



Multilingualism and Language of Instruction Policies in Cameroon's Primary Schools

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Abstract

Cameroon is a multilingual country where multiple indigenous languages coexist alongside French and English as official languages. A survey was conducted with teachers and parents from selected primary schools across different regions of Cameroon. The data collected included responses to questionnaires and interviews. The findings reveal a mixed approach to language use in the classroom, with some schools adhering strictly to French or English while others incorporate local languages as well. This results in varied student achievement levels depending on the school's diversity policy. While multilingual education has potential benefits for linguistic development and cultural preservation, it faces challenges related to resource allocation and teacher training. Implementing a more consistent language of instruction across schools would enhance educational equity and effectiveness. Additionally, professional development programmes for teachers are essential to support the integration of local languages in the curriculum.

Keywords: *Multilingualism, Cameroon, Indigenous Languages, Bilingual Education, Sociolinguistics, Language Policies, Community Engagement*

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