

ISRG Journal of Education, Humanities and Literature (ISRGJEHL)



ISRG PUBLISHERS

Abbreviated Key Title: ISRG J Edu Humanit Lit

ISSN: 2584-2544 (Online)

Journal homepage: <https://isrgpublishers.com/isrgjehl/>

Volume – I Issue- IV (July – August) 2024

Frequency: Bimonthly



Innovations in GCE Ordinary Level Economics Syllabus as a Determinant of Students' Academic Performance: An Empirical Survey of Secondary School Economics Teachers in Cameroon

Nubonyin Hilda Fokong

Faculty of Education, The University of Bamenda

| Received: 19.06.2024 | Accepted: 24.06.2024 | Published: 01.07.2024

*Corresponding author: Nubonyin Hilda Fokong
Faculty of Education, The University of Bamenda

Abstract

It is almost a truism that no reforms in education can succeed without teachers, as they are at heart of all education endeavors. Thus, this paper attempts to find out if the innovations in the GCE Ordinary Level Economics syllabus serves as a determinant of students' academic performance. The study used the survey research design. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the regions while simple random sampling techniques was used to select respondents from nine regions out of the ten regions in Cameroon. Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table, the sample size was found to be 197 respondents out of a total population of 402. Data was collected using questionnaire, observation checklist and interview guide. To ensure reliability, the test and re-test results revealed that the instrument was 96% reliable. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. A mean of 3.00 was set as cut off point that is, all scores of 3 and above were accepted as Economics syllabus reforms or changes being strictly implemented. The overall weighted mean results of 2.74, 2.29 and 2.48 revealed that teachers do not strictly adhere to the aims, objectives and contents of the current Ordinary Level GCE Economics syllabus and that appropriate methods and instructional resources are not being used in the implementation of this syllabus. Based on the findings, it was recommended that teachers and students should use innovative teaching learning methods and materials, own copies of the current syllabus and exploit it.

Keywords: Economics syllabus, GCE ordinary level, innovation, students' academic performance.

Introduction

The improvement of the quality of education in a school system requires the development of adequate strategy and sustained action in key domains of the schooling process. One of these is the syllabus which is the heart of the schooling process. It is indeed, the focus of education practice: teaching, evaluation, supervision, administration, and counselling. In Cameroon, considerable

attention is being given to syllabus change and improvement since 1997 by the GCE Board. In 2001, the proposal to restructure the GCE was endorsed by the European Economics Commission (EEC) and accepted by the Council of the GCE Board and approved by the then Minister of National Education. Bearing this in mind, the GCE Board on the 5th of November, 2004 restructured

the syllabuses of the various subjects to meet up with the standards of modern development in testing (Cameroon, GCE Board, 2015). Among the subjects restructured was Ordinary Level (O Level) Economics. Aspects of the syllabuses that were restructured or reformed included: aims, objectives, contents, structure, instructional method, assessment method, time and resources.

Worthy of note is the fact that, after five (5) years of implementing the 2004 new Ordinary Level Economics syllabus, the syllabus is again restructured in 2012. This decision is driven by the rapid changes in technology. This decision is justified by the fact that, there is the need to shift from skill-based approach to a competence-based approach through real life situations, a need to shift from a school cut off from society to one that prepares citizens for a smooth insertion into socio-cultural and economic activities and a need to shift from evaluation of knowledge to that of competences necessary to sustainable development (MINESEC/IGE/IP-SS, 2014). In this circumstance therefore, the new syllabus defines the essential competencies that should be acquired by learners within the first cycle of secondary education in terms of knowledge, know how and attitudes. The new syllabus equally defines the methodological approach that teachers should use to teach Economics at the 'O' level. From this insight, perhaps one important question which begs for an answer is: What is the significance of all this frequent restructuring of the syllabus to learners?

Here the answer is simply. Today, technology is changing in the workplace, the home and daily life. As such, the objectives of teaching Economics are tailored to meet the critical needs of our society: To know the nature and scope of economic concepts and principles so as to understand the subsequent topics; to understand the role of production, its effects to the economy of Cameroon, and the principles of public finance, to explain public revenue and expenditure in Cameroon; to apply economic principles to such problems as inflation, population, unemployment and balance of payment in the economy of Cameroon; and to analyze the principles of price market to explain the distribution of goods and services and that of international trade to explain Cameroon's position in international economy. From the perspective of assessment and evaluation, the Cameroon GCE Board (2015) confirms the aforementioned explanation when they reiterate them as assessment objectives for 'O' Level Economics. In spite of this assessment objectives that are relevant for the development of competencies, perhaps the important question that requires an answer is whether the content of 'O' Level in the old and new syllabus are similar or different?

This question is indeed relevant because, the contents of 'O' Level Economics is being restructured to comprise twelve topics as opposed to nine topics in the old syllabus. In the new syllabus, Business Unit and Agriculture / Industrialization are being separated from production. Also, economic development and growth is being added as a topic at the 'O' Level (MINESEC/IGE/IP-SS, 2014). From the revision of the content, it can be deduced that besides meeting the needs of the digital revolution, this revision is intended to help bridge the gap between O' level and Advance (A) level Economics. For this content to be effectively implement, there is need for a question like what are the methodological approaches?

By all means the new syllabus prescribes the use of active methods or teaching techniques which place the learner at the centre of instruction as opposed to the old syllabus that advocated for the use

of teacher centre approaches. According to the new syllabus this implies that, the competency-based approach of learning leans on teachers' effective use of discussion, brainstorming, role play/simulation, group work, presentation, interviews, enquiries/excursion/field trip, practical work, lecture and analysis of documents (MINESEC/IGE/IP-SS, 2014). From the foregoing discussion, it is obvious that for teachers to implement the syllabus effectively they need to align their teaching approaches with instructional resources and evaluation types. Unfortunately, the syllabus did not prescribe but somewhat describe the instructional aid and the use of diagnostic evaluation, formative and summative evaluation are highly recommended (MINESEC/IGE/IP-SS, 2014). If all the necessary measures to ensure the effective implementation of this current syllabus is being resolved, so the question is: What could be the performance of the students given the changes in the syllabus?

According to statistics obtained from the GCE Board data base (the Cameroon GCE Board Booklet on the June GCE Examination results volume 2), the general performance of students is below 50% when the old syllabus is used, apart from 2001 and 1999 when students taught using the old syllabus registered the highest performance. Interestingly, the highest performance that students registered when the new syllabus is used is in 2007. Moreover, in 2012 when the new syllabus is again introduced, there is an increase in performance. In 2014, there is a fall in performance, then a sharp increase in 2015, then a fall in 2016 and a further fall in 2017. An increase in performance is registered in 2018 which drops in 2019 and increase sharply in 2020 then to 2022. However, there is a drop in 2021. From these results, the rhetorical question that arises is that are the objectives of reforming or restructuring the syllabus in order to improve students' performance being attained? What factors contribute to the level of attainment of this objective? Consequently, this paper attempts to find out if the innovations in the GCE Ordinary Level Economics syllabus serves as a determinant of students' academic performance.

This study set out to answer the following questions:

- 1) To what extent do teachers follow the aims, objectives and content of the current GCE Ordinary Level Economics syllabus?
- 2) To what extent do teachers use appropriate teaching methods to teach Economics as stipulated by the current GCE Ordinary Level Economics syllabus?
- 3) To what extent are appropriate instructional resources being used in the implementation of the current GCE Ordinary Level Economics syllabus in secondary schools?

Literature Review

Conceptually, Tyler, (1975) as cited by Okobiah, (1986) in Nduanya (1986) defines the aims and objectives of the syllabus simply as "what changes in student behaviour should result from the syllabus". The changes include a change in knowledge, attitudes and skills. He states that content refer to the educational experiences to be provided in order to achieve the purpose. He further stipulates that, learning experiences are the inclusive activities and related opportunities created and provided the learners for the purpose of achieving the desired changes embodied in educational objectives. In other word MINESEC/IGE/IP-SS (2014) simply defines the content as the subject matter (that is. notion, concepts, principles, laws, theories, facts and information

from the different subjects that constitute the school curriculum) and also related activities in which the learner would be engaged during the process of learning. Unlike the content, teaching methods refer to the mode of inquiry which spells out the procedures and process for communicating and organizing facts and information for the learners. Some of these modes of inquiry include lecture method, student-centred method, etc. (MINESEC/IGE/IP-SS, 2014). Available learning resources refer to the human resources (such as teacher quality) and educational resources (such as textbooks, teacher guide, and time factor) that serve as effective instruments for enhancing educational performance among students and teachers (Harbison and Hanushek, 1992). The evaluation strategy refers to the process of finding out how far the learning experiences, as developed and organized in the syllabus are actually producing desired results (Tyler, 1975 as cited by Okobia, (1986) in Nduanya, 1986).

The theoretical framework on which this study is based is Piaget's (1978) and Vygotsky's theories of constructivism. Interestingly, Piaget's and Vygotsky's model, advocated for discovery learning and collaborative learning. These theories relate to the present study in that, increasingly, the trend in educational reform is to teach from a constructivist perspective. The teaching of Economics follows this current trend. This implies teachers should give students the chance to interact with their environment through participating in stimulating activities in which they will acquire more skills.

Empirically, June 1997 and 2021 report on (525) Economics states that many teachers of Economics focused only on selected topics of the syllabus and in some cases neglect essential aspects of the subject content. This poor coverage of the syllabus accounts for the 48.92% passed in Economics in 1997. In relation to this, Kesamang and Barungwi (2006) research findings revealed that a lot of the errors found on students' scripts are from the topics that the students had not yet been taught by the time of testing. In assessing the contribution put above, Tchombe (1998) asserts that, the curriculum is never covered, and even if it is, there is always a rush, consequently poor teaching and poor results.

Also, June 2004 to 2021 reports laid emphasis on the syllabus. Much of the syllabus content was never covered as a result of strike action. Many teachers and students of Economics study without reference to the official syllabus. For instance, many answer scripts are reported by the examiners to show that much effort is spent by some candidates on memorizing and reproducing material from outdated publications. As such, they are not properly informed about the aims/objectives and scope of the examination paper in this subject. This accounts for the 42.51% passed in 2004, 37.50% passed in 2009, 58.50% passed in 2012, 33.98% passed in 2014, 32.51% passed in 2018 and 46.55% passed in 2021 respectively.

From the perspective of teaching methods and strategies, Fokong (2023) used a sample of 192 secondary school Economics, History and Geography students and reports that, some teachers were not very effective when using experiential activities base on games; however, they could use experiential activities base on field trip, group work and role play to enhance students' academic performance. Moreover, Fokong (2022a) used economics learners and teachers at secondary schools in Cameroon and reiterates that to enhance students' performance teachers should teach using a transformative method like collaborative learning, problem-solving, illustrated lecture and discussion besides lecture and

explicit teaching methods. This is because it motivates students to take responsibility of their own learning. To reaffirm the above findings Oladele, et al., (2019) argue that academic performance in Economics is below average in Nigeria due to non-use of innovative teaching methods. Similarly, Saluhudeen et al. (2018) chi square results state that, teachers should adopt oriented methods and use concrete objects to enhance students' academic performance in Economics. To corroborate the above findings, Ganyaupfu (2013) results demonstrate that teacher-student interactive method was the most effective teaching method, followed by student-centred method while the teacher-centred approach was the least effective teaching method.

From the perspective of instructional resources, Fokong (2022b) used questionnaire, focused group discussion and one sample t-test to justify that teachers' use of cartoons in social science classes as a teaching device positively promoted cooperative learning, problem-based learning, transformative learning and critical thinking amongst students. Similarly, Fokong and Shafack (2020) used a survey research design and explained that economics teachers have inadequate knowledge on how to establish a classroom environment and to plan instructions that address students' needs. To buttress this view, Tafah (1997) used the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) technique and revealed that though different school inputs act in various ways to influence performance, all public schools scored 68.4% while private schools scored 67.6%. Therefore, there was no much difference between performances in both types of schools although the number of teachers remain the most important determinant of cognitive achievement.

According to Mpako, (1996), the time allocated to the teaching of Economics in schools as compared to other subjects is often short to enable the teacher to cover the syllabus for GCE Ordinary Level Economics for three years, as in the case in government grammar schools. He further explains that much will depend on the number of teachers and the size of the classes for the teachers to cover the syllabus. Furthermore, Mpako, (1996) argues that a majority of the teachers teaching Economics are not qualified to teach it at the level they are teaching. This is because of the acute shortage of qualified teachers in Economics.

Moreover, other factors that affect the teaching / learning of economics include lack of resources such as textbooks, teacher guide, journals, newspapers, from which current economic problems are commonly discussed, libraries, diagrams, pictures, computer, radio and television (Mpako, 1996). In an earlier study, Mbua, (1980) has shown a range of teaching aids in Economics particularly the use of the chalkboard, tables of various data, diagrams, such as charts, pie graph showing relative values of exports on a country of tax revenue from direct and indirect taxes, bar graphs showing sex ratio in a given population, and flow diagram showing bilateral balance of trade between France and Cameroon. From the foregoing discussions it is evident that to improve learning, resources must be distributed wisely and managed well at the school level. This implies that school principals play a significant role in the implementation of the syllabus (Lynch, 2005).

Methodology

This study that employed the survey research design was conducted in Cameroon. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the regions. Simple random sampling techniques was used to

select respondents from nine regions (Centre, East, Far North, Littoral, North, North West, South, South West and West) out of the ten regions in Cameroon. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) was used to obtain the sample size. Specifically, the sample size was found to be 197 respondents out of a total population of 402. The sample comprised 09 regional pedagogic inspectors (RPIs) out of a population of 09, 15 chief examiners out of a population of 15, 171 examiners or teachers out of a population of 376 and 2 technical GCE Board officials out of a target of 2. Data was collected using questionnaire, observation checklist and interview guide. The questionnaire used was made up of 33 close ended items and 3 open ended items. The observation checklist was constructed taking into consideration aspects of the study which the researcher had to observe in a classroom setting. The interview guide was made up of open-ended questions. Statistics on performance at the GCE “O” Level Economics were based on percentage of passes for each year from 1997 to 2022.

Content validity of the instrument was attained when ten copies of the questionnaire were distributed to ten Economics students who were organizing GCE revision classes in different vicinities in Buea. To ensure reliability, the test and re-test method was used. Comparing the responses for the two tests revealed a 96% similarity. The researcher personally administered the instrument to the respondent on a face-to-face basis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data. A mean of 3.00 was set as cut off point that is, all scores of 3 and above were accepted as Economics syllabus reforms or changes being strictly implemented while scores below 3 were regarded as Economics syllabus reforms or changes not being strictly implemented. This statistical method was used to verify the hypotheses.

Presentation of Results

In presenting the descriptive statistics, the demographic results are presented after which the results are presented according to the specific research questions. This section end with the presentation of the interview results.

According to the demographic data analyzed, there were 64.1% of males and 35.9% of females in the sample. This implies that the sample was dominated by male participants. With respect to qualification, 56.4% of respondents had DIPES I, 19.5% had B.A. /B.Sc., 11.8% had M.A. /M.Sc., 9.7% had DIPES II and 2.6% had other certificates. Thus, the sample was dominated by holders of DIPES I. This indicates that the respondents from this sample are qualified for the teaching profession. From the perspective of work experience, most of the respondents (64.1%) have a working experience of 6 – 10 years, followed by those of working experience of 16 years and above, then those of 0 – 5 years; and finally, those of work experience of 11 – 15 years. This implies that a majority of respondents have therefore acquired adequate skills in their profession. In terms of the type of school, a large majority of respondents (78.5%) teach in government schools; 13.3% teach in denominational schools, while 8.2% teach in lay-private schools. This implies that the respondents have a good knowledge of their work environment since they have taught there for a relatively long time.

With respect to research question one, when the responses of questionnaire Items relating to implementation of aims, objectives and content of syllabus were evaluated and weighed by using the response format and measuring scale in section 3, 77.4% of respondents were classified to have disagreed on implementation

of aims, objectives and content of syllabus while 22.6% agreed. Based on the observation checklist, 60% of the teachers observed do not take the general aims of the Economics syllabus into consideration when teaching; 60% do not actually follow the objectives as laid down in the syllabus; 70% did not exploit the content of the syllabus as expected.

With regards to research question two, when the responses of questionnaire Items relating to implementation of teaching methods were evaluated and weighed by using the response format and measuring scale in chapter 3, 80.5% of respondents were classified to have disagreed on implementation of teaching method while 19.5% agreed. Furthermore, 80% of the observed teachers took a central stage in lesson delivery; 90% did not structure their lesson for all students to explore the environment and discover knowledge by themselves; only 20% had an active participation of students in class, and 30% evaluated their students at the end of their lesson.

With regards to research question three or instructional resources, 74.4% of respondents were classified to have disagreed on appropriate use of instructional resources in the implementation of the current syllabus, while 25.6% agreed. Moreover, 60% of the teachers observed were trained teachers; 30% used appropriate textbooks to teach; none of the teachers used a variety of teaching aids, while only 10% used a few teaching aids.

Table 1: Analyses of interview with GCE Board Technical Officials

SN	Item	Responses
1	What were the reasons for reforming the GCE “O” level Economics syllabus?	-To improve on learning outcomes. -To meet with global trends. -To integrate technology into the lesson. -To have students participate with the new tools or methods of instruction. -To improve on the relevance and adaptability of the syllabus.
2	Were the reasons congruent with the objectives of the 1995 National Education forum and the 1998 law on Education?	-Yes. Following the 1995 forum and 1998 law some curriculum changes have been introduced such as: New pedagogic approach. That is problem solving and scientific approach to teaching and learning to discourage rote learning.
3	What resources were put in place by the GCE Board to ensure the implementation of the reforms?	-Instructional materials such as print materials (copies of the new syllabus, textbooks, teachers’ guide, workbooks, pamphlets, and magazines) were made available at the GCE Board office, Regional Delegations, press-book shops etc. -Audio media, visual materials and interactive media were used for sensitization of Economics specialists. -Holding of seminars with RPIs, chief examiners who were expected to in due course organize seminars for HODs and

		teachers. -Encouraging subject specialists/ experts to write new scheme of work, textbooks etc.
4	What are the implications of Economics syllabus reforms on Cameroon secondary education policies?	-Education will be relevant, productive and adaptable. -Education will be effective and efficient.

From table 1, in-depth interviews confirmed that the main objective for syllabus reforms was to improve on the quality of results obtained in GCE subjects; to develop teaching methods that are relevant to the present-day technology and cultural needs of Cameroon; to improve on the professional growth and development of teachers; to improve on instructional resources and to create syllabuses that are efficient, effective and appealing.

With regards to the inferential statistics, the verification of hypothesis 1, 2 and 3 is presented in table 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

Table 2: Weighted Means of Items Relating to Teachers Use of Aims, Objectives and Content of Current Syllabus

SN	Item	Mean
7	The content of your lessons is drawn from the current Economics Syllabus	2.9
8	The content of your lessons is not drawn from the outline of textbooks	3.4
9	You take into consideration the aims of the current Ordinary level Economics Syllabus when formulating your lesson objectives	2.3
10	Some of your lesson objectives are different from those of syllabus objectives	3
11	The objectives of your lessons are the same (congruent) with those of the current ordinary level syllabus	1.9
12	The schemes of work you use in teaching Ordinary level Economics was drawn from the objectives and content of the current ordinary level syllabus	2.1
13	Most often you completely cover the content of the syllabus before the end of academic year.	2.43
14	You do not leave out some topics when covering your schemes of work	2.95
15	You give more emphases on some topics than others	3.15

16	Most teachers hardly complete their schemes of work	2.75
17	The volume of the content of the current ordinary level syllabus is enough to equip students with basic skills needed to change society.	2.89
18	Economics syllabus content can be covered within three years.	3.1
	Total	32.87
	Overall Mean = Total/total number of items	2.74

In table 2, the overall weighted mean on the implementation of current aims/ objectives and content is 2.74 on a five-point scale. The cut-off point is 3; this implies that the syllabus aims/objectives and content of the current syllabus are not strictly followed.

Table 3: Weighted Means of Items Relating to Teaching Methods

SN	Item	Mean
19	Teachers follow a step-by-step procedure to explain such concepts and principles to students.	2.15
20	During Economics lesson students less frequently are engaged in copying notes.	1.72
21	In few occasions, during Economics lessons students are actively engaged in solving real world problems	1.89
22	Students less frequently complete price and quantity tables, draw curves and analyzing or interpreting economic concepts.	2.22
23	During Economics lesson students rarely work together in groups	3.23
24	A teacher rarely ensures that during Economics lesson students are actively engaged in self-directed learning.	2.55
	Total	13.76
	Over all weighted mean = Total Mean/Total Number of items	2.29

In table 3, the overall weighted mean of responses relating to methods teachers use in implementing the current Ordinary Level Economics syllabus is 2.29 on a five-point scale. This implies that teacher do not use appropriate methods in teaching Ordinary Level Economics because this weighted is far below the cut-off point (3).

Table 4: Weighted Means of Items Relating to Instructional Resources

SN	Item	Weighted Mean
25	The available Economics textbooks can enable the attainment of aims, objectives and content of the current Ordinary level Economics syllabus	2.78

26	The available Economics textbooks provide practical exercises used for the application of Economic concepts and principles.	2.35
27	Economics textbooks are designed to cover all contents, aims and objectives in the Economics syllabus.	2.25
28	There are enough trained teachers to teach Economics in my school.	3.5
29	Economics seminars and workshops organized at regional and divisional levels are always based on the syllabus.	3
30	Economics seminars / workshops do equip teachers with knowledge and skills to enable them improve on their teaching and students' performance in Economics.	2.24
31	I own a copy of the current Economics syllabus and I consult it before teaching.	2.45
32	Most often I use instructional materials such as charts, graphs, newspaper articles and concrete examples in the teaching of Economics.	1.65
33	There are enough instructional resources available for the teaching of Economics in my school.	2.15
Total Weighted Mean		22.37
Overall weighted mean= Total Mean/Total Number of Items		2.48

In table 4 the overall weighted mean on the instructional resources being used in the implementation of the current GCE Ordinary Level Economics Syllabus in secondary schools is 2.48 on a five-point scale whose cut-off point is 3. This implies that appropriate instructional resources are not being used in the implementation of the current Economics syllabus.

Discussion of Results

The results indicated that teachers do not follow the aims, objectives and content of the current GCE Ordinary Level Economics Syllabus when teaching their Economics lessons. This is justified by the weighted mean of 2.74 obtained. This finding is indicative that teachers have defy MINESEC/IGE/IP-SS (2014) and Cameroon GCE Board (2015) objective of effectively implementing the current 'O' Level Economics syllabus so as to ensure that, there is a change in the student in terms of knowledge, know-how and attitudes. Furthermore, this finding is supported by items 13 and 16 of the teacher's questionnaire, (which asked teachers whether the current Economics syllabus is overloaded in terms of content), that registered a mean of 2.4 and 2.7. This implies that the content of current syllabus is not strictly implemented. This may have accounted for the below average performance registered after 2012 at the GCE Examination.

When there is a change in the curriculum, there is need to evaluate whether the concepts and principles are understood, whether the objectives covered in Economics can equip students with skills that can integrate them in the society and whether theories and principles taught in class can address economic and socio-cultural problems (like inflation, unemployment, and so on.). Items 7, 9,

11, 12 and 17 of the teacher's questionnaire, registered a mean of 2.9, 2.3, 1.9, 2.1 and 2.8 respectively. This implies that the syllabus aims, objectives and content of the current syllabus are not strictly implemented. Also, this finding is confirmed by analysis of observation checklist item relating to aims, objectives and content, June 1997 to 2021 report on (525) Economics, Kesamang and Barungwi (2006) and Tchombe (1998) findings that, the curriculum is never covered due to teachers not actually following the objectives as laid down in the syllabus; no exploitation, rush and teaching of outdated content, strike actions and so on. Holistically, this implies that, Economics students nowadays are not well equipped with the skills needed to integrate them in the society.

Furthermore, the results show that teachers do not use appropriate teaching methods to teach Economics as stipulated by the current GCE Ordinary Level Economics Syllabus. This is justified by the weighted mean of 2.29 obtained. This result is in consonance with Fokong (2023) and Oladele, et al., (2019) findings that academic performance in Economics is below average due to non-use of innovative teaching methods. This finding is further confirmed by the results from the qualification, work experience and observation check-list. This implies that even though most of the teachers are experienced the predominance of the lecture method in lesson delivery in Economics must have accounted for the less desired results relating to performance in Economics. This result point to the fact that teachers rarely use the participatory/active teaching methods as prescribe by the new syllabus. This problem does not differ from what Fokong (2022a), Saluhudeen et al. (2018) and Ganyaupfu (2013) discovered as concern the use of innovative methodologies in Economics. They reiterate that to enhance students' performance teachers should teach using a transformative, oriented or teacher-student interactive methods.

The results indicated that appropriate instructional resources are not being used in the implementation of the current GCE Ordinary Level Economics Syllabus in secondary schools. This is justified by the weighted mean of 2.48 obtained. This finding is supported by items 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33 of the teachers' questionnaire, that registered a mean of 3, 2.24, 2.45, 1.65 and 2.15 respectively. This implies that although Economics seminars are always based on the syllabus, teachers are not still well equipped with skills to enable them improve on performance. Teachers neither consult syllabus nor use charts, graphs and concrete examples in teaching. Besides, schools do not provide sufficient instructional resources for the teaching of Economics. Thus, only 10% of teachers used a few teaching aids to teach, while none used a variety of teaching aids. Other researchers corroborate the findings by asserting that the effective use of teaching aid (Fokong, 2022b; Mbua, 1980), human resources (Fokong and Shafack, 2020; Tafah, 1997) and time resources (Mpako, 1996) remains some of the most important determinants of cognitive achievement. To reaffirm the previous findings, items 25, 26 and 27 of the teachers' questionnaire registered a mean of 2.78, 2.35 and 2.25 respectively. This implies that the available Economics textbooks are not designed to cover the whole syllabus thus, compromising, the attainment of aims, objectives and content of new syllabus. Also, this finding is confirmed by analysis of observation checklist item relating to appropriate use of textbooks. Only 30% of respondents used appropriate textbooks to teach. As such, students, in the learning process, are not well equipped with the skills needed to fully integrate them into the society. These findings are similar to Mpako (1996) as well as Harbison and Hanushek (1992) findings

that the lack of appropriate textbooks by teachers mar the effective teaching and learning of Economics.

From the forgoing discussions, the findings of this current study point to the fact that, the objectives of restructuring the syllabus are not being attained. It is equally evident from the findings that to enhance students' academic performance in Economics, regional pedagogic inspectors, principals, vice principals and head of department for Economics must effectively monitor the implementation of the current GCE Ordinary Level Economics syllabus components (such as: aims, objectives and content, teaching methods and instructional resources) because they serve as salient determinant of students' academic performance in secondary schools. Lynch (1999) reaffirms this assertion.

Conclusion

1. Teachers do not follow the aims, objectives and content of the current GCE Ordinary Level Economics Syllabus when teaching their Economics lessons.
2. Teachers do not use appropriate teaching methods to teach Economics as stipulated by the current GCE Ordinary Level Economics Syllabus.
3. Appropriate instructional resources are not being used in the implementation of the current GCE Ordinary Level Economics Syllabus in secondary schools.

Recommendations

1. Regular in-service training is necessary for all teachers of Economics in order to keep them abreast with current research findings and updates on curriculum development. Teachers are also called upon to use appropriate teaching methods, high quality teaching aids during lesson delivery so as to sustain the interest of the learner. This will go a long way to improve performance. They should also purchase and make use of the current syllabus and the required textbooks, give assignments regularly to students and meticulously correct them.
2. Students are encouraged to work in groups. All students are encouraged to own the prescribed textbooks for Economics and other study aids to assist them in their individual study.

References

1. Cameroon GCE Board (2015), *Regulations and Syllabuses for Ordinary Level General Education Subjects*. Limbe: Presprint.
2. Cameroon GCE Board (1997-2015), *Cameroon GCE Board Booklet on the 1997 to 2008 GCE Examination Results: Volume 2*. Limbe: Presprint.
3. Fokong, H. N. (2023). Pedagogical innovations in secondary education: An analysis of experiential learning strategies for teaching and learning effectiveness in Bamenda II Municipality. 16th International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation (ICERI), held in Seville, Spain 13th-15th November, 2023, 9348-9359.
4. Fokong, N. H. (2022a), Economics curriculum and teaching for transformative learning: The case of the anglophone sub-system of education in Cameroon. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 13(12), 98-108.
5. Fokong, N. H. (2022b), The use of critical pedagogy in social science education: An analysis of cartoon on teaching and learning outcomes in the Bamenda Municipality. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 12(14), 31-40.
6. Fokong, N. H. and Shafack, R. M. (2020), Teachers' knowledge of students' conceptions as predictor of students' academic achievements in grammar secondary schools in Mezam Division, Cameroon, *African Journal of Social Sciences*, 11(4), 75-86.
7. Ganyaupfu, E. M. (2013), Teaching methods and students' academic performance, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 2(9), 29-35.
8. Harbison R.W. and Hanushek E. A. (1992). "Educational Performance of the Poor Lessons from Rural North East Brazil". World Bank Publication. Oxford University Press. U.S.A.
9. Kesamang, M and Barungwi, S.B. (2006). "Aligning Educational Policy with research in assessment: Error analysis in an international study of mathematics and science: The case of Botswana". In Annual Conference Association for Education Assessment in Africa (AEAA): The Royal Swaziland Convention Centre 28th August to 1st September 2006, Swaziland.
10. Krejcie, R.V. and Morgan D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational Psychology Measurement Journal*. (30) 607-610.
11. Lynch, T. J. (2005). An Evaluation of School responses to the introduction of the Queensland 1999 Health and Physical Education (HPE) Syllabus and Policy Documents in three Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) Primary Schools.
12. Mbua, F.N. (1980). *A Textbook on Economics for Cameroon GCE 'O' and 'A' Levels* (2nd Edition). Yaounde: CEPER.
13. MINESEC/IGE/IP-SS (2014): *Republic of Cameroon, Ministry of Secondary Education, Inspectorate General of Education Economics Syllabus for Form 3, 4 & 5 Classes: Inspectorate of Pedagogy for the Social Sciences*. MINESEC/IGE/IP-SS, 2014.
14. Mpako, E.A.M. (1996). New Direction in the Teaching of Economics in Secondary School. ME.d Thesis, University of Nigeria.
15. Nduanya M. O. (Ed). (1986), *Associateship Certificate in Education Series: Curriculum Studies* (1st Edition) Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.
16. Oladele, J.I., Akano, O.T., Joseph, M.H. and Owolabi, H.O. (2019), Impact of innovative practice on the academic performance of secondary school students in Economics in Ilorin Metropolis, *ASSEREN Journal of Educational Research and Development (AJERD)*, 6, 115-121.
17. Piaget, J. (1978), *The language and thought of tile child*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
18. Salahudeen, L.A., Abigail, A., and Abraham, O. A. (2018), The effects of teaching methods of Economics on students' performance: A case study of selected secondary schools in Ojo Local Government Area, Nigeria, *ICONIC Research and Engineering Journals (IRE)*, 2(4), 109-119.
19. Tafah E.O. Edokat (1997). Private Versus State Schools: An Evaluation of the Relative Performance of Public and Private Primary Schools in Cameroon. *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*. 2 (2).

20. Tchombe T. M. (1998). Structural Reforms in Education in Cameroon. School of Education University. Date Retrieved: May 29, 2024 at <http://www.unifri.ch/ipg/ecodoc/conferences/Docu-pdf-conf-inter.pdf>.