trait approach and situational approach of leadership. Meanwhile these theories increases our understanding of leadership, they fail to provide guidelines on how leadership can be enacted.

2.1 Shared leadership

There are many different definitions of shared leadership as there are many different researchers who have tried to define it. Shared leadership in a layman's point of view emphasizes on distribution, collaboration, participative and non-authoritarian approach to leadership. To begin with, Alava, Halttunen & Risku (2012, p.37) describe shared leadership as a network of interaction where the superior guides subordinates towards the achievement of common goal. Further, Pearce and Conger (2003, p.269) describe shared leadership as "a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of organizational goals". In addition, Evaggelia (2012) defines shared leadership as "a simultaneous ongoing mutual influencing process within a team that involves the serial emergence of official as well as unofficial leaders". Looking at the above definitions, it is glaring that in shared leadership, the task is not only distributed but some aspect of power and authorities are genuinely shared between leaders and subordinate. Nonetheless, this researcher suggests that if leadership is shared, then the word "influence" is not necessary. Based on these suppositions I define shared leadership as a mutual social interactive process where leadership responsibilities are jointly enacted in order to achieve desirable vision and goals. As illustrated by Pearce and Conger (2003, p.270), when shared leadership is defined in this way, it offers a thought of leadership as a phenomenon where leadership is enacted by many individuals rather than exclusively by those at the apex. Spillane (2006, p.4) distinguish shared leadership from distributed leadership as follows, shared leadership involved formal head plus other leaders meanwhile distributed leadership involve many and not a few.

2.2 The transition of shared leadership

Multitudes of research have reported that any business that depends on a single leader "Great man" runs a considerable risk. This is because when the individual retires or dies in office, the institute possibly will lose its stability. Leadership has undergone an evolving chaos throughout recorded history, as we can see from the eras of the different notables, who were concerned about factors of production and organizational effectiveness. The era between 1890s-1910s leadership literatures was dominated by the works of Max Weber. Weber being the hero at that time focused his ideas on the structural characteristics that facilitate leadership (Tompkins, 2005, p.4). In this light, Weber came up with his famous theory of bureaucracy that dominated the world until 1910. His ideas of setting a clear line of control and command from top to bottom if administrative effectiveness and productivity are to be met, were later succeeded by the works of Tompkins (2005, p.5). The era between 1910s-1920s, leadership publications were dominated by the works of Fredrick Winslow Taylor. During this era, Taylor reasoned that we can increase production by identifying and eliminating all sources of waste based on careful scientific study Shafritz, Ott, and Jang (2005, p.66). Based on this argument, he came up with the scientific management theory (1911). Although this theory was not directly connected to field of education, it indicates that in an institution, the responsibilities of the leader and the followers should be clearly defined and separated. In this light, Taylor came up with the scientific approach to the study of leadership (Tompkins, 2005, p.5).

In the 1930s, Fayol & Gulick haven sailed across the ideas of Taylor and Weber dismissed the idea of perceiving leadership as an island. They came up with the idea that we should not only have a clear line of command and control or reserved power to a single individual, we should delegate power and authority to subordinate if administrative efficiency and productivity is to be achieved. Thus emanate with empowerment leadership style. Based on this premise, the administrative management

theory proliferated (Tompkins, 2005, p.4). In addition, in the 1940s, one of the management thinkers Elton Mayo in his human relations theory, conceive that to achieve administrative effectiveness, we must go beyond the idea of delegating power and standardizing work task. He therefore settles on the idea of developing cohesive work teams and supportive behavior in institutions (Tompkins, 2005, p.396). Although his ideas were not directly related to leadership, we can say with certainty that he came up with the idea of co-leadership. In 1960s, Abraham, Maslow and Douglas, haven sailed across the above mentioned theories, spring up with the following common factors: that organizational performances can only be enhanced when we treat followers with respect, developed worker's unique talents by creating a cooperative and collaborative environment and above all engage followers and co-workers in decision making. In the 20th century the quality management theory emphasizes on collective problem solving in an institution so as to produce quality goods. Therefore, it came out with the idea of distributed, collaborative and shared leadership. The 20th century, the symbolic management theory, emphasis on enhancing communication, shared vision and goals, and social cohesion. Meanwhile these theories originated from the business world, it emphasized on shared leadership for effective administration.

2.3 Predictors of shared leadership

Even though there have been some discrepancies surrounding shared leadership tenets, Kouzes and Posner (2002), Dufours (1999), Harris and Jones (2003), Alava, Halttunen & Mika, (2012) suggest that shared leadership exist when there is shared decision making, shared common vision and goals, and supportive behaviors. Likewise, Owens (2004 p.168) asserts that sense of community, shared vision and goals, collaborative planning, recognizing academic success as well involving parents in decision making are vital for any strong school leadership. Jackson (2000, p.168) substantiates this by asserting that "there are four characteristics that serve to describe shared leadership,

regardless of the organization: firstly support of personnel professional development, secondly collaborative decision making and individual accountability, thirdly provision of environment that encourage multidisciplinary care and fourthly shared vision and goals within the organization". Also, Printy and Marks (2006, p.127) affirm that in a school where shared leadership prevails, the school principal is frequently out of office sharing experiences with individual teachers, peer observation among teachers is visible, more experienced teachers work with struggling teachers and finally teachers participate in important decision making. Furthermore, Carson, Tesluk and Marrone (2007, p.122) maintained that shared leadership emerged when personnel exercised shared purpose, influence direction, support each other socially and lastly exercise a common voice.

2.4 Shared decision making

Weiss (1992, p.10) perceived shared decision making as involvement of teachers in the decision making body. Greenberg and Baron (2003, p.359) define decision making as "making a choice among several alternative". Beside this, Keung (2008, p.32) considered shared decision making as one of the prime factor of a decentralized school system. Equally, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2011, p.8) assert that in shared leadership, school formal head, allow other school professionals to democratically engage in essential decision making and sharing of authority. Again, Katzenmeyer and Mollar (2011) explain that school principals' should allow teachers take part in national as well as international educational conferences, seminars, professional development workshops and other external school reforms. When teachers participate in these activities, it helps to develop their individual and collective abilities, and also help to remove interference that hinders "teaching for understanding". Most importantly, Weiss (1992, p.11) advocates that shared decision making helps to improve school performance, unleash teachers' creativity and increase teachers' commitment to their

task. Again Weiss (1992) further asserts that since teachers have variegated knowledge about students and the school curriculum, including them in decision making will help them to point out those apparatus that are necessary for students learning, likewise administrators, who will focus attention on paperwork and financial issues. Weiss (1992) cautions that shared decision making gives teachers a semblance of authority while real authority remain securely anchored to the principals' office. Barth (2011, p.22) supported these views by highlighting that the more teachers are engaged in decision making and have access to information affecting the school, the higher their morale and the greater their participation and commitments in implementing school goals.

In a similar manner, Dufour (1999, p.14) advises school principals to "enlist faculty members in the school decision making processes and empower individuals to act on their ideas". Highlighting his personal experiences as a principal he explained that, he came to realize that he cannot do everything alone. That the challenges of leading alone were too complex that he could not act as the sole problem solver he had to disperse power to other stake holders in schools. He further advised that for shared leadership to flourish in schools, leaders should do more than just delegation of power, and provides staff members with relevant background information and findings, leaders should ensure that teachers receive appropriate training on new pedagogical skills so as to make them more effective in achieving school goals. Leaders should also create time and structures for staffs to engage in reflective discussion in matters concerning the schools. Leaders should develop monitoring procedures that will facilitate information gathering so that teachers could use the feedbacks to make corrective actions and necessary improvements in order to achieved team's objectives. Tompkins (2005, pp.130-131) highlights that "leadership in schools is not a commodity possessed only by top administrators who delegate portion to subordinates". The author reiterates that leadership in schools should be genuinely shared among teachers and other stakeholders. Again, Tompkins (2005, p.131) concluded that a good school

head is no longer that person who makes decisions alone, but that who successfully invite others in decision making.

2.5 Shared vision and goals

The next aspect this chapter will unravel how shared vision and goals are practiced. A vision refers to purpose, objective or a sheet of paper place in the wall of the school principal's office. Kirry (2011, p.2) assert that shared vision is how personnel in an organization come together to build up a common philosophy. Furthermore, Kirry (2012) explains that shared vision is the most essential component to consider when developing shared leadership in school. Most importantly, Kirry (2012) added that "shared vision, when formulated in a collaborative process, can help school professionals to engage in the overall organizational vision". Kousez and Posner (2002) throw more light by asserting that shared visions help us to have focus and also to understand the organization better. Likewise, Hord (2003, p.19) points out that "when school professionals share the same values and visions it gives rise to a binding norms of behavior among them". In other words, Nkengbeza (2014, p.24) stresses that school vision should center on students learning and consider school values, visions and goals during decision making process in schools. Similarly, Dufour (2004, p.2) maintains that school vision should be such that it can turn aspiration into action and vision into reality. In addition, Merideth (2007, p.84) highlights that a school vision "should not be some fuzzy, ambiguous prophecy delivered annually to the school board, but should be a concrete statement of purpose that requires analyses of school valves". Merideth (2007) explains further that designing a school vision should not be the responsibility of a single administrator who then sends a memo to all educational stakeholders announcing it. Northouse (2007, p.190) added that a school vision should emerge from the combined interest of various educational stakeholders and the various work units of an institution. Northouse (2007, p.190) supplements that when a school vision is done in

this way it helps to build trust, commitment, and also foster collaboration among teachers. Also, Angelle (2011, p.232) asserts that school vision should be shared and well communicated to all stakeholders. Also Adam and Townsend (2003, p.2) affirm that it is important to involve so many members of the community when developing the school vision, values and goals, and that they should also be engage in continuous revisiting of these pillars. Similarly, Merideth (2007, p.85) clarifies that to make a school vision realistic, credible and part of an attractive culture, requires the commitment of the entire community and not the effort of a single individual. Dufour (1999, p.13) in the article *learning communities*, said “principals should lead through shared values and vision rather than through rules and procedures”. As Dufour (1999) explains, school principals should engage teachers into small groups that will enable them work with their colleagues to identify shared values, attitude, behavior, and above all identify what they want the school to become. The author further cautions that principals should share the school vision and values to provide a sense of direction to key school stakeholders such as parents, students, support staff and administrative team. Hord (2003, p.19) mentioned that school personnel should be encouraged to participate not only in the process of developing a shared vision, but should also be included in the process of coming up with essential decision in school. Northouse (2007, p.188) concluded that effective leaders should create shared vision, in doing so they should listen to the dreams of others and unanimously leaders and followers should work towards the accomplishment of these dreams.

2.6 Shared personal practice

Hord (2003, p.23) point out that in shared personal practice, school professionals share their classroom experiences, demonstrate a caring behavior backed by communication and trust, and finally ensure that they share their triumphs and difficulties. Ruebel (2011) emphasize that examining other teachers' practice does not mean to be evaluated,

but should be seen as part of working together to make possible school improvement. It is therefore critical to note that shared personal practice prevails when there is mutual trust, respect, understanding among staff members, and a high level of collaboration in their daily work life. Dufour (1999, p.18) further affirmed that in shared personal practice, "teachers engaged in debate, discussion and disagreement, teachers comfortably share their academic successes and failures, praise and recognize one another's triumphs, and offer empathy and support for each other's troubles" (p. 18). To sum up, Dufour (1999) maintains that involving teachers in the interview, selection, and hiring of new teachers act as a booster to shared personal practice. Moreover, Nkengbeza (2014) asserts that in shared personal practice staff members share ideas and suggestions, make corrections where necessary so as to improve on students learning and the principal provides opportunities for coaching and mentoring. In addition, Harris and Jones (2007, p.179) assert that apart from that, shared personal practice allows teachers to share their ideas on challenges and successes they came across in course of the teaching and learning processes. In addition, as a strategy to improve the individual as well as the organizational capacity, peers express their views and provide feedback on teachers' instructional practices. Printy and Marks (2006, p.129) maintain that, when school professionals frequently work together through peers, observe and mentor struggling teachers, they tend to develop a sense of cohesion and stability vital for teachers and students learning. Again, Northouse (2007, p.187) draws attention to the fact that outstanding leaders inspired others to act, by listening closely to diverse views of followers and treat followers with countless respect and dignity and most of all create an environment where followers can feel good regarding their work.

2.7 Social support

Carson, Tesluk and Marrone (2007, p.122) describe social support as provision of emotional and psychological assistance to each other. These authors supplement that one way of achieving social support is by recognizing personnel accomplishment. Kezar (2005, p.2) highlights that to build a sense of commitment in schools, the school principal should celebrate teachers' accomplishment and success through major events organized in school. Celebrating teachers' success individually and collectively will aid in building a sense of commitment and collaboration in schools therefore encourages shared leadership. Nkengbeza (2014, p. 24), suggest that shared leadership can be maintained if formal school head instill a culture of social support and also ensure that trust and respect prevail among school personnel. Furthermore, Hord (2007) holds that school professionals ought to be provided with the necessary tools that would facilitate teaching and learning, and the resultant outcomes be recognized and celebrated; time must be allocated by formal school heads for collective work and above all the school time table should be such that teachers should have time for meetings. This will go a long way to enhance and promote collaborative learning and shared practice. Likewise, Dufour (1999, p.15) advanced that, school principals should make available social support by celebrating results. Dufour (1999) says celebrating outcome sent messages to teachers individually and collectively. He further highlights that principals should be data driven and result oriented. Being result oriented helps leaders to identify areas needing attention and establish priorities on those areas needing attention therefore fostering commitment to continuous improvement that characterized shared leadership. Lieberman (2011, p.105) in defining how to build a community of learners, maintained that in any sustainable school, they must be respect, trust, responsibility, support for one another and above all focus on result. The ultimate test for any principal is the school's results. Principals must work with staff members to attend good results in matriculation exam. The principals must also provide supportive conditions for staff to

work together towards the attainment of this result. The ability to work together is very important in schools, providing social support to teachers and focusing on students achievements are very important aspects that characterize educational reforms today. Therefore, leaders should consider involving others in decision making, sharing the vision of the school, working in teams, have trust and respect for each other so as to build a sustainable school community.

3 RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter deals with the research methods and procedures employed by the researcher. It starts with the research design, followed by the population of the study, target population, instrument for data collection, validity of instrument, face and content validity, and ends with the distribution and returned rate of research instrument (questionnaire).

3.1 Research design

Mbua (2003, p.553) refers to a research design as “the researcher’s plan of how to proceed as long as his or her study is concerned”. Creswell (1994) affirms that there are four main types of research designs namely experimental, non-experimental, quasi-experimental and qualitative research design. In this study, the researcher employed the non-experimental research design since other variables apart from independent variables have been observed. Underneath the non-experimental research design, the researcher narrowed the study to the survey research design. Burton, Brundrett and Jones (2008, p.79) assert that survey research design gathers information from wide range of participants through the use of sampling. They supplemented this by saying that, the information collected can be statistically tested, correlated, and results generalized.

3.2 The strength of quantitative study

Quantitative research according to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p.19) assert that quantitative research is essential for studying a large number of participants, provide quantitative evidence in relation to scale and also the data collected give room for quantitative predictions. Quantitative study according to Creswell (1994, p.87) is deductive and set out to investigate an ideology. Again Creswell (1994, p.100) explains that the theory is usually placed towards the beginning of the study and based on this theory, research questions are derived. The theory is then verified by collecting numerical data after which researchers can either confirmed or discards the perceptions. Mbua (2003, p.516) shed more light by asserting that these numerical data are often analyzed statistically though the theory under investigation are not inherently numerical. Connolly (2007, p.4) summarized the views of Creswell (1994) and Mbua (2003) by affirming that quantitative research is objective, express in numbers and involve hypotheses testing whereas qualitative research is subjective, express in words and involve the use of grounded theory. Buton, Brundrett and Jones (2008, p.146) supplemented the views of Creswell, Mbua and Connolly by asserting that quantitative research often helps to grab the attention of readers more than qualitative research.

3.3 Population of the study

Mitchell (2005, p.55) states that a population is a group of potential participants which can be set of objects, individuals, events, conditions, from which a sample is drawn. Burton, Brundrett and Jones (2008, p.46) define population "as the total number of possible units or people that are included in the study". They further explain that these people are often drawn from a sample using different sampling techniques. Mitchell (2005, p.55) exerts that for any generalizations to be made based on the findings from

the research, the sample from which data has been collected must be a representative of the population.

3.3.1 Sampling technique

In this study, probability sampling technique was utilized in the selection of the schools. The purpose being that it gives the opportunity of any school being selected without bias. According to Mitchell (2005, p.57), probability sampling technique compresses of four different types namely “simply random samples, stratified random samples, systematic samples and clusters samples”. The simple random sampling technique was used in this study. This type of sampling technique was exploited because it gives every member of the population the same opportunity of being selected and also to avoid tilting of data to favor the majority. In a population of 20 secondary schools in Fako Division, the researcher allocated a unique number to the respective schools, these numbers were folded and placed in a basket, her flat mate was asked to pick out eight of the folded papers and based on this the target population was selected.

3.3.2 Target population

The main participants for the study were school professionals (vice principals, discipline masters and teachers) of randomly selected public and private secondary schools in the Buea municipality of Cameroon. The study was limited to vice principals, discipline masters, and teachers only because shared leadership is a relatively new concept, although support staffs and students take part in shared leadership they have very shallow idea about the concept.

3.4 Instrument for data collection

The main instrument used by the researcher for data collection was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was generated after reviewing a wide-range of previous literature

and research related to share leadership. The questionnaire was designed such that it evaluates school professionals' views based on four domains which are shared decision making, shared vision and goals, social support and shared personal practice. These four domains constituted the main areas of focus in the questionnaire. The most important objective of the instrument was to collect information that would provide responses to the research questions. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, the first section (section A) composed of questions that identified the respondent and the second (section B) comprised of 23 questions. These 23 questions were unevenly distributed under four sub-headings. All the questions were closed ended questions and respondent were asked to express their views based on different degree. The researcher utilized four-point Likert-type scale. The different degrees employed strongly disagree (SD), disagree (D), agree (A) and strongly agree (SA). The *raison d'être* being that since the study was a quantitative one, this system of evaluation will facilitate the work of respondent as well as the researcher when it comes to tabulation and data analysis.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of instrument

Validity is the most influential feature of any measurement instrument Rupp and Pant (2007). The validity demonstrates trustworthiness of the research result and also indicates if the instrument utilized strike the researcher intention. There are three types of validity in quantitative research, content validity, criterion validity and construct validity (Voyt, 2011). In content validity, the researcher seeks to investigate whether the items in the questionnaire are the most appropriate to measure what he or she has in mind. Likewise, in criterion validity, Voyt (2011) highlights that the researcher seeks to find out if the theory or measurement is closely related to another theory or measurement. Finally in construct validity, the center of attention is the internal structure of measuring instrument.

To ensure that the questionnaire met its purpose, the researcher made sure that, the questionnaire went through content validity. The researcher prepared and handed over the questionnaire to her supervisors for cross examination, the content and structure were checked and some questions were redesigned, some corrected, and a few were eliminated. Pre-testing of the questionnaire was completed by 30 school professionals. The school professionals engaged for the pre-testing were not part of the main population of the study, although they among secondary schools in Buea municipality, this was done with the help of a research assistant. After piloting testing, significant modifications were made on the questionnaire before final administration of the questionnaire.

Reliability

It can be defined as the extent to which a measurement provides same result after a while. Mbua (2003, p.560) adheres that reliability is used to judge the quality of a measurement employed in a research. Vogt (2011) added that the most frequently used reliability approaches are test-retest reliability, split-half reliability and Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Again, Vogt (2011) added that, so many factors can affect the reliability of a study some of which are repeatability in instrument, differences among respondent, length of measurement and lack of precision. Mbua (2003, p.560) added that "a test might be reliable but not valid; on the other hand a valid test is always reliable". Considering the definitions of reliability and validity in quantitative research, two things must be noted; to start with, reliability, whether the outcome is replicable. Secondly, with regards to validity, researcher should check if he or she hits the target of the research.

3.6 Administration of the questionnaire

Data collection was done in two phases, firstly the researcher contacted the principals of the concerned schools requesting for permission to collect the data. This was done with

the aid of research assistant one month before the data collection proper. With the aid of a cover letter from the Institute of Educational Leadership of the University of Jyväskylä in Finland, and with letters of acceptance, from the various school principals concerned, the researcher employed the direct delivery technique for data collection. That is, the researcher visited the schools personally and with the aid of vice principals and discipline masters she distributed the questionnaires to the target population, in their offices and also in the staff rooms. The researcher also explained the purpose of the research to those who needed some assistance. The researcher stayed back till some research participants finished completing the questionnaires meanwhile some were collected later. This strategy employed by the researcher significantly improved the response and return rate of the questionnaire.

3.7 Demographic information regarding the questionnaire

The researcher ends this chapter by revealing some general information on the number of questionnaires administered, the number returned, the types of schools that participated in the study and the number of male and female participants who took part in the study. The study targeted 280 teachers, but the responses of 207 (74%) were obtained from eight schools. Irrespective of the school size as well as the teacher population, the researcher decided to administer an equal number of questionnaires in every school in order to avoid bias. In terms of age distribution, it turned that all participants were above 25 years old, implying therefore that the questionnaires were completed by mature citizen. The numbers of male and female respondents were equal (Table 2).

Table 2: The characteristics of schools sampled.

Characteristics	Number sampled	Percentage (%)
<i>Types of schools</i>		
Government secondary schools	3	37.5
Government Technical schools	2	25
Denominational schools	1	12.5
Lay private schools	2	25
<i>Total</i>	8	100
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	104	50.2
Female	103	49.8
<i>Total</i>	207	100
<i>Age range (years)</i>		
More than 25	134	64.7
Less than 35	61	29.5
Between 40 and 55	10	4.8
55 and above	2	0.9
<i>Total</i>	207	100

4 ANALYSIS OF DATA, PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data for this study were collected, and entered into a database in Excel software. All entered data was double checked for completeness and any errors and omissions were corrected prior to analysis. Data was then exported and analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software. The findings are presented as percentages, means, standard deviations and some summary statistics presented in the tables below. The results are presented according to the different research questions, starting with the first, followed by the second, third and the last (fourth) research question.

4.1 The reliability of the research instrument

I commence the analysis by calculating the reliability of the four tenets examined in the study. By means of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software, the internal consistency (Cronbach's α) coefficients reliability, of shared decision making, shared vision and goals, shared personal practice were calculated. Computed score for shared decision making having 10 items, the reliability result was quiet low (0.221). Further analysis indicates that if six items are deleted, that is items number 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10, and utilized in subsequent analyses the reliability coefficient increased 0.604. This is an adapted version of the scale and can be categorized under marginal reliability.

Shared vision and goals initially had nine items with a reliability coefficient of 0.363. Further analysis suggests taking away three items, which are item number 11, 13 and 16 will raised the reliability coefficient to 0.547. Which is still far less than the conventional cutoff value of 0.70. Initially, the subsection on Social support had 6 items, when internal consistency reliability was computed, it was clear that item 24 be removed and

so the remaining items number 20, 21, 22, 23 and 25 were utilized for the subsequent analyses. This gave an adapted reliability of 0.478 representing a reliability coefficient far less than marginal reliability. The next reliability that was performed was shared personal practice. This tenet had 8 items, the computed (Cronbach's α) was 0.635, and so no item was rejected from this subsection.

In summary, there was marginal reliability for shared decision making and shared personal practice. For shared vision and goals and social support suggestions to reject some items did not raise the reliability. This limitation will be discussed in chapter five.

4.2 Descriptive statistics for the selected questionnaire items

The result of descriptive statistic was gotten after reversing some questions in the questionnaire and computing the mean and standard deviation. For shared decision making, the mean ranges from 3.0 to 3.1 and an overall standard deviation of 2.3 was obtained. The next item computed was shared common vision and goals, this had 6 items and following analyses the mean obtained ranges from 2.7 to 3.1 and a standard deviation of 2.9. After reversing and scoring the relevant items on shared personal practice, the mean ranges from 2.6 to 2.8 with a standard deviation of 2.5. Social support having 8 items was subsequently computed, and the mean ranges from 2.1 to 2.9. The higher score denotes higher level of acceptance and lower score represents lower level of acceptance. The summary of descriptive statistics is presented in the table below.

Table 3: Summary of descriptive statistics of all research items.

Tenets	Number of items	Mean (minimum)	Mean (maximum)	Standard deviation (SD)	Cronbach's alpha
Shared decision making	4	3.0	3.1	2.3	0.604
Shared vision and goals	6	2.7	3.1	2.9	0.547
Shared personal Practice	5	2.6	2.8	2.5	0.478
Social support	8	2.1	2.9	3.7	0.635

4.2 Data Analysis of Research Questions

4.2.1 Research question one, School professionals' perceptions of shared decision making

This first research question had four items (Table 4). The four items sought to investigate the school professionals' perceptions of shared decision making. For research question one, the means and standard deviations of items 1, 2, and 6 are reversed scores because these items were originally expressed in the negative. When school professionals were asked to express their views pertaining to four items concerning shared decision making, most of the research participants' responses were tilted towards the positive. On a 4-point likert-scale, participants demonstrated significant rate of agreement with an overall mean of 12.1. A large number of participants who responded to the questionnaire made it clear that principals empowered school professionals by making sure that they assume leadership positions. Spillian (2006, p.4) asserts that shared leadership might take variety of forms ranging from team, to small group then to widespread empowerment among colleagues. The school principals also make use of key staff members, giving them the opportunity to lead. Leader - member exchange theory looked at the relationship between leaders and subordinate. It highlights that a school leader may exhibits more interpersonal relationship with other school professionals who fall within the in-group and moderate

interpersonal relationship with other school professionals called the out-group. Lunenburg (2010, p.3) noted that the in-group members often participate in all important decision making and demonstrate more job responsibility. In contrast, other school professionals who fall within the out-group benefit from open communication, involvement in goals settings, responsibilities to assume leadership role, participation in decision making, but usually do not go beyond influencing important decision making in school. This assertion was true as some of school professionals' demonstrated negative attitude regarding participation in important decision making and opportunities to initiate change in school.

Table 4: Percentages of responses by school professionals regarding shared decision making.

Research item	Percentages (%)				
	SD	D	A	SA	T
1	35.3	50.7	10.6	3.4	100
2	31.9	42.5	19.3	6.3	100
6	31.9	44.0	16.4	7.7	100
8	5.8	15.4	49.8	29.0	100

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of items
0.607	0.604	4

Item Statistics

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
1	3.1787	0.75165	207
2	3.0000	0.87578	207
6	3.0000	0.89225	207
8	3.0193	0.82416	207

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	No. of items
12.1981	5.150	2.26934	4

4.2 School professionals' belief about sharing a common vision and goals

This second research question had 9 items (items 11-19). The nine items centered on the

4.2.2 Research question two, School professionals' belief about sharing a common vision and goals

This second research question had 6 items. The six items centered on the school professionals' beliefs concerning their principal sharing of a common vision and goal. The responses obtained for each of the six items are represented on the tables below. Item (17) was rewritten in the positive, and the proceeding mean and standard deviations relating to this research computed. With regards to joint formulation of school vision and goals, collaboration among school professionals, discussion of information pertaining to goal attainment, and celebration of departmental and school success, research participants illustrated diverse degree of responses relating to these items. Nonetheless, a large number of the participants hold very strong views concerning these items, meanwhile a small number exercised less strong hold of them giving a minimum mean of 2.7 and maximum mean of 3.01. The statement assessing school professional ability to come to unanimous decision making, experienced a negative feedback as more than half (n=12, 53.1%) of the respondents pointed out the absent of this perception. The results obtained as well as the computed statistic values are presented on Table 5 below.

Table 5: Percentage distribution of participants' responses to sharing a common.

Research item	Percentages (%)				
	SD	D	A	SA	Total
17	10.6	19.3	53.1	16.9	100
12	7.7	7.2	53.1	31.9	100
14	6.8	13.0	55.1	25.1	100
15	19.3	43.5	27.1	10.1	100
18	14.5	20.8	40.6	24.2	100
19	12.1	15.0	47.3	25.6	100

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No of items
0.549	0.547	6

Item Statistics

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
17	2.7101	0.88846	207
12	2.7633	0.85730	207
14	3.0918	0.83392	207
15	2.9855	0.80940	207
18	2.7536	0.97651	207
19	2.8744	0.92625	207

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	No. of items
17.1787	8.633	2.93819	6

4.2.3 Research question three, school professionals' perceptions regarding social support

This third research question had five items, which sought to obtain information regarding the provision of social support by the school principal. The findings from the five items are summary in the statistics below. Question 21, 23, and 25 are reversed questions, as these items were originally expressed in the negative. Here a climate of mutual trust, respect and understanding, rewards and recognitions of individual and departmental academic success and finally the aspect of structure and time allocation for collaboration among school personnel were investigated. Based on the rating scale

of 1 for Strongly Disagree to 4 for Strongly Agree, a mean of more than 2.6 illustrated that more than 60% of the respondents had a positive view, as the case of statements 20, 21, 22, 23 and 25. In this tenet, school professionals perceived that trust and respect prevail among them, the school formal head reward and recognized their academic achievements and there is adequate time and structures put aside for collaboration and accomplishment of classroom tasks. This signifies that in Cameroon secondary schools, social support prevails. Hord (2003), Greenberg & Baron (2003) and Ruebel (2011) emphasized on the concept of time for effective social support. Also, Mendel (2012) maintained that time is essential for the completion of tasks and bringing together of personnel. Once more, Hord (2003) highlights that mutual trust and respect must not be left out, and avenues must be provided so that staff relate to each other, creation of caring culture so as to overcome obstacles. The results for analysis are summarized on Table 6 below.

Table 6: Percentage distribution of participants' perceptions regarding social support.

Research Item	Percentages (%)				
	SD	D	A	SA	T (%)
20	16.4	18.4	48.3	16.9	100
21	20.3	47.8	26.1	5.8	100
22	14.5	25.6	42.5	17.4	100
23	17.4	49.3	24.2	9.2	100
25	20.8	42.5	26.6	10.1	100

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of items
0.481	0.478	5

Item Statistics

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
20	2.6667	0.93994	207
22	2.6377	0.92910	207
21	2.8164	0.81558	207
23	2.7391	0.84736	207
25	2.7295	0.89997	207

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	No. of items
13.5894	6.408	2.53145	5

4.2.4 Research question four, perception of shared personal practice

This fourth and last research question was made up of eight items (items 26 - 33). These items investigated the school professionals' perception of shared personal practice. Research question four examined the aspects of shared personal practice. Here, aspects such as teachers' collaborative efforts, teachers' practice, teachers' pedagogical assessment and sharing of triumphs and difficulties were evaluated. The frequency of the responses depicts enormous degree of variation. Also, none of the items pertaining to this section had a mean of 3 or above indicating a weak perception of this tenet.

Apart from statement number 32, which had a mean of 2.985, meaning above 50% of participants agree to this statement, item number 28, exhibits a negative role with a mean of 2.115, meaning less than 45% of the school personnel agree with this fact, indicating a negative teachers' pedagogical assessment. Based on the findings by Ruebel (2011) that effective shared personal practice, is characterized by personnel comfortable sharing their triumphs, personnel working together to ensure the act of changing pedagogical practice is maintained, personnel actively participate in the development of curriculum and also make sure that they support each other learning, one can conclude that the aspect of shared personal practice is wake. Data obtained from this research question are presented on Table 7 below.

Table 7: Percentages, reliability, means and standard deviations of research question four items.

Research Item	Percentages (%)				
	SD	D	A	SA	T
26	12.6	20.8	46.9	19.8	100
27	9.7	28.5	46.4	15.5	100
28	25.1	44.0	26.1	4.8	100
29	12.1	27.5	50.2	10.1	100
30	15.0	44.4	29.5	11.1	100
31	24.6	28.0	34.8	12.6	100
32	9.2	15.5	44.0	31.4	100
33	12.6	22.2	48.8	16.4	100

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of items
0.630	0.635	8

Item Statistics

item	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
30	2.6232	0.86633	207
31	2.6377	0.98490	207
26	2.7488	0.91093	207
27	2.6860	0.84356	207
28	2.1159	0.83380	207
29	2.5942	0.82413	207
32	2.9855	0.90564	207
33	2.7005	0.88523	207

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	No. of items
21.0918	13.909	3.72948	8

5 CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, LIMITATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

5.1 Conclusion

In this study the researcher employed an original multifactor shared leadership questionnaire, made up of four tenets and each tenet had some items to be evaluated. After the instrument was administered and data analyzed, the reliability ranges from 0.478 to 0.635, most of the reliability did not meet the recommended cutoff for research. Based on the findings of the study, a number of conclusions can be drawn. From the analysis, of the four research objectives, the results affirm previously documented educational material on leadership in African and Cameroon carried out by Poff (2008) and Forka (2012). This quantitative descriptive study reveals that, the school principals in Buea municipality include school professionals and relevant stakeholders in establishing vision and goals. The school principals also ensured that a collaborative vision and goals setting practice exists when developing school vision and goals. The school principals ensure that school professionals participate in at least setting of goals related to student academic achievement or also related to classroom instruction. Meanwhile the national board of education sets specific attainment targets for all schools and students in the country. The divisional and sub divisional educational stakeholders together with the school principals ensure that school vision and goals are aligned with national goals. Interestingly, this study reports that school professionals find it difficult to reach consensus on important decision, less involvement in important decision making, insufficient time and inadequate formal structures to facilitate teachers professional development were also highlighted. Some school professionals also assert that the focus of the school is on student learning not leadership. Also some

school professionals highlight the absent of facilities and opportunities to give feedback on teaching styles and methods.

5.2 Discussion

The concept of shared leadership became popular due to its importance in our society. Hypä (2013, p.15) explains that in this era of globalization, democratization and technological advancement, leadership should not be owned by a single individual but it should be disseminated and shared to all members of the organization. In like manner, Meredith, (2007, p.66) holds that leadership in institutions should be shared so that every person may be a leader in some situations and a follower in others. She goes further to explain that, all members in a school have the potential for leadership in any given situation. Similarly, Harris and Jones (2003, p.94) argues that though the top down system of leadership helps to increase accountability and efficiency, this system of leadership crushes creativity, innovation, collaboration, networking and above all slows down decision making. Simon (2001, p.112) in a similar vein says “administrative efficiency is increased by limiting the span of control at any point in the hierarchy to small number” In this context he emphasized that leadership be it in schools or in any organization should be shared among subordinates rather than being concentrated in the hands of one person. Barnard (1938, p.89) in classics of organizational theory argues that “Individuals must be induced to cooperate since to do otherwise will result in dissolution of the organization” This emphasize that all members in a school have the potential for leadership in any given situation. Barnard (1938) advises that school leaders should induced cooperation and collaboration in schools and this can only be achieved through shared leadership. Since shared leadership is all about cooperation, collaboration, networking or working in teams, the school principal is to ensure that these paradigms exist in school by sharing or distributing leadership. Simon (2001, p.112) sharing similar views with Barnard, asserts that, organization did not and could

not exist as self-contained island, isolated from its environment. In the context of the school as an organization, principals are advised not to make all decision alone to involve other stake holders such as students, teacher, support staffs, alumna, parent, community group, state department of education in the management processes.

Harris and Jones (2010, p.175) citing the importance of professional learning communities highlight that in schools where shared leadership is evident, teachers work in teams. Working in teams is the core concept of shared leadership. Working in teams also encourages new innovation about teaching and learning as well as raise collective and individual professional performance. Working in teams also encourages local school authorities as well as policy makers to support and maintain schools. Working in teams also lessens teachers' isolation and encourages collaboration and creativity. Similarly, Choi (2009, p.97) confirms that shared leadership is at odd with bureaucratic culture because it encourages employee involvement and rejects the hierarchy of control, domination, and power that bureaucratic culture creates. Choi (2009) further explains that it stimulates subordinates participation in decision making and team work and encourages collaboration and communication among colleagues. At the same time, Gronns (2002, p.429) highlights that leadership is best conceive as a set of functions which must be carry out by a group.

McGregor in Tompkins (2005, p.303) in the human resource theory believe that human capacity is something that must be "grown" rather than "manufactured". The individual McGregor assert, "Will grow into what he is capable of becoming provided we can create the proper conditions for that growth". McGregor (2005, p.303), advises leaders to delegate power to other subordinates, thus calling for the decentralization of the organization and empowering of others to lead. Another central theme in human resource theory is that human talent flourishes best when power is mutually shared among members of the organization or school. Follett in Tompkins (2005, p.131) believes that by participating in teams, individuals develop their fullest potentials. She

advocates for a “collective doctrine” in leadership and argues that group life liberate rather than suppresses talent in individuals.

In the context of shared supportive leadership McGregor cited by Tompkins (2005, p.304) emphasizes that working in groups enables better decision to be made, especially by those closest to the work situation. It also enables workers to be provided with opportunities to take personal responsibility and develop their capacities, therefore become more motivated in carrying out task. But if upper and middle managers try to make all decisions themselves they will never develop an organization that grows and becomes healthy in its own right.

McGregor (2005, p.304) in his concept of delegation includes the idea that each work unit should be provided with the data it needs to evaluate and correct its own performance. In shared supportive leadership a bureau chief or school head, should have available data about the overall performance of the school or the organization, but not about everything that occurs in each of the schools or classroom. He further cautions leaders to implement the principle of self-control; they should control their own area of responsibility but not the details of their subordinate activities. He crowed it all by saying “managing on the basis of overall results involves an element of risk, but unless managers are willing to take these risks there will be no true delegation”. McGregor advises that leaders should provide workers with as many opportunities as possible to assume responsibility try out new ideas and exercised judgments thus calling for shared supportive system of leadership.

5.3 Limitation of the study

Research participants, in fear of sabotaging the school heads, might have provided inappropriate degree of assessment of the different items found in the questionnaire. This might go a long way to cause a serious threat in the outcome. Political and

religious perspectives might also impair the degree of assessment of the existence or absence of shared leadership tenets in Cameroon.

Even though this piece of work contributes tremendously to scholastic literature, it is limited in terms of generalization in Cameroon secondary school. This is due to the fact that Cameroon educational system is liberalized and different schools ranging from denominational; government/public and lay private schools have different social, economic, cultural, religious and political specificities that govern them. Given the fact that most of the research participants were Cameroonian, some of them might be possibly not interested in school leadership issues. This might have alters the degree of assessment of shared leadership tenets. On the other hand, those who are interested could have provided a better and accurate degree of responses to the questions on the questionnaire.

The above-mentioned reliability score suggest that, there might have been a lot of repeatability in the assessment instrument. The contradiction in reliability suggests that perhaps the language in the questionnaire was understood by some participants, but not by all of them. Considering that the questionnaire had both negative and positive questions. Reproducibility can also account for irregularity in reliability. Reinard (2006, p.10) suggests that reproducibility often occurs when the questionnaire have varying perceptions. Reinard (2006) also put forward that the use of different raters without considering experience and duration of training can produce great inconsistencies in reliability. Reinard (2006, p.12) added "that reliability of a scale items increases as the number of scale item increases" in this case, four point scale was used; some researchers hold that from 5-point scale to 7-point scale enhances reliability. Furthermore, Reinard (2006, p.12) suggested that "lack of precision in measurement tool also affect reliability". Lack of precision usually occurs when the instrument did not have a précised degrees and respondent had difficult time giving responses.

5.4 Recommendations for future research

The void in this literature can be filled using a qualitative exploratory study approach. The research interest can be diversified to leadership in elementary schools that has received less attention over the years. Also a wealth of study has been conducted on shared leadership characteristics; perhaps researcher can now focus attention on how shared leadership barriers can be alleviated. In addition, multitude definition has been offer, and the variation among them is the way shared leadership is coordinated. Researcher should come to a consensus if shared leadership is something that is enacted by team members or it is a collective doctrine where leaders emerge spontaneously. A comparative study of shared leadership in mission and public schools should be conducted.

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Appendix

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF

Dear respondent

I am a student in the Master's degree programme in Educational leadership, Institute of educational Leadership University of Jyväskylä - Finland. I am writing my thesis on the topic '**assessing the applicability of some shared leadership tenets in Cameroon**'. The aim of my study is to identify some aspects of shared leadership practiced in some selected secondary schools in Cameroon.

Instructions

Please kindly read through the questionnaire below assessing your views on the different issues mention below. The scale is from 1 (strongly disagreed **SD**) to 4 (strongly Agree **SA**)

Personal information; Please, kindly tick the correct box

1. Gender:

Female

Male

2. Age Group: Less than 35 Between 35 and 55 More than 55

3. Position: Vice Principals Teacher Others specify _____

Evaluation scale

1. Strongly Disagree SD

2. Disagree D

3. Agree A

4. Strongly agree SA

Shared decision making	SD	D	A	SA
1. The principal does not give teacher(s) the responsibility to assume leadership role				
2. The Principal does not empower teacher (s) to lead				
3. Staff participate in decision making in school				
4 Staff does not actively participate in all important decision making concerning the school.				
5. The principal does not overturn staff decisions				
6. The principal fails to identify and utilized key staff members such as heads of departments				
7. The principal is not seen as the sole figure of authority in school				
8. Principal shares responsibilities to staff members				
9. Staff have access to key information concerning the school				
10. Teachers lack opportunities to initiate change in school.				

Sharing a common vision and goals	SD	D	A	SA
11. Staff do not participate in drawing up of the school visions and goals				
12. A collaborative practice exists for developing a shared vision and goal				
13. School's vision and goals are formulated by national board of education				
14. Staff members share a common vision for school improvement that focuses on student learning				
15. The school curriculum is in alignment with the school visions and goals				
16. When it comes to collaboration there is general inability to a unanimous decision making on key issues among staff				
17. Staff do not discuss information genuinely				
18. Staff meet regularly to share information with regard to goal attainment				
19. Staff celebrate when departmental and schools goals are achieved				

Supportive conditions	SD	D	A	SA
20. There is mutual trust, respect and understanding among school professionals				
21. Teachers' contributions towards school goals are not acknowledge				
22. Teachers' successes are celebrated				
23. Departmental contribution towards school goals are not acknowledge				
24. Inadequate time for the accomplishment of classroom tasks				
25. There is no time for collaboration among teachers in the school timetable				

Shared Personal Practice				
26. There is mutual trust, respect and collaboration among staff				
27. Teachers meet regularly to shared their classroom experiences				
28. Teachers visit each other in their classroom and give feedback on their teaching styles and methods				
29. Staff celebrate academic success of colleagues				
30. Staff do not share their academic successes and failure with their colleagues				
31. Academics is not often the main focus of all staff meetings				
32. Staff support each other in moment of difficulty				
33. Staff enjoy high level of collaboration in their daily work life at school				