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A STUDY OF THE RELATION BETWEEN PARENTS' PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL AND THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE REFORM OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN CAMEROON

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John Kale
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The idea of reforming the educational structures and curricula of African societies is not new. The Phelps-Stokes Commission (1922) criticized the wholesale transfer of education conventions of Europe and America to the peoples of Africa. The Nuffield Foundation (1952) noted that education in Africa was bookish, divorced from reality and gave its pupils a distaste for manual work and rural life. When the IPAR project was launched in April 1967, Cameroon's Head of State pointed out that the main objective of the project was the adaptation of the system of education inherited from the colonial past to the needs of Cameroon.

So far, efforts at adaptation have not met with success (Phelps-Stokes Commission: 1922). Wilson (1963), Clignet and Foster (1966) have noted that Africans have resisted any change in the precepts and practice of the system of education inherited from the colonial past.

Why do Africans resist educational innovations which are oriented to the realities of African life? Put in other words, why do Africans prefer the western type curriculum as opposed to an indigineous African curriculum?

This question has intrigued me for some time and in fact spurred me to carry out this study.
The main thesis of this study is that, reaction to educational innovation is a function of the perception people have of education. To investigate this thesis, a group of consumers of education namely parents in the district of Yaounde were chosen for treatment.

Our first aim was to investigate the way parents perceived education. Do parents send their children to school because they desire that their children be educated or because they desire that their children benefit from the material advantages arising out of education in commerce, industry and the civil service? Put in other words, are children sent to school to learn for the sake of learning or to learn so that they may benefit from the material rewards that come thereafter?

The second aim was to examine the relationship between parents' perception of education and their attitude toward the reform programme that has been proposed. We wanted to know whether perception influenced attitude toward the reform programme.

The ultimate goal of the study was to attempt to formulate research questions rather than answer them and to illustrate and test a methodology for exploring them.
1. The problem and its Setting

Certain socio-economic and cultural realities have convinced politicians, administrators and educational experts that the aims, curriculum and structure of the school system in Cameroon need be reformed. This need has not only been felt by politicians, administrators and educational experts but even as a former minister of education pointed out in his opening speech at the seminar for political and administrative cadres in Yaounde, the graduates of the school system feel the need for the reform.¹

This need has become even more pressing as criticisms of this school system which Cameroon inherited from her colonial past grow in leaps and bounds. Among the major criticisms is the inadapted nature of the system to present day socio-economic and cultural realities of Cameroon.²

The general inadaptation of the system to Cameroonian realities can be seen at two levels.

¹ Opening speech by the Minister of Education at The Seminar for Administrative and Political Cadres on the Reform of Primary Education in Cameroon, (MINEDUC, Yaounde, 1973), pp. 5-9.

At the first level, it creates a gap between the school and the natural and human milieu of pupils. The schools have no place for those aesthetic activities such as tribal music, dancing, folklore and so on. These are elements which touch the roots of Cameroonian emotional life. As a result, graduates of the system know more about French or British culture as the case may be than about Cameroonian culture.

At the second level, the system trains "pen pushers" instead of technocrats. Every youngster attending school aspires for an office job. This aspiration does not reflect present day realities of the labour market. The public bureaucracies which would have absorbed the "pen pushers" are already full to capacity. The result of this absence of synch between the school system and the labour market is the mass unemployment of school graduates particularly those from the primary level.

The white collar job mentality which this system gives its graduates explains a number of attitudes among Cameroonian youths. They tend to hold a disdain for manual work, they prefer living in the urban areas and have little or no regard for the Cameroonian cultural heritage.

Cameroon has therefore opted for a system of education which will place great emphasis on agriculture, the practical vocational aspects of education and Cameroonian culture. By placing emphasis on agriculture, craft and cattle keeping, the new system will be reflecting the economic realities of the country.

This sector of the economy as we have already pointed out has been looked down upon by primary school graduates due to the type of training they receive at school. If graduates are expected to participate in this sector then the proper feelings, knowledge and skills should be inculcated at school. The curriculum of the new school system will therefore also reflect the human geography, history, moral values, traditions and economy of the Cameroonian society.

4Ibid. pp. 43-44.
Cameroon's head of State has pointed out on several occasions that numerous employment opportunities exist in the primary and secondary sectors of the economy.\textsuperscript{5} The reformed school by equiping youth with the right attitudes and skills that are necessary for functioning within these sectors will go a long way in solving the problem of youth unemployment which plagues the country at the moment.

It has also been pointed out that the search for a system of education which is in synch with the culture, traditions and economic needs of the country does not mean that modern scientific and technological progress taking place in the developed countries will not be taken into account when planning school curricula.\textsuperscript{6} The new school system will keep pace with modernity but unlike the former which borrowed blindly from the developed countries, it will do selective borrowing. In other words only those aspects of modernity which are functional and are adaptable to the Cameroonian context will be given place in the new curriculum.

2. Statement of the Problem

Aberle and others (1950) and Olsen (1968) point out that all societies and organizations must provide for the socialization of new members. According to these authors, socialization remains one of the most salient functional prerequisites of all societies and organizations. It makes for the continuity of the norms and traditions that govern all social systems. In most modern societies the socialization function is performed by a number of institutions among which are the church, family, place of work and school. Of these social institutions the school has so far been one of the most important. It trains for life in society and for life at the work place. Most societies expect the school not only to equip the young with skill such as literacy and numeracy but also to inculcate the right attitudes to life.

\textsuperscript{6}Ibid. pp. 43-44.
Merton (1957) identified two functions of social institutions. According to him social institutions perform manifest and latent functions. Manifest functions constitute the social and ethical services or roles which institutions perform in society. These services or roles justify the raison d'être of social institutions in society. In Cameroon, the primary functions of the school are the provision of training in academic and/or vocational skills, citizenship and conduct for participation in the life of the society. These are the services or functions which the society as a macro system expects from the school. They are the manifest functions of the school and are derived from the manpower needs, culture and traditions of the Cameroonian society.

Latent functions are those services or roles which individual actors perceive as being performed by social institutions. They could be regarded as the micro functions of social institutions because they are a function of the personal needs of the individual actors in a social system. For example, Blau and Duncan (1967) and Wilson (1963) have observed for the United States and West Africa respectively that the school for most people has increasingly become an important avenue for upward social mobility. Scolarization has equally been associated with other variables such as: escape from the countryside, white collar employment and so on.

Very often there is discordance between the manifest functions and the latent functions of the school. Society as a macro system looks up to the school for the provision of skilled labour and for the perpetuation of its norms and values while individual actors look up to the school for their personal needs. For example, the manifest functions of school in Cameroon as we have already pointed out are the provision of training for those skills that are required by the economic system and training for participation in the social and cultural life of the society. For individual actors the school performs essentially latent functions such as: increasing earning power, escape from manual work, opportunity to reside in urban areas and so on.
In this study we want to argue that parents' perception of school in Cameroon is a function of the latent services or functions which school performs in the Cameroonian society. We shall argue further that if parents' perception of school is a function of the latent services, roles or functions which school performs in the society then their attitude toward the reform of primary education in Cameroon will be favourable only if the reformed school performs those latent services, roles or functions which they have always associated with school.

As we have already pointed out, the inability of the present school system to prepare large numbers of Cameroonian youth for participation in the major economic sectors of the economy as well as for participation in the socio-cultural life of the society at large has challenged the raison d'être of this school system which was inherited from the colonial past.

However, even though there is a felt need for a reform of the school system, consensus on the aims, curriculum and structure of the reformed school can be a source of disagreement between planners, that is, politicians, administrators and educational experts on the one hand and societal pressure groups such as parents, teachers or students on the other. Such disagreement can be engendered by the manner in which the role of the school in society is perceived. Parents may perceive the role of the school essentially from the point of view of its latent functions while planners may perceive its role essentially from the point of view of its manifest functions. Such perceptions are bound to colour reactions toward the reform process. Griffiths (1962) makes this point when he states that public agreement on matters concerning education is hard to come by because each person thinks first of the welfare of his own children and not of what is fairest for everyone. Another cause of disagreement over an educational reform can be ignorance on the part of pressure groups. Some may oppose a reform programme due to ignorance of the manpower needs of the country while others may oppose it due to ignorance of the tenets principles upon which it is founded.
3. **The Hypothesis**

We submit the hypothesis that parental perception of the latent functions which the school performs in the Cameroonian society will significantly influence their attitude toward the reform such that:

- Parents who perceive the school as satisfying its manifest mandate will be favourably disposed toward the reform.
- Alternatively parents who perceive the school purely in terms of its latent functions will be generally less favourably disposed toward the reform.

Stated for testing in its null form the hypothesis now reads: There will be no significant relationship between parental perception of the functions school performs and their attitude toward the reform. Broken down for testing are:

- Parental perception of school as performing its manifest functions will produce favourable attitude toward the reform.
- Parental perception of school as performing its latent functions will result in unfavourable attitude toward the reform.

4. **Plausible Rival Hypotheses or Control Variables**

There are a number of variables other than parents' perception of school which can influence their attitude toward the reform. These will be retained here as plausible rival hypotheses. They are:

- The amount of information that parents have about the reform.
- Parents' occupation.
- Parents' level of education.
- Parents' age.
- Parents' sex.

These variables can introduce variations in parental attitude toward the reform. By randomizing our sample and using statistical models such as the multivariate analysis of variance, we shall control them.
5. **The delimitations of the study**

There are several dimensions of parents' attitudes toward the reform which invite indepth scholarly probing. However, in this study we shall be primarily concerned with their attitudes towards the aims and content of the reform. This restricted scope of inquiry is necessitated by the contraints of time and money.

The study and analysis of a concept such as attitude to which both sociologists and psychologists have given a number of definitions without arriving at a common one poses the problem of choice of definition of studies dealing with this concept. Our study is not an exemption from this problem. Therefore, our personal interpretations of some of the numerous definitions for the purpose of arriving at a definition which will be pertinent and germane to this study constitute another limitation.

As we pointed out earlier there are a number of plausible rival hypotheses that can explain parental attitude toward the reform. Out of these we have chosen a few for control. This choice is arbitrary hence a limitation of this study.

The title of this study presupposes a larger universe than the actual universe from which our sample will be drawn. We shall study parents' attitude toward the reform in the Yaounde district. Our data will therefore be descriptive of parents in this area only and will of necessity limit our range of generalizability.

Even though we shall take all the necessary precautions to ensure the validity and reliability of our instrument of measurement, we do not consider the instrument perfect. Our interpretation of data will therefore suffer from this shortcoming.
6. **The Definition of Terms**

**Parent**

A household head having at least one child attending primary school. This definition is broad enough to include in our sample guardians who may not necessarily be biological parents but who have authority over their charge's education; widows and widowers, single men and women, separated men or women who are responsible for the schooling of one child or more.

**Perception**

A mental image that one can have about an object, a situation, a social institution, and so on. This image influences the way one relates to these variables. Parents' perception of school is thus the mental image that they have of the school. Indicators such as: type of education, type of career and amount of schooling, that parents would want for their children can be used to operationalize this concept.

**Education**

In the context of this study will refer to formal schooling.

**Primary School**

The level of schooling that caters for pupils between the ages of six and thirteen years. It is not uncommon to find pupils older than the maximum in Cameroonian primary schools.

**Attitude**

Summers (1971) points out that the concept attitude has been given many definitions over the years. Having reviewed the definitions given by Cook and Sellitz (1964), Campbell (1950), Thurstone (1920) and Katz and Stotland (1959), Summers points out certain areas of concensus among this variety of definitions.
First of all an attitude is a predisposition to respond toward an object rather than the actual behaviour toward that object. The readiness to behave is one of the qualities which is characteristic of an attitude. Thus we can find differences between people's verbalizations about certain objects or situations and their concrete behaviour when they are confronted by the object or situation. La Pierre (1934) carried out a study which proved that there is a difference between what people say about a stimulus object and what they do when confronted by the stimulus object.

This discordance between verbalizations and overt behaviour poses a problem in the measurement of attitude - how are we sure that what a person says about say, the reform of primary education in Cameroon portrays the way he will behave toward the reform concretely? For a proper measurement of attitude toward the reform, it is important that there be some amount of consistency between what the person says and what he can do or what he does concretely when confronted with some aspect of the reform.

Secondly, an attitude is persistent over time. According to Summers this is not to say it is unchangeable but rather that it makes for the consistency of behaviour. This quality is important for measurement purposes as we shall see later when discussing attitude scales.

Thirdly, attitude as a latent variable gives rise to consistency among its manifestations whether they be in the form of verbalizations about the object, or approach or avoidance of the object. This is another quality which helps in the measurement of attitude. An attitude can motivate an individual to behave toward a social object. As Summers (1970) points out,

"There is a general agreement that attitude connotes preference regarding outcomes involving the object, evaluations of the object, or positive-neutral-negative affections for the object". 7

In this study we shall consider the concept attitude as consisting of two essential elements. Firstly it connotes a state of preparedness which is more or less permanent and secondly, this state of preparedness is usually in relation to some social object. It is thus an original concept which is useful in the attribution of certain psychological states which express the degree to which a subject may favour or not favour certain events, certain customs, certain people, certain ideas and so on. Thus knowledge of a subject's attitude vis-à-vis any of these social situations or objects can help in the prediction of the subject's behaviour toward them.

School reform

In the context of this study will refer to the reform of primary education in Cameroon.

7. The Social and Theoretical Utility of the Study

Parental support for the reform is crucial. In a recent edited volume on Innovation in Mass Education (Street, 1971), the articles collected by David Street give considerable attention to the relationship of the schools to the community. These studies make it clear that parents are a force to be reckoned with in attempting to change public schools. Mort (1964) and Mackenzie (1964) have also made allusion to the important part that citizen and parent groups play in the diffusion of educational change.

That decisions on curricula are a professional responsibility of teachers and educational experts is indisputable; given the important part that parental support can play in the diffusion of educational change we argue that the curriculum should not remain the exclusive province of teachers and educational experts. Education is a total process, involving the home and the school. We therefore feel that an active and informed parental support for the work of the school is of crucial importance at all times.
This research will therefore study parental attitude toward the reform of education in Cameroon. It shall seek answers to questions such as: To what extent do parents see the reform as a good thing? How informed are they about the reform? Will they be willing to respond to it in a helpful supportive way?

Obviously the answers to these questions will be of interest to planners of the reform. They will provide knowledge of parents' feelings toward the reform. Such knowledge could be used as an indicator of extent to which parents will be willing to commit themselves by action or otherwise when the reform is operationalized.

Politicians and educational experts need dependable answers to these questions since the answers could also be used as a basis for making changes in the reform. As far as we know no concrete empirical studies have been done so far to seek parental opinion on the reform. This study can therefore be regarded as a pilot attempt.

Educational researchers have paid relatively little attention to parents in their studies of innovation diffusion. In the twenty three studies of innovation collected by Miles (1964), not a single study examines parental reaction, except occasionnaiely to note in passing that parents can make or break innovative efforts. Given the limitations noted earlier, this study is not meant to be more than a pilot effort, perhaps worthy of replication on a larger scale at some future time. We seek in this study to arrive at greater precision in the formulation of research questions for future exploration, and to illustrate and test a methodology for exploring them. This study does not purport to provide definitive answers to pertinent policy questions, but only preliminary hints.

Parents through taxes pay for their children's education and this give them the right to be heard in matters concerning education. A study of this nature can serve as a communication medium between parents and the planners of architects of the reform.
The government attaches a lot of importance to the reform of the system of education. To this end, substantial material and non-material resources have been put in both from the government and international organizations such as: The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund and the United Nations Development Programme. It is important that the government get some feedback on people's reactions as this will help in making decisions for future changes in the system of education. Such information can also be used to back the government's demand for more aid from international organizations.

The results of this study can also be useful to the institute that has the mandate to actualize the reform. Factual information on the aspects of the reform which enjoy popular support among parents will be provided. Armed with such information, the institute could decide on the adaption of new strategies to make the reform more acceptable in its entirety.
CHAPTER II

THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. The Problem of Attitude Measurement

The most crucial factor in a study dealing with a latent or hypothetical variable such as attitude is centred around the question: How do we go about measuring it? Hollander (1967) points out that the most widespread approach to measuring attitudes has been the attitude scale. In this chapter we shall review literature on the techniques for attitude scale construction, the functional aspects of each technique, and the characteristics or basics requirements of attitude scales in general.

Campbell (1950) defines measurement as the assignment of numerals to objects or events according to a rule or a set of rules. In attitude measurement numbers are assigned to persons in such a way that the assigned numbers reflect the person's attitudes vis-à-vis the object or event in question. An attitude being a latent variable cannot be directly observed hence attitude measurement consists in the assessment of a person's responses to a number of statements which are often called items. The items are constructed in such a way that they reflect all the pertinent aspects of the object or event which is being measured. There are usually a number of response categories for example, "agree", "neutral", "disagree", and the person is requested to choose one. The value assigned to an individual's response is called an item score, and the number derived from his item scores concerning a given social object represents his position on the latent variable.
An attitude scale therefore consists of a set of items and the item scores (Shaw and Wright: 1967). This is the sense we shall use each time we refer to attitude scale.

Most writers on attitude scales (Thurstone: 1929, Likert: 1932, Guttman: 1944, Edwards: 1957) point out that a useful scale must yield consistent results if it must be reliable and should measure what it is purported to measure. On this point Summers says that:

"Attitude measurements are meaningful only when they accurately reflect the attitude. Inaccuracy of, or discrepancy between the observed attitude score and the "true" scale is known as measurement error. That is, the observed attitude score, \( X_o \), is the true attitude score, \( X_t \), plus the error in measurement \( X_e \). Formally,

\[
X_o = X_t + X_e \tag{1}
\]

Ideally one would like to have \( X_t = X_o \) and thereby eliminate measurement error".\(^8\)

One of the first questions that confronts the investigator is that of the choice of the technique for measurement: which technique measures best what he wants to measure? Other questions are: which method is least costly in time and money but is at the same time simple to construct? With these questions in mind we shall examine two of the most commonly used methods for attitude measurement. We shall also examine comments and empirical studies on these methods. We believe that this exercise will ultimately provide some basis for making rational judgements on what method to use in this study to operationalize the variables. The techniques in question are those developed by Thurstone: (1929) and Likert: (1932).

Thurstone and Chave (1929) in their study of attitudes toward the church developed a technique for the construction of scales for the measurement of attitudes. This technique is generally known as the method of equal appearing intervals or simply the Thurstone technique.

This method entails the construction of questions on the positive or negative characteristics of the attitude variable. These statements or items are given to subjects who are required to indicate their agreement or disagreement with a set of items about the attitude variable. These responses are then given to a selected number of judges who on the basis of consensus among themselves arrange the responses in eleven piles of cards starting from the most favourable to the least favourable opinion. The eleven piles of cards are then scored on an eleven point continuum.

Thurstone (1929) makes the assumption that judges in their agreement can accurately evaluate item validity. According to him then, there is no systematic error.

Hovland and Sherif (1952) have been able to demonstrate with empirical evidence that judges make finer discrimination among items near their own position than among items more distant from their own position on the attitude continuum. This evidence weakens the amount of reliability that can be expected from the scoring procedure of the Thurstone technique.

The use of judges poses another limitation to the Thurstone technique. Rice (1930) summarizes this limitation very cogently when he points out that:

"The difficulty of building scales similar to Thurston's and applying them to measurement of the attitudes of groups, become increasingly difficult once we leave the classroom, the discussion club and other small, comparatively infrequent and highly selected groups that enjoy having experiments tried on them. Such groups already have developed ways of making their attitudes articulate."
It is the more numerous workaday groupings of society, which are inaccessible to his controlled measurements, about whose attitudes the social scientist is in the most need of information. Students may be required, good natures academicians may be cajoled, and sundry needy persons may be paid to sort cards containing propositions into eleven piles. But it is difficult to imagine securing comparable judgements, or satisfactory measurements on the final application, from nuns, stevedores or seamstresses and, unless the scale itself is based upon equal-seeming differences to a random sample of the group which is to be measured, its validity—the degree to which it measures that which it purports to measure—becomes open to question. 9

Likert (1932) also points out that the Thurstone method makes a lot of unverified statistical assumptions and that it is extremely labourious to construct. He says this about the method:

"It seems legitimate to inquire whether it actually does it work better than the simpler scales which may be employed, and in the same breath to ask also whether it is not possible to construct equally reliable scales without making unnecessary statistical assumptions." 10

Likert (1932) developed the method of sumated ratings for the measurement of attitudes. In this method, the investigator chooses a number fo items which he feels are pertinent to the attitude he intends to measure. He then presents these items to subjects who are expected to indicate for each item one of five responses namely: "Very favourable", "favourable", "undecided", "disapprove", "disapprove strongly". These responses will indicate the nature of the subjects' attitudes vis-à-vis each item. The responses are then given values ranging from one to five. High values indicate the most favourable positions to the attitude in question. The sum of the values constitute the total scores of the individual.


This technique has been highly acclaimed by investigators for its reliability, simplicity in construction and economy in terms of time and money. Before we examine the empirical studies which allude to these advantages of the Likert method, it will be worthwhile to examine the hypothesis that Likert makes concerning his method of scale construction.

Edwards and Kenney (1948) summarize the four main characteristics of Likert's method of summated ratings as follows:

1. "It avoids the difficulties encountered when using a judging group to construct the scale" (Murphy and Likert, 1938, p.24);
2. "The construction of an attitude scale by the sigma method is easier than by using a judging group to place the statements in piles from which the scale values must be calculated" (Murphy and Likert, 1938, p. 43);
3. "It yields reliabilities as high as those obtained by other techniques with fewer items" (Murphy and Likert, 1938, p.p.42-43);
4. "It gives results which are comparable to those obtained by the Thurstone technique. More generally the method of summated ratings seems to avoid many of the shortcomings of existing methods of attitude measurement, but at the same time retains most of the advantages present in methods now used" (Murphy and Likert, 1938 p.42).

To test the above hypothesis, Likert (1932) used data gathered from a research project he began in 1929 with Murphy. He used the data to test the reliability and the scoring procedure used in his method and that of Thurstone. His findings demonstrate that it is possible to construct an attitude scale by the Likert method that will yield reliabilities as high or higher than those produced by the Thurstone method and that using the Likert method of scoring on a Thurstone scale produced a higher reliability. After these findings, he points out that:

"This is possible because it uses an approach to the problem somewhat different from that conventionally used. Previous attempts have been made to find the scale value of each person's score being then determined by the score value of the statements that he accepts. In this study however each statement becomes a scale in itself and a person's reactions to each statement is given a score." 11

Edwards and Kenney thus made a study which employed the two techniques independently. Their findings reveal the possibility of constructing scales by the two techniques which will yield comparable reliability. They however, point out that scales constructed by the Likert method would yield higher reliability coefficients with fewer items than scales constructed by the Thurstone method. They also found out that the Likert scale is less time consuming and less laborious than the Thurstone technique. These findings while invalidating Ferguson's argument help to conform Likert's hypothesis as well as his earlier findings.

Eysenck and Crown (1949) constructed a Thurstone scale to measure anti-semitism. The items were judged and placed on an eleven point continuum of favourableness to Jews. After administering it to two hundred University students, the split half reliability was found to be .83 (un-corrected). They considered this reliability unsatisfactory so they readministered the scale asking for Likert type responses from a second group of two hundred students. The split half reliability was .90 (uncorrected). This further confirms the high degree of reliability that can be expected from the Likert method.

Barclay and Weaver (1962) carried out an empirical study to answer the question: Which of the two techniques would yield a satisfactory attitude scale in the least amount of time? They found a reliability coefficient of .97 (uncorrected) for the Likert scale and a coefficient of reliability of .66 (uncorrected) for the Thurstone method. The total construction time for the Likert scale was 5,620 minutes while that for the Thurstone scale was 8,049 minutes.

Another empirical study was made by Poppleton and Pilkington (1964) to answer the question: Which method would yield the more valid attitude scale score and appropriate external criteria? Their findings reveal that both the Thurstone and Likert methods yield approximately equal validities and that the predictive validity of both methods is equally high.
The commentaries and empirical studies which we have reviewed in this chapter provide information or evidence in favour of the reliability, simplicity, and economy in terms of time and money of the Likert method over the Thurstone technique. With 20-25 items, we can construct and score a scale by the Likert method with a coefficient of reliability of .90 or more whereas for the same amount of reliability we need at least 50 items if we use the Thurstone technique.

2. The Fundamental Requirements of an Attitude Scale

Having examined the functional aspect of the most commonly used scales in attitude measurement, it will be worthwhile to look at the fundamental requirements or properties of an attitude scale as well as the procedures or methods for achieving them.

Psychologists and social psychologists point out that a useful attitude scale is one that yields reliable, valid and precise results. According to McNemar (1946), if the study of attitudes and opinions is to ever approach scientific status, it is important that these fundamental requirements are reasonably attained. Shaw and Wright (1967) point out that:

"The usefulness of an attitude scale depends upon its properties. At minimum, a useful scale must be reliable (yield consistent results) and valid (measure what it is purported to measure)."

For Kerlinger:

"If one does not know the reliability and validity of one's data little faith can be put in the results obtained and the conclusion drawn from the results."

He used his scoring procedure on items designed for the Thurstone scale and found out that the reliability of his procedure was equally high even when he used fewer items.

Another study was made by Likert, Roslow and Murphy (1934) to further substantiate the hypothesis that the Likert scoring procedure when applied to a Thurstone scale, yields more reliable results. Ten scales were constructed using the Thurstone method to measure attitudes toward birth control, the Chinese, communism, evolution, Germans, God (2), negroes and war (2). The Likert procedure for scoring was used. The findings supported the hypothesis.

Ferguson (1939-1941) has criticized these findings. He argues that a test of reliability which scores items constructed by the Thurstone method on a Likert scale is not valid. According to him:

"One should compare scales constructed (independently of the Thurstone method) by the Likert technique with those constructed by the equal-appearing interval method".13

Ferguson's criticism is supported by Edwards and Kenney (1946) when they point out that:

"A valid comparison of the Thurstone and Likert techniques, we believe, must start with an original set of items, not with items sifted by the Thurstone procedure and then scored by Likert's method, and not with items sifted by the Likert procedure and then scaled by the Thurstone technique".14


Thurstone: 1929, Likert: 1932, Guttman: 1944 and Edwards: 1957, point out that a useful scale should yield consistent results if it is to be reliable. Shaw and Wright (1967) define reliability as the degree to which a scale yields consistent scores when the attitude is measured a number of times. This notion is thus very much linked to the empirical question: How can a scale be constructed so that it yields results which are consistent with reality? In other words, how can a scale be constructed so that if a measure is repeated a number of times the results will remain consistent? Johoda and all (1951) answer this question as follows:

"When a measurement is repeated under the same conditions, it will yield the same results to the extent that it is free from random or variable errors". 17

There are a number of empirical procedures or methods that can be employed to determine the extent to which any measurement instrument is free from random or variable errors hence the extent to which it is reliable. Kerlinger (1964), Shaw and Wright (1967), mention the following: the test retest method, the equivalent forms methods, and the split half method.

The test retest method

This method entails the administration of a battery of questions to the same group of subjects on two temporally separated occasions. The investigator then computes the product moment correlation coefficient between the two sets of measures and this serves as the reliability estimate of the test or instrument.

The major advantages of this procedure according to Shaw and Wright (1967) are that it holds constant the items used and in this way eliminates unreliability due to differences between items, and also requires only a single scale.

The disadvantages of this method are many. As Campbell and Stanley (1963) point out there are several extraneous variables such as: history, maturation, the effect of testing, instrumentation or "instrument decay" and statistical regression which can jeopardize the internal validity of this procedure. Kuder and Richardson (1957) sum up the disadvantages as follows:

"The retest coefficient on the same form gives, in general estimates that are too high, because of material remembered on the second application of the test. This memory factor cannot be eliminated by increasing the length of time between the two applications, because of variable growth in the function tested within the population of individuals". 18

They further point out that the difficulties inherent in this procedure are so many that it is rarely used.

The equivalent forms method

The investigator who uses this method has to develop two tests considered to be equivalent. He then administers them to the same group of subjects. The two sets of scores are correlated to obtain the estimate of reliability using the Spearman Brown formula. It is also possible for the investigator to use more than two forms in which case the average of the intercorrelations of the forms is taken as the estimate of reliability.

Since the forms are administered at the same time, the effect of extraneous variables (Campbell and Stanley: 1963) on the internal validity of the forms are minimized. According to Shaw and Wright (1967) this is the major advantage of this method.

The method however relies too heavily on the equivalence of the forms for its reliability estimate. As Kuder and Richardson point out:

"There is no unique value of the reliability coefficient. In the quest for equivalence, the shift of items from one form to the other will affect the magnitude of the coefficient. In this situation, there are \( \frac{2n!}{2(n!)^2} \) coefficients, again not equally defensible". 19

The split-half method

This procedure permits the investigator to arbitrarily divide the test into two parts. For example, all odd numbers could constitute one group and even numbers the other. The correlation coefficient of each part is then computed and the Spearman-Brown formula for double length is used to estimate the reliability coefficient of the whole test.

Commenting on the disadvantages of this procedure, Kuder and Richardson point out that:

"A more pertinent observation about the split half coefficient is that it is not a unique value. There are \( \frac{n!}{2(n!)^2} \) ways of dividing a test of \( n \) items into halves. Each one of these ways of splitting the test gives its own estimate of reliability". 20

Brownell having reviewed a number of empirical studies points out that:

"The correlation of scores on test-halves measures only the degree to which scores on the two parts are consistent. Any manipulation of test items, or of other conditions, which improves this consistency therefore becomes a method of measuring the reliability coefficient whether it increases the reliability of the test or not". 21

20 Ibid. p. 152.
He further points out that the coefficient obtained by test halves and then by stepping up the measure through the application of the Spearman-Brown formula is not rightly the reliability coefficient for the given test unless the assumptions underlying the formula are satisfied.

The central point in Brownell's paper is that for the split-half technique to yield the reliability estimate of a test, the underlying assumptions of the Spearman-Brown formula must be fully applied. Failure to do this results in reliability estimates of the content of the test rather than of the measuring instrument per se.

Having examined the limitations of the various procedures for estimating the reliability of a measuring instrument, test or attitude scale, Kuder and Richardson (1937) developed a number of formulas for computing a unique value of the coefficient of reliability in tests. The applicability of any of these formulas depend on the amount of information the investigator has about a given test, and upon the degree of accuracy desired. For example, some formulas require information such as the number of items in the test, the difficulties of the items, the inter-item correlations, and the standard deviation of the total test. From this information the coefficient of reliability of the instrument is computed.

Having looked at the different formulas, formula 20 seems to be the most ideal for an attitude scale. This formula can be used to compute the coefficient of reliability of a scale if the following information is available: the number of items, the standard deviation, the difficulties of the items and the average variance of the items. Empirical evidence (Kuder and Richardson: 1937, p. 160) demonstrates that reliabilities as high as .808, .825, and .716 can be obtained by using this formula. This method calls for less computation hence accomplishing a material saving in labour. Kuder and Richardson (1937) point out that this method appears to be adequate in any case.
In attitude scales like all other psychological measurements perfect reliability is impossible, yet the question of how high the reliability for a given purpose should be if it is to be satisfactory remains moot. For McNemar:

"If a study involving measurement is worth doing, every effort should be made to attain accurate measurements rather than being satisfied with just any reliability".22

He however points out that the nearer the reliability coefficient is to unity, the more accurate the measurement. Johoda and all (1951) in attempting to answer the question point out that satisfactory reliability;

"Depends upon one's purpose. If one wishes to distinguish precisely among a group of people who are similar in the characteristic being measured or if one hopes to find close relationships between variables, it is necessary to have highly reliable instruments. If one wishes only to distinguish at the extremes or to determine whether a relationship exists, high reliability in the measure is not so necessary".23

For Kerlinger, reliability is defined so to speak, through error:

"The more error, the greater the unreliability; less error, the greater the reliability".24

The knowledge of the reliability of measurements has a number of practical advantages for the investigator. Such knowledge can enable his assert the degree of confidence he may have that an individual who scores higher than another on the measure is truly higher, it also helps in determining the kind of relationships that exist between subjects, the characteristics of subgroups in the sample, etc.


23 Johoda, Marie, Morton Deutch and Stuart Cook, op. cit. p. 106.

3. The Validity of an Instrument

The problem of validity is that of supplying evidence that the device used measures or classifies the attitude it was deviced to measure. As McNemar (1946) points out, this is an old problem that has engendered much debate. Questions such as: Does an expressed opinion actually represent a person's real attitude? Can verbal or symbolic behaviour be depended upon as indicating an individual's action tendency? What is the degree of relationship between overt nonverbal and verbal behaviour? According to McNemar (1946) these are moot problems. Studies by La Pierre (1934) and by DeFleur and Westie (1954) demonstrate that there is a difference between expressed behaviour and overt behaviour. These findings question the operational significance of the notion of validity in attitude measurement. As Kerlinger points out:

"Most criticisms of psychological and educational measurement, by professionals and laymen alike, center on validity. This is as it should be. Achieving reliability is to a large extent a technical matter. Validity, however, is much more than technique. It bores into the essence of science itself. It also bores into philosophy. Construct validity, particularly, since it is concerned with the nature of "reality" and the nature of the properties being measured, is heavily philosophical".25

Inspite of the complexity and controversy which surrounds the subject of validity, writers (Kerlinger: 1964, Shaw and Wright: 1967, Jahoda, Deutsch and Cook: 1951) point out that validity is an important property of any measuring instrument. They identify four types of validity namely, predictive, concurrent, content, and construct validity.

Predictive Validity

To achieve predictive validity, a test is administered and on the basis of the scores obtained, the investigator predicts a future behaviour. When the future behaviour is measured at the estimated time scores are correlated with scores of the first test. The degree of correspondence is taken as the estimate of validity. The period of waiting between test and occurrence of the predicted behaviour can be a constraint on the use of this procedure.

Concurrent Validity

This procedure entails the administration of the attitude scale and the criterion measure at approximately the same point in time. The danger in this method as Shaw and Wright (1967) point out is that one data collection operation may influence the other thus yielding spuriously high estimate of validity. Kerlinger (1964) points out that obtaining criteria poses a difficulty as most often criteria do not exist and even when they do exist their validity is doubtful.

Content Validity

According to Kerlinger;

"Content validity is the representativeness or sampling adequacy of the content - the substance, the matter, the topics - of a measuring instruments".²⁶

To achieve this form of validity the investigator constructs items that are representative of the content or universe of content of the property being measured. Kerlinger (1964) suggests that the investigator should examine critically the items for their relevance to the attitude being measured. He suggests that the investigator can also ask his colleagues to help in the evaluation of items.

Construct Validity

This type of validity is evaluated by the determination of the relationships between the attitude score and other aspects of the personality. Cronback and Meehl (1955) point out that achieving this type of validity calls for the investigation of the psychological qualities which the scale measures and a demonstration that certain explanatory constructs account to some degree for the attitude scores. Shaw and Wright (1967) mention

the known groups technique as one of the most familiar for estimating construct validity. The underlying logic in this approach is that if the defined groups hold different attitudes toward a given object, then a valid scale to measure the attitude in question should yield different scores for theses groups.

Kerlinger (1964) points out that construct validity is concerned with the psychological property or properties which can explain the variance in the test. For him this form of validation contrasts sharply with the other forms which define the validity of a measure purely by its success in predicting a criterion.

4. Other Desirable Properties of an Attitude Scale

Writers make mention of characteristics such as: equality of units, unidimensionality, and the zero point as being desirable for an attitude scale.

McNemar illustrates the equality of units property as follows:

"If we have A scoring 4, B scoring 6 and C scoring 8, it simply cannot be said with any certainty that A and B differ as much as C and B or that C possesses twice as much of the attitude as A".27

That attitude scales have not attained this degree of precision is evidenced by the fact that out of the large collection of attitude scales assembled by Shaw and Wright (1967), none has been shown to have equality of units. McNemar (1946) points out that the most an attitude scale can do is the rank ordering of groups of individuals. Kerlinger (1954) seems to reiterate this point when he mentions that an attitude scale shows the directions to which values differ on a single continuum. Hollander makes this point in his definition of attitude scales:

"The most widespread approach to measuring attitudes has been the attitude scale. In general, such scales consist of a number of statements with which a person may agree or disagree along a dimension with several points, usually ranging from "highly agree" to "highly disagree". In this way both the direction and degree are indicated by the response to each statement or "item". Typically these items all relate to some common social entity, person, issue of activity. Responses are then summed to provide a score indicating the person's overall attitude".28

Among many other advantages, this property permits the comparison of scores of one person with those of another on the same scale.

The scale property of unidimensionality is very apparent in the definition of attitude scale by Hollander (1967) cited above. Shaw and Wright (1967) point out that a scale is unidimensional if it measures a single attitude. On a unidimensional scale a person's attitude score reflects only his position on the underlying attitude continuum, thus two or more persons having the same score will be on the same position on the psychological continuum (Lineberg: 1954).

This property helps in the classification of individuals vis-à-vis the attitude being measured. McNemar points out that:

"The single dimension requisite is not only pertinent when a score or a response is being interpreted; it has an important bearing on research which is designed to analyse individual differences in attitude, i.e. to determine the correlates of attitudinal differences. Such an attempt at explaining variation is handicapped if the variability under analysis is rendered more complex by the presence of many continuum in the measuring instrument".29

Shaw and Wright (1967) point out that it is desirable that attitude


scales have a zero point. This is the point at which the quality of the attitude changes from positive to negative or vice versa.

This property is closely linked to the meaning of the two extremes on a scale. The implications of the presence of this point on a scale according to Shaw and Wright (1967) are: one could more readily answer questions such as: whether it is easier to move a person from a moderate to an extreme position, whether a neutral person is open to or against conformity to the attitudes of group members. For these questions to be answered we need to know what the extremes stand for but as McNemar (1946) points out this question has not been resolved.

McNemar (1946), Johoda and all (1951) mention a number of external procedures for ascertaining validity such as, following scale administration with extensive interviews in order to see whether the first expressed position holds up under cross examination, using the ratings of close acquaintances, etc. As Johoda and all (1963) point out such procedures of validation depend upon many factors such as, the quality with which the points on the rating scale are defined, the training and competence of the raters, their familiarity with the people being rated, etc.

Johoda and all (1963) mention precision as another important property of the attitude scale. According to them the precision of a measuring instrument is defined in terms of the specificity or exactness with which it is able to localize the position of any individual with respect to the characteristics being measured. Thus, they feel an attitude scale with five graduations is more precise than one with two.

5. The Wording of the Attitude Statements

The way in which the items in an attitude scale are worded can
influence the reliability, validity and precision of the attitude scale. McNemar point out that:

"It is difficult to see how a reliable and valid response can be secured unless the respondent understands the given issue. Likewise, he must be able to understand the questions asked him".30

Edwards points out that:

"A well constructed attitude scale consists of a number of items that have been just as carefully edited and selected in accordance with certain criteria as the items contained in any psychological test".31

Having reviewed the work of Wang: 1932, Thurstone and Chave: 1929, Likert: 1932, Bird: 1940 and Edwards and Kilpatrick: 1948, Edwards (1957) presents a comprehensive list of criteria for the construction of attitude scale statements. Among other criteria, items should not be factual or capable of being interpreted as factual, they should be unambiguous, they should be relevant to the attitude in question, etc. (See also, McNemar: 1946, p. 297).

Edwards (1957) suggests that one of the best procedures in the preliminary evaluation of the statements is to have several individuals respond to the statements as they would if they had favourable attitudes towards the object under consideration. The same group of individuals could also be asked a second time to respond to the statements as they would if they had unfavourable attitudes. Such evaluation could help eliminate many ambiguous as well as factual material.

The method of colleague evaluation which Kerlinger (1964) suggests for content validation can also be used. According to this procedure the

investigator after constructing the items, requests some of his colleagues to judge whether the wording and sense of the items are pertinent and germane to the attitude or issue he wants to measure.

6. Conclusion

In a survey research such as the one we propose to undertake, the attitude scale seems to be the most appropriate instrument for measurement. It has a number of properties such as: reliability and unidimensionality which if well exploited can help in the inference and classification of the range of responses that subjects give.

The items on attitude questionnaires do not require much time to answer. This is so because essentially the items are supposed to be short and precise. Since one of the constraints on this study is time we consider this property an advantage because if the items are short and precise they will elicit short and precise answers thus making the classification stage of the study relatively fast. This also means that too much of our subjects' time will not be taken.

Some scholars, LaPierre (1934), and DeFleur and Westie (1954) have used empirical evidence to challenge the certainty or confidence we can have in saying that what we measure is consistent with actual behaviour. As a matter of fact this issue has engendered much debate in attitude measurement. Even though such a debate is beyond the scope of a Masters thesis we feel that the issue of inconsistency between expressed behaviour and overt behaviour can be taken care of by the construction of clear and precise items. It is also possible that variables such as: the problem being investigated and the context in which it is being investigated could produce inconsistency between expressed behaviour and overt behaviour. To
apply the findings of these scholars to all attitude studies will therefore be fallacious. As Klineberg points out, the discrepancy between "attitudes" and "actions" is striking but warns us that:

"At the same time it would be unfair to conclude that the study of attitudes as verbally expressed is a waste of time and effort. Frequently there is consistency, both internal and external. LaPierre's results may be a function of rather specific circumstances and therefore not applicable to attitude measurement in general." 32

In this review of related literature we also sifted out the merits and demerits of the attitude scales developed by Thurstone and Likert. We cannot however say, that the one is better than the other. We feel such a distinction depends very much on the subjective judgements of the investigator as well as the nature of the problem under investigation and the amount of resources available. Our choice of measuring instrument would therefore be essentially influenced by the objectives and limitations of this study rather than by what other scholars have said about the techniques we have reviewed.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

1. The Population

The geographical area that was covered in this study is the district of Yaounde. We felt that in order to gather information that would be pertinent and germane to this study, the data universe had to be restricted to those parents whose children were attending the experimental classes of the reform in the district of Yaounde. It is this group of parents which we considered to be in a better position to know something about the reform since they could get first hand information from their children. Our target population was therefore defined as: all parents residing in the district of Yaoundé and whose children were attending the experimental classes of the reform in any of the public schools in the district.

The district of Yaounde is carved out into four subdistricts namely, Yaounde I, Yaounde II, Yaounde III and Yaounde IV. In each of these subdistricts there are public and private primary schools. At the time this study was carried out, the reformed curriculum was being experimented only in the first two classes of some of the public schools. It was the population of parents whose children attended these classes that interested this study.

The data in Table I, which was extracted from "Statistics for 1974/75
Academic Year", published by the Ministry of National Education, shows the breakdown of public school attendance in the district of Yaounde.

**TABLE I. The Breakdown of Public School Attendance in the District of Yaounde.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subdistrict</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yaounde I</td>
<td>10,595</td>
<td>5,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaounde II</td>
<td>13,578</td>
<td>7,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaounde III</td>
<td>6,901</td>
<td>5,502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaounde IV</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31,590</td>
<td>18,152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49,742</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were about 40 primary schools in the whole district at the time the study was done and out of these, 11 were experimenting the reformed curriculum in the first two years of the cycle. We assumed that if there were about 50 pupils per class and there were 22 classes, we would have a population of about 1,100 from which to select the sample.

On the 8th. and 9th. of March, we made visits to all the 11 public schools that were following the reformed curriculum. We wanted to cross check the assumed figures with the actual figures in order that we could have an idea of the actual population from which we were going to draw the sample of the study. Our experience in the field showed that classroom population fluctuated between 50 and 60 pupils. We then figured out that we would be dealing with a population of about 1,300. Through these visits we were also able to learn that each subdistrict had at least two and no more than three experimental schools. This information was handy at the
time we were deciding on the sampling procedure.

2. The Sample/Sampling Procedure

Since there were at least two schools in every subdistrict and given the unstable nature of the classroom population, we decided to select two subdistricts and then take all the pupils in the experimental classes for the sample. Even though this procedure limited the degree of generalizability of the findings, it had the advantage of limiting the physical distances that we had to cover thus it helped us to save both material and human resources.

Leedy, writing about population samples points out that:

"The sample should be so carefully chosen that through if the researcher is able to see all the characteristics of the total population in the same relationship that he would see them were he to inspect the totality of the universe of data".33

By using all the pupils in two subdistricts, the main variations such as: age, sex, level of education and type of occupation, which existed in the larger population were well reflected.

The sampling procedure which we used to ensure the representativeness of the sample is that of randomization which Leedy defines as:

"Selecting a part of the whole population in such a way that the characteristics of each of the units of the sample approximates the broad characteristics inherent in the total population".34

The random sample procedure guarantees a high degree of precision.


34Ibid. p. 93.
The names of all the four districts were written on pieces of paper and then folded. A colleague was then called upon to pick a first and then a second. The sample was random in the sense that the subdistricts in the sample were chosen by the lottery method which guaranteed the possibility of having any of the four subdistricts in the sample. No subdistrict had a better chance of being chosen over the other. Yaounde II and Yaounde IV were the two subdistricts selected. Table II shows the number of experimental classes and the number of pupils in each of these subdistricts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subdistrict</th>
<th>Public school</th>
<th>No. of pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yaounde II</td>
<td>Nkolndongo I</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nkolndongo II</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaounde IV</td>
<td>Nlongkak I</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essos I</td>
<td>115/438</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Data Collection

The data for this research was collected through the questionnaire which is in Appendix A. The questionnaire had 60 items. Items 1-23 were used to measure parents’ perception of the functions of education, items 24-50 to measure attitude toward reform and items 51-60 to measure attitude toward moral and civic training.

4. The Items on Perception of the Functions of Education

In order to construct the items on the perception of the functions
of education, we examined a few commentaries on the role that education had played in Africa and how this role has coloured people's attitude toward schooling. From these commentaries the main variables which are popularly associated with education were sifted and used to construct the items.

Most scholars who have written on the development of education in Africa (Calvert: 1925, Foster: 1965, Clignet and Foster: 1966, Abernethy: 1969), point out that the aims of education during the colonial period were: to strengthen the colonial regime by producing literates who could occupy subordinate positions in the civil service, to produce clerks and book keepers for the commercial houses and to spread the culture of the western world.

School curricula were developed to reflect these aims. Scanlon (1964) points out that these curricula prepared children for clerical activities or work in the government agencies and commercial houses much to the neglect of manual activities. From the onset therefore, schooling was associated with "bookish" training in the three Rs and disassociated from manual and agricultural training.

Foster (1965) commenting on early education in Ghana points out that African aspirations were oriented to clerical occupations in commerce and government and, most particularly, to the financial rewards accruing to such occupations. According to him, the products of the school were unwilling to engage in any industrious manual occupations. He further points out that:

"Education, in practice, was valued for its cash return and it remained the only mode by which individuals could partially dissociate themselves from traditional society and enter the
small but relatively lucrative number of posts then open to Africans. Generally speaking, the student was guided by what appeared most advantageous for his temporal advancement".35

A.F. Calvert (1925), commenting on education in the Cameroons, noted that the anxiety for schooling was spurred by the idea of getting a European job.

Even after the colonial era, education is still perceived as the means for achieving power, wealth and progress. Parents send their children to school because they feel the school is the surest avenue to upward social mobility. Abernethy (1969) points out that in Eastern Nigeria, a particular family emphasized academic excellence either because the head of the family had received training himself or because he wished for his children the benefits denied him by his lack of education.

The perception of education as the key to power, wealth and progress, was further re-enforced by the success of the educated in achieving freedom from colonial rule. After independence, educated Africans manned high offices in the public bureaucracies. These offices did not only command good salaries but also permitted residence in former European residential areas and participation in urban life.

For most Africans, education means an academic training as opposed to vocational training. Lewis states that:

"... the prizes to be gained by continuing in a general rather than vocational education at the present time in Nigeria are so great that there is likely to be considerably greater pressure from pupils and their parents for them to pursue general rather than vocational studies".36

Wilson makes a similar remark when he says:

"Bookish education in the three Rs, followed by an academic secondary and higher education seemed eminently desirable to African people themselves for the simple reason that it provided a ladder to an altogether different world of increased financial and enhanced social status". 37

From this review of commentaries on education in Africa, we sifted the following variables with which education is associated. Going to school for most people means:

- having a formal academic training patterned on western lines;
- having a well paying job in the modern sector of the economy;
- escape from manual work and agriculture;
- participation in modern life;
- closeness to the source of power and wealth;
- progress;
- prestige or high social status in the community;
- comfortable living;
- self satisfaction;
- a profitable investment in time and money.

If education is associated with the variables that we have enumerated above then people will favour a curriculum which reflects academic education as opposed to one which reflects practical vocational training. Using these variables as background information, we constructed items 1 to 23 of the questionnaire to measure parents' perception of the functions of education.

5. The Items on Attitude toward the Reform

Items 24 to 50 were used to measure parents' attitude toward the reform. We constructed these statements after looking through the objectives of the reform as outlined by the educational research institutes in Cameroon. Since the general objective of the reform is the adaptation of the system of education to the socio-economic and cultural needs of Cameroon, we grouped the objectives as follows:

- education should be an instrument of change;
- children should be prepared for instituting change in the society;
- the school should develop in the child a sense of curiosity so that he may continually educate himself;
- the school should teach civic values such as: sense of the community; national pride and respect for public property;
- the school should teach the child to be proud of whatever work he does whether it be tiller of the soil or clerk;
- the school should teach the child to be innovative so that he will be able to adapt himself to new situations;
- the gap between school and community should be bridged.

The economic objectives were as follows:

- training in agriculture;
- training in handicrafts such as: weaving and carving;
- training in manual vocations such as: carpentry and masonry;
- since employment in the government or private sector is not available for all graduates, training for self reliance should be given at school.

The old system of education taught children more about Western civilization and little or nothing about African culture. Graduates of the school were thus estranged from their tribal milieux and as a consequence they developed disrespect for everything traditional and African. The reformed
school system is therefore expected to have the following cultural objectives:

- the school should inculcate respect for the culture and cultural institutions of Cameroon;
- education should consist of knowledge that can be applicable to Cameroonian problems;
- the school should serve as the repository of the country's cultural heritage.

6. The Items on Attitude toward Moral and Civic Training

Items 51 to 60 were constructed to measure attitude toward moral and civic training in schools. We consider moral and civic training to be important manifest functions in every school system. We therefore wanted to investigate how parents who perceived education essentially in terms of its latent functions, would react toward this aspect of education. From the source material for the reform the following broad objectives on moral and civic training, were retained:

- character moulding should be part of the school curriculum;
- training for citizenship should be given at school.

7. The Measuring Instrument

A Likert type scale with five response categories was used for scoring the responses. The response categories ranged from, "highly agree", "agree", "undecided", "disagree", to "highly disagree". Subjects were requested to choose only one response.

The items were arranged on the questionnaire such that all even num-
bers represented positive statements of each of the major variables we wanted to measure while negative statements were represented by odd numbers. Thus items 1 and 2 are positive for the measurement of perception while items 3 and 5 are negative.

For all positive statements, the "highly agree" response was given a score of 5, the "agree" response a score of 4, the "undecided" response a score of 3, the "disagree" response a score of 2 and the "highly disagree" response a score of 1. For all negative statements, the "highly agree" response was given a score of 1, the "agree" response a score of 2, the "undecided" response a score of 3, the "disagree" response a score of 4 and the "highly disagree" response a score of 5. After reversing the negative items, we computed each individual's scale score by adding up all his scores on each of the items.

8. Validation of the Measuring Instrument

The problem of validity as we pointed out in the review in literature, is that of supplying evidence that the device used measures or classifies the attitude it was constructed to measure. Of the four types of validity mentioned in chapter two, namely; predictive, construct, concurrent and content validity, we chose content validity. To achieve this type of validity, we had to make sure first of all that the items for each major variable we wanted to measure were constructed from other variables which had bearing on them. After constructing the items, they were presented to experts and colleagues for a rigorous evaluation.

The first draft of the questionnaire was ready in the first week of December 1977. After discussing it with the adviser of the study, some
corrections were made and by the second week of the same month, a first version was made. Copies of the first version were distributed to a number of professors in the Department of Measurement and Evaluation at Laval University, a professor at Governors State University in Illinois and a few colleagues. These critics were solicited to make not only an appraisal of the extent to which the items in the questionnaire reflected the variables we intended to measure but also to offer suggestions.

On the basis of the criticisms and suggestions that were made by these critics, we constructed a second version of the questionnaire in January 1978. On the advise of the thesis director, three copies were distributed to some particular professors. It was the opinion of these three as well as the thesis director that the questions were good enough to tap the information that we wanted. After making some modifications on the form of the questionnaire and on the syntax of some items, a third version of the questionnaire was produced in the first week of February. This version was approved by the thesis director who however advised that on arrival in Cameroon, a few copies be given out to colleagues to check if the terminology used was suitable for the Cameroonian experience.

When I arrived in Cameroon in the third week of February, the questionnaire which was written in English was translated into French by a bilingual interpreter at the Presidency of the Republic of Cameroon. About 25 copies were distributed to a cross section of my colleagues at the Institute for Educational Research, Yaounde. They suggested substitutes for words they considered too high sounding or ambiguous in the Cameroonian context. This was the only modification we made on the third and thus final questionnaire which is in Appendix A.
9. **The Reliability of the Measuring Instrument**

Even though it would have been ideal to use the Kuder-Richardson formula 20 for estimating the index of reliability of the measuring instrument, certain requirements of this formula could not be met by our measuring instrument which was essentially an attitude scale. No item was more difficult than the other thus the KR20 requirement of item difficulties could not be met. We therefore used an alternative formula developed by the same authors. The index of reliability will be reported later.

10. **Limits of the Sample**

It must be recalled that our sample is not representative of the Central South Province of which the Yaounde district is a part. Thus the findings of this study cannot be generalized to the entire population of parents in the Central South Province. The sample is representative of parents in the district of Yaounde only.

11. **Administration of the Questionnaire**

The first phase of the administration process began on the 10th of March and ended on the 17th, when schools closed for the easter holidays. About 120 questionnaires were distributed during this phase. The second phase started on the 18th of April and ended on the 16th of May. During this phase, 318 questionnaires were distributed.

The procedure we used for distributing the questionnaire was as follows: in each school we first of all made contact with the headmaster, told him the object of our mission. The headmaster then called for the teacher (s) in charge of the experimental classes to his office. Each of
them was handed a questionnaire and a resumé of the study was given. After the resumé, there were usually brief discussions about the reform of primary education and the study we were undertaking.

After the discussions in the headmaster's office we proceeded to the classes concerned. The teacher first of all asked all children whose parents could not read or write to stand up, we took note of their names. The teacher then explained to those pupils whose parents were literate that the little booklets which we had brought were for their parents, they had to take them home and as soon as their parents had finished answering the questions they were to bring them back to the teacher. They were told not to dirty the booklet and to keep pestering their parents to respond to the statements as soon as possible. In most cases, teachers gave a deadline of two days. Since we feared that children could forget the questionnaires in their lockers if given long before closing time, we decided with the teachers that, they, the teachers, should keep the questionnaires and distribute them at closing time.

After counting the number of questionnaires we had to leave with each teacher, we took down the names and addresses of children whose parents were illiterate. We took this list home and grouped them according to place of residence. At the end of each day we took one group home, got acquainted with the location of their homes then went back to draw up a schedule for meeting their parents.

During the first contact with the parents of a particular area, we identified all those who could speak pidgin English. I interviewed these and the rest were interviewed by my interviewer who spoke most of the local dialects in the area. The interviews lasted for a period of 20-30 minutes depending on how enthusiastic the individual was about the subject.
At the end of every week we went round the schools collecting questionnaires that had been returned. On the whole, the response was very encouraging. Out of the 438 questionnaires distributed we had 349 properly completed. About 99 persons did not send back their questionnaires. This could be explained by a number of reasons such as: children not taking the questionnaires home, parents forgetting to answer the questionnaire either because they were too busy or were not interested in the study and a host of others.

12. **Coding/Punching the Responses**

The coding process began on the 18th of May and ended on the 30th. Each questionnaire was given an identification number. Having had the weight for each response marked on the master sheets, data sheets were given to those engaged to do the coding. They were shown the specific column for each time on the questionnaire. I cross checked the scores on the questionnaires with those recorded in the date sheets.

Punching of the coded answers into IBM cards could not start immediately after coding. This delay was caused by the lack of the facility for punching. On the 21st of June we were granted access to the computer centre at the Presidency of the Republic of Cameroon. We started punching the data on the 26th and finished on the 8th of July.

13. **Verification of the Punched Data**

Before starting the analysis, we wanted to make sure that the data was correctly punched. The SPSS programme, List Cases was used for this purpose. The output was a listing of the cases and the items. Using the data sheets we checked column after column to make sure that there was no mistake in punching. After this exercise, we were ready for the analysis phase.
14. The Research Methodology

Hillway points out that a vague description of the approach to research indicates a poor understanding of what is to be done and that such research will be potentially ineffectual. According to him, the classification of educational research method is essentially an arbitrary process. A mere identification of the research method or technique without a description of the scheme of analysis leads to a lot of ambiguity. Barr has suggested a classification scheme which among others, includes the grouping of data-gathering techniques and data-processing methods. Following this classification, this research can be said to have used the survey method for data gathering and packaged programmes such as, frequency distribution, T-tests, F-tests and correlations. These programmes have been developed by Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner and Bent specifically for analyzing Social Science data.

Mouly has also given a description of data gathering procedures in educational research. According to his system of classification, the data-gathering procedure used in this research is the descriptive survey and the data analysis procedures, statistical empiricism.

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CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

1. Introduction

One-way as well as factorial analyses of variance techniques were used for the treatment of the data of this study. One-way models were used for variables which we felt could show significant relationships with the dependent variables when treated either singly or in combination. Factorial models were used for variables which could show significant relationships when combined than when treated singly.

The combination of these models enabled us to see the effects of independent variables treated in isolation and in combination with the dependent variables. While both models furnished us with information which permitted us to evaluate the relationship between the experimental and the criterion variables, the factorial design moved a step further - it provided us with information about interdependencies and interactions between the experimental variables.

2. Grouping the Variables

The first step of the analysis was grouping the variables. To achie-
ve this, we first of all had to recode all the negative items of the scale. The scores of all the negative items were reversed as follows: the score for highly agree statements were reversed from 5 to 1, agree from 4 to 2, disagree from 2 to 4 and highly disagree from 1 to 5. Undecided answers for both positive and negative statements had a score of 3.

The reversal of scores was necessary because subjects who highly disagree with a negative statement were in fact agreeing with the variable that the statement was supposed to be measuring. After the reversal of the scores on the negative items, the scale score for each subject could be computed by summating his or her total item scores.

3. The Independent Variable

The independent variable was, perception of the latent functions of education. It was made up of 23 items (items 1 through 23).

4. The Control Variable

Socio-economic status was used as a control variable. To create this variable, we put together the variables years of schooling and type of occupation. This method of quantifying socio-economic status was developed by Hollingshead. According to this method which is called the two factor index of social position, type of occupation and level of education can be used as factors in determining social class. Questions 64 and 66 of the questionnaire tapped information on years of schooling and type of occupation respectively. With this information we grouped subjects into three strata using the two factor index of social position.

Age was also used as a control variable. Respondents were asked to indicate the age group to which they belonged - there were 5 of such groups (20-30 years, 30-40 years, 40-50 years, 50-60 years and 60 years plus). Group 1 was made up of the youngest followed by group 2 and so on to group 5. Question 61 was used to tap the necessary information.

The control variable, awareness of the reform was measured by question 63. Individuals were asked to indicate whether or not, they had pre-knowledge of the reform. Those who had pre-knowledge were put in one group and those who did not have pre-knowledge were put in a second group. We had two groups.

Sex was also a control variable. Question 62 tapped the necessary information. Subjects were asked to indicate their sex by encircling the appropriate category. Male had a code of 1 and female a code of 2.

The last control variable was, state of employment. We wanted to differentiate between those who had jobs and those who did not have jobs. Question 65 furnished the necessary information - subjects were asked to indicate whether or not they had an employment - employment here, meaning salaried.

5. The Dependent Variables

The first dependent or criterion variable was, attitude toward the reform. This was measured by 26 items (numbers 24 through 50 in the questionnaire). The second dependent variable was, attitude toward moral and civic education. This was measured by 10 items (numbers 51 through 60 in the questionnaire).
6. The Index of Reliability of the Measuring Instrument

The Kuder-Richardson formula for estimating the reliability of essay test scores or of multiple ratings of the same performance was used to compute the index of reliability of the measuring instrument. This formula is a modified form of the Kuder-Richardson formula 20. It takes care of the fact that one is not dealing with items that vary in difficulty.

To compute the index of reliability, the formula which reads as follows:

\[
\frac{r}{K} = \frac{1}{K-1} - \frac{G^2}{G^2 + G^2}
\]

requires the variance of student scores on a particular question or form a particular rater, the sum of these questions or rater variances for all questions or all raters and the variance of the total essay test scores, or the sums of the ratings from all raters.

38 items (numbers 23 through 60 of the questionnaires) were used to measure attitude toward reform and attitude toward moral and civic education. Using this formula we had a reliability coefficient of .623 for these 37 items which constituted the dependent variables of this study.

7. Some Descriptive Statistics

Tables III through V contain summaries of descriptive statistics done for some of the variables. Table III shows the means and standard
deviations of perception of the latent functions of education, socio-economic status and age while Tables IV and V illustrate the correlation coefficients between these variables and the dependent variables.

Table III

Descriptive Statistics for perception of the latent functions of education, socio-economic status and age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perception of the latent functions of education</td>
<td>72.47</td>
<td>8.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic status</td>
<td>9.74</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table IV

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient with Attitude toward Reform as dependent variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>Significance of r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perception of the latent functions of education</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic status</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table V

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient with Attitude toward Moral and Civic education as dependent variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>Significance of r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perception of the latent functions of education</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic status</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perception of the latent functions of education was divided into three levels namely high, average and low. The high level was made up of the upper 30%, the average of the middle 40% and the low of the bottom 30%. The highest scale score was 104 with a frequency of 1 and the lowest was 50 with a frequency of 1. Scores in the top 30% ranged from 77 to 104, in the middle 40% or buffer zone from 73 to 76 and in the bottom 30% from 50 to 68. Table III contains the mean and standard deviation which were 72.47 and 8.76 respectively. The kurtosis was .248 and the skewness .203. With a kurtosis of .248 and a skewness of .203, we considered the distribution to be normal. By leaving a buffer zone of 40% we feel that we guaranteed the independence of the extreme groups - an individual with a high score could not be found in the bottom group and vice versa.

Socio-economic status as we have already pointed out was divided into three groups. The high status group had 34 cases, the average or
middle status group had 153 cases and the low status group 162 cases. Table III contains the mean and standard deviations which were 9.74 and 2.95 respectively.

Age had five categories or groups. For the group between 20 and 30 years, there were 98 cases; between 30 and 40 years, there were 144 cases; between 40 and 50 years, 77 cases; between 50 and 60 years, 26 cases and 60 years and above, 4 cases. In table III we present the mean which was 2.12 and the standard deviation which was .94.

For the variable sex, there were 299 males and 50 females. These proportion of males to females was about 6 to 1.

Awareness of the reform was broken down into two groups. Those who were aware of the reform and those who were not aware. For the former, there were 186 and the latter 183 cases.

The variable employment was made up of two categories. There were 287 cases that reported being employed and 62 that reported being unemployed.

In all, we had six independent or predictor variables and two dependent or criterion variables. The independent variables were: perception of the latent functions of education, socio-economic status, age, sex, awareness of the reform and employment. The dependent variables were: attitude toward reform and attitude toward moral and civic education.

To test the relationship between some of the independent variables and the dependent variables, we did a Pearson product-moment correlation
coefficient. We wanted to know whether a linear relationship existed between the independent and the dependent variables. The results of these analyses are summarized in Tables IV and V.

With perception of the latent functions as predictor variable and attitude toward reform as criterion variable, the r was .43 which was significant at the .001 level of significance (see Table IV). The \( r^2 \) was .185. At the .05 level of significance, .001 is significant. The \( r^2 \) also shows that about 18.5% of the variance in the criterion variable was accounted for by the variance in the predictor variable.

In Table V, we see that the r for perception of the latent functions of education and attitude toward moral and civic education was .36 which was significant at the .001 level of significance. The \( r^2 \) was .129. At the .05 level of significance, .001 is statistically significant. The \( r^2 \) also indicates that about 12.9% of the variance in attitude toward moral and civic education was explained by the variance in perception of the latent functions of education.

Table IV illustrates the r between socio-economic status and attitude toward reform. The r was .11 which was significant at the .016 level of significance. The \( r^2 \) was .12. At the .05 level of significance, .016 is significant. The \( r^2 \) shows that only about 1.2% of the variance in the criterion variable was explained by the variance in the predictor variable.

Socio-economic status and attitude toward moral and civic education had an r of .12 which was significant at the .013 level of significance (Table V). The \( r^2 \) was .14. Taking the .05 level of significance, this relationship is statistically significant. The \( r^2 \) indicates that only
about 1.4% of the variance in the criterion variable was explained by the variance in the predictor variable.

As shown in Table IV, the $r$ between age and attitude toward reform was .075 which was significant at the .08 level of significance. The $r^2$ was .49. At the .05 level of significance, this relationship is not statistically significant. The $r^2$ also indicates that only .49% of the variance in the criterion variable was explained by the variance in the predictor variable.

In Table V, we see that the $r$ for age and attitude toward moral and civic education was .007 which was significant at the .45 level of significance. The $r^2$ was .049. At the .05 level of significance, this relationship is not statistically significant. The $r^2$ also shows that only .049% of the variance in the predictor variable.

The other independent variables namely, sex, awareness of the reform and employment were qualitative. We did not compute the correlations between these variables and the dependent variables since such coefficients or correlation would have been meaningless.

In all, we had six independent variables namely, perception of the latent functions of education with three levels, socio-economic status with three levels, age with five levels, sex with two levels, awareness of the reform with two levels and employment with two levels. There were two dependent variables, namely, attitude toward reform and attitude toward moral and civic education.
8. The Research Hypothesis

We posited the research hypothesis that:

- Parents' perception of the latent functions of education will strongly influence their attitude toward the reform.

In other words, attitude toward the reform is a function of the perception of the latent functions of education.

As we have already pointed out, the independent variable, perception of the latent functions of education was broken down in three groups. The top 30% consisted of cases with a very high perception of the latent functions of education - these were those who perceived the school or education essentially in terms of its latent functions. The bottom 30% consisted of those with a low perception of the latent functions of education, they did not perceive education essentially in terms of its latent functions. The middle 40% consisted of cases with an average perception of the latent functions of education.

The hypothesis is proven if after taking into consideration the effects of the control or plausible rival hypotheses, the high perception group shows a negative attitude, the average perception group less negative attitude and the low perception group a favourable attitude toward the reform.

9. The Null Hypothesis

The null or statistical hypothesis which we set out to test was:

- There is no significant relationship between parents' perception of the latent functions of education and their attitude toward the reform.
The .05 level of significance was chosen as the level for accepting the null hypothesis of this study. Having chosen the acceptable level of significance, we set out to test the relationships between the experimental or independent variables and the criterion or dependent variables.

To test the null hypothesis we did an analysis of variance with three factors having attitude toward the reform as the criterion variable. The three factors were, perception of the latent functions of education with three levels, socio-economic status with three levels and awareness of the reform with two levels. This was a $3 \times 3 \times 2$ analysis of variance model.

Table VI is a résumé of the results of the treatment. It shows the effects of the factors acting in isolation and the effects of the factors acting in combination.

Table VI
Three way analysis of variance, attitude toward reform as the dependent variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Degrees of freedom</th>
<th>Sum of square</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (perception of the latent functions of education)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3797.02</td>
<td>1898.51</td>
<td>33.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (socio-economic status)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>78.62</td>
<td>39.31</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (awareness of the reform)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38.43</td>
<td>38.43</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>681.49</td>
<td>170.37</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>107.38</td>
<td>53.69</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28.94</td>
<td>14.47</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>276.35</td>
<td>69.07</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>18911.01</td>
<td>57.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Perception of the latent functions of education when treated with attitude toward reform had an F ratio of 33.13. With 2 and 330 degrees of freedom this ratio is significant at the .001 level of significance. Using the .05 level of significance we found that .001 was statistically significant.

We conclude that there is a significant relationship between perception of the latent functions of education and attitude toward the reform. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the research hypothesis upheld.

The $\eta^2$ for the factor, perception of the latent functions of education was .18 (.43). This indicated that 18% of the variation in the criterion variable was explained by perception of the latent function of education. The unadjusted deviation $\eta$ for the three levels of this factor were as follows: high perception group, 5.47, average perception group, -0.41 and the low perception group, -4.08. The high perception group accounted for most of the variation within the factor followed by the average perception group then by the low perception group.

From the information we conclude that cases in our sample which had a high perception of the latent functions of education were unfavourably disposed toward the reform while cases that were low in perception of the latent functions of education were favourably disposed toward the reform. The low deviation $\eta$ of the high perception group can be accounted for by the fact that this group had the least number of cases. As we had earlier indicated in the frequency distribution of this variables, there were only 93 cases in the high perception group while the middle and low groups had 145 and 111 cases respectively.
10. **Plausible Rival Hypotheses**

To a large extent, the evidence we found was consistent with the hypothesis we posited namely, parents perception of the latent functions of education significantly influences their attitude toward the reform. We however, did not regard this evidence as conclusive. The same finding could be consistent with other hypotheses. For the finding to be accepted as demonstrating the truth of the hypothesis, we had to do further testing. The criterion variable had to be tested with other alternatives in order to make sure that these alternatives did not influence it significantly. It is only after such testing that the finding could be taken as conclusive.

A number of control variables or plausible rival hypotheses were used to confirm whether or not, the evidence we got demonstrated the truth of the main hypothesis. These variables were: socio-economic status, awareness of the reform, age, sex and employment.

Table VI has the results of the interaction between; socio-economic status and perception of the latent functions of education, awareness of the reform and perception of the latent functions of education as well as the results of the interaction between these three experimental variables. The results will be discussed later.

We wanted to know whether socio-economic status significantly influenced attitude toward the reform. We posited the following research hypothesis:

- There is a significant relationship between socio-economic status and attitude toward the reform.
The statistical hypothesis we tested was:
- There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and attitude toward the reform.

The results of this treatment are in table VI. The F ratio was .69 and was not significant at the .05 level of significance. Earlier on, when we tested for linearity between this variable and the criterion variable we found out that only 1.2% of the variance in the criterion variable was explained by it.

The eta for the factor socio-economic status was .17 and the $\eta^2$ .19. According to the $\eta^2$ only 1.9 of the variance in the criterion variable was explained by the variance in the factor, socio-economic status.

We also thought it worthwhile to investigate which of the levels of socio-economic status explained the most about the variation within. The eta for the high status group was -2.11, for the middle or average status group, -1.18 and for the low status group, 1.30. $\eta^2$ for the high status group was -4.65 meaning that -.465 fo the variance in the factor was explained by the high status group. $\eta^2$ for the middle status group was -1.31 meaning that -.131 of the variance in the factor was explained by the average or middle status group. $\eta^2$ for the low status group was, 1.69 meaning that 1.7% of the variance in the factor was explained by the low status group. These results show that the low status group explained most of the variance in the factor followed by the middle and then the high stratum respectively.

We felt that people with a pre-knowledge of the reform could be more favourably disposed toward it than people without pre-knowledge. The con-
control variable awareness of the reform was introduced to test this relationship. We posited the research hypothesis that:

- There is a significant relationship between awareness of the reform and attitude toward the reform.

The statistical hypothesis that we tested was:

- There is no significant relationship between awareness of the reform and attitude toward the reform.

The results of the awareness of the reform and attitude toward reform are summarized in table IV. The F ratio was 0.67 which was significant at the .10 level of significance. The .10 level of significance is higher than the .05 level of significance which we chose. We therefore retained the null hypothesis which claims the absence of a significant relationship between the experimental and criterion variables. The eta for this factor was .07. \( \text{Eta}^2 \) was .0049. According to this information, less than .5% of the variance in the criterion variable was explained by the factor, awareness of the reform. This percentage is negligible thus adding credibility to the conclusion we made earlier that, there is no significant relationship between awareness of the reform and attitude toward the reform.

Before presenting the results of the analysis of the other variables, we shall at this point, present the results of the interactions between the control variables which we have treated so far. We would want to know whether by combining these variables, they could influence the criterion variable more than when they are treated in isolation.

Perception of the latent functions of education interacting with socio-economic status gave the following results which are presented in detail in table VI. The F ratio was 2.97 which was significant at the
significance level of .02. Using the .05 level of significance, we found that out that the relationship was statistically significant.

We therefore conclude that the combination of these factors significantly influenced attitude toward the reform. The following caveat was however placed on this conclusion: though the relationship was significant, it was not strong enough to explain the variance in the criterion variable - perception of the latent functions of education treated in isolation had a stronger influence on the criterion variable and seems to be chiefly responsible for the variance in attitude toward reform.

Perception of the latent functions of education interacting with awareness of the reform produced the following results which are presented in more detail in table VI. The F ratio was .94. This ratio was significant at the .100 level of significance. This level of significance is much higher than the .05 level of significance we chose.

We concluded that the interaction between these two factors did not significantly influence the criterion variable, attitude toward the reform.

Socio-economic status was combined with awareness of the reform. We wanted to find out whether the combination of these two significantly influenced attitude toward reform. The results have been presented in detail in table VI. The F ratio was .25 which was significant at the .100 level of significance. This level of significance is much higher than the .05 level of significance we chose.

We concluded that the interaction between these factors did not significantly influence attitude toward reform.
The three factors were combined to see their interaction effect on the criterion variable. The results are presented in table VI. The F ratio was 1.21 and was significant at the significance level of .31. The .31 level of significance is much higher than the .05 level we chose.

We concluded that the combined effects of these factors on the criterion variable was not statistically significant.

Using age as a control variable, the following research hypothesis was posited:
- There is a significant relationship between age and attitude toward the reform.

The null hypothesis which we tested was:
- There is no significant relationship between age and attitude toward reform.

Choosing the .05 level of significance, we did an F-test to investigate the relationship between age and attitude toward reform. Table VII which is a resume of the results of the F-test, shows, age group, category, number of cases and the significance of F.

Table VII
One way analysis of variance, attitude toward reform as dependent variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of cases</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The relationship between age and attitude toward reform is significant at the .133 level of significance. The .133 level of significance is higher than the .05 level of significance which we chose. We therefore retained the null hypothesis that, there is no significant relationship between age and attitude toward reform.

To investigate the relationship between sex and attitude toward the reform, we did a T-test analysis. The level of significance of the relationship was set at .05. Table IV is a resumé of the results of the analysis. It shows the number of cases in each group, the mean scores, standard deviation and pooled variance estimate.

Table VIII
Sex and attitude toward reform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>N. of cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. dev.</th>
<th>T value</th>
<th>Degree of freedom</th>
<th>2-tail probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>8.51</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>0.317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>8.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The research hypothesis was:
- There is a significant relationship between sex and attitude toward reform.

The statistical hypothesis was:
- There is no significant relationship between sex and attitude toward reform.

Table VIII shows that the level of significance of the relationship
between sex and attitude toward the reform is .317. This level of significance is higher than the .05 level of significance which we chose. The null hypothesis was therefore confirmed.

We retained the null hypothesis that, there is no significant relationship between sex and attitude toward the reform. Since this finding did not contradict the truth of our main hypothesis, we concluded that we did not have to control for sex.

Using employment as control variable and attitude toward reform as the dependent variable, we did a T-test analysis to investigate whether the fact of having or not having a salaried job significantly influenced attitude toward the reform. The research hypothesis was:
- The fact of having a salaried employment influences attitude toward reform.

The null hypothesis was:
- There is no significant relationship between the fact of having a salaried employment and attitude toward reform.

Setting the level of significance at .05, a t-test was done. Table IX is a résumé of the results.

Table IX
Employement and attitude toward reform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N. of cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. dev.</th>
<th>T value</th>
<th>Degrees of freedom</th>
<th>2-tail probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group one was made up of subjects who had an employment and group two of those who did not have.

According to the results of the analysis, the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is significant at the .49 level of significance. This level of significance is much higher than the .05 level of significance we chose therefore we retained the null hypothesis.

We concluded that, the fact of having or not having a job did not significantly influence attitude toward reform. The finding did not contradict the validity of the main hypothesis therefore, we did not have to control for employment.

Since moral and civic education constitutes an integral part of the reform, we did a last analysis to investigate the relationship between perception of the latent functions of education and attitude toward moral and civic education. We wanted to know whether those who perceived education essentially in terms of its latent functions were favourably or unfavourably disposed toward the inclusion of moral and civic training in the reformed curriculum.

The first analysis we did was that of linearity. We wanted to investigate whether there was a linear relationship between the following experimental variables, age, socio-economic status and perception of the latent functions of education and the criterion variable, attitude toward moral and civic education.

As we have already pointed out, attitude toward moral and civic education was measured by questions 51 through 60. The lowest score was 22 with a frequency of 1 and the highest was 47 with a frequency of 2. In
the middle 40% zone, scores ranged between 32 and 35.

The correlation coefficient between age and attitude toward moral and civic education was .0073 which was significant at .45. The $r^2$ was .049 indicating that only about .05 of the variance in the criterion variable was explained by the variance in the experimental variable.

This percentage was too small so we concluded that age is not a good predictor of attitude toward moral and civic education.

The correlation coefficient for socio-economic status with attitude toward moral and civic education was .118 which was significant at the .013 level of significance. The $r^2$ was .139 meaning that about .14% of the variance in the criterion variable was explained by socio-economic status.

Statistically, the relationship is significant since .013 is less than the .05 level of significance we chose. However, the percentage of variance in the criterion variable explained by socio-economic status is too small to warrant the conclusion that socio-economic status is a good predictor of attitude toward moral and civic education.

Perception of the latent functions of education was correlated with attitude toward moral and civic education. The $r$ was .368 and was significant at .001. The $r^2$ was .12 meaning that 12% of the variation in the criterion variable was explained by the variation in the experimental variable. Statistically, this relationship is significant and taking into consideration the size of our sample, 12% is quite strong. We therefore concluded that perception of the latent functions of education, was the best predictor of attitude toward moral and civic education.
The last analysis we did was a three-way analysis of variance with attitude toward moral and civic education as dependent variable. The experimental variables were, awareness of the reform, socio-economic status and perception of the latent functions of education. The results of this analysis are presented in table X.

Table X
Three-way analysis of variance, attitude toward moral and civic education as dependent variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Degree of freedom</th>
<th>Sum of square</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (perception of the latent functions of education)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>661.30</td>
<td>330.65</td>
<td>21.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (socio-economic status)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20.55</td>
<td>10.27</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (awareness of the reform)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>181.60</td>
<td>45.40</td>
<td>2.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>47.65</td>
<td>23.82</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52.73</td>
<td>26.36</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25.17</td>
<td>6.29</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>5154.90</td>
<td>15.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With perception of the latent functions of education as dependent variable and attitude toward moral and civic education as criterion variable, the results of the F-test were, F ratio, 21.17 with a level of significance of .001. At the .05 level of significance this relationship was statistically significant. The eta for this factor was .36 and the $\eta^2$ was .12.

The research hypothesis we posited was that:
- There is a significant relationship between perception of the latent functions of education and attitude toward moral and civic education.

The statistical hypothesis we set out to prove was:
- There is no significant relationship between perception of the latent functions of education and attitude toward moral and civic education.

According to the results in Table X, the relationship is statistically significant at the .05 level of significance. The $\eta^2$ also explains that 12% of the variation in the criterion variable is due to the variation in the experimental variable.

Looking at the variation within the factor, we found out that the eta for the high perception group was the highest being, 2.29 while that for the average and low perception groups was -0.19 and -1.69 respectively.

We therefore rejected the statistical hypothesis and retained the research hypothesis that, there is a significant relationship between perception of the latent functions of education and attitude toward moral and civic education. Parents who perceived education essentially in terms of its latent functions were favourably disposed toward the inclusion of
moral and civic education in school curriculum.

Socio-economic status was treated with attitude toward moral and civic education. We wanted to know whether socio-economic status significantly influenced attitude toward moral and civic education. The research hypothesis was:
- There is a significant relationship between socio-economic status and attitude toward moral and civic education.

The null hypothesis was:
- There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and attitude toward moral and civic education.

The results in Table X show that the $F$ ratio was $0.66$ which was significant at the $0.10$ level of significance. Since our level of significance was $0.05$, we found that this relationship was not statistically significant. The eta of the factor was $0.15$ and the eta$^2$, $0.25$. This means that only $2.5\%$ of the variance in the criterion variable was explained by socio-economic status.

The results of our analysis indicated that there was no strong relationship between socio-economic status and attitude toward moral and civic education. We therefore retained the null hypothesis.

Awareness of the reform was treated with the criterion variable. The research hypothesis was:
- There is a significant relationship between awareness of the reform and attitude toward moral and civic education.

The null hypothesis was:
- There is no significant relationship between awareness of the reform and attitude toward moral and civic education.
Table X shows that the F ratio was .08 and was significant at .10. Since .10 is higher than the .05 level of significance we chose, we concluded that the relationship is not statistically significant. The eta for the factor was .04. The \( \eta^2 \) was .16, meaning that 1.6% of the variation in the criterion variable was explained by awareness of the reform. This percentage is too small to warrant the conclusion that awareness of the reform is a good predictor of attitude toward moral and civic education. We therefore retained the null hypothesis that, there is no significant relationship between awareness of the reform and attitude toward moral and civic education.

A test for interactions between factors was also performed. We wanted to find out whether interactions between various combinations of the experimental variables could produce significant influences on the criterion variable.

Perception of the latent functions of education was combined with socio-economic status. The results in Table X show that the F ratio was 2.91 which was significant at the .02 level of significance. This level of significance is smaller than the .05 level we chose therefore the interaction between these factors, significantly influenced attitude toward moral and civic education.

Perception of the latent functions of education combined with awareness of the reform gave an F ratio of 1.53 which was significant at the .22 level of significance. .22 is higher than .05 which is the level of significance we chose therefore the interaction between these factors did not influence the criterion variable.

Socio-economic status was combined with awareness of the reform.
The F was 1.69 and was significant at .18. Since .18 is higher than .05, we concluded that the interaction between these factors did not significantly influence the criterion variable.

The three way interaction between the factors gave an F of .40 which was significant at the .10 level of significance. This relationship was not significant since .01 is higher than .05.

11. Discussion

The results of the analyses show that out of the six independent variables of the study, only perception of the latent functions of education and socio-economic status showed statistically significant relationships with the dependent variables. Of this two, the former seems to have explained about 18% of the variance in attitude toward reform and about 12% of the variance in attitude toward moral and civic education while the latter explained less than 2% and less than 3% respectively.

When these two predictor variables were treated in combination, they significantly influenced the criterion variables. However, the combined effects was not as strong as that of perception of the latent functions of education treated in isolation.

Taking measurement errors into consideration, the results demonstrate that perception of the latent functions of education seems to have been chiefly responsible for explaining the variances in both attitude toward reform and attitude toward moral and civic education.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

In this study, we made an attempt to examine the way parents perceive education and how this perception colours their attitude toward the proposed reform programme for primary schools in Cameroon.

We identified two main functions of education in society. They are manifest and latent functions. Manifest functions are defined as the social and ethical roles or services which social institutions perform in society while latent functions are defined as these services or roles which individual actors see as being performed by social institutions. Some examples of the manifest functions of the school are: equipping the young with skills such as numeracy and literacy and the inculcation of the right attitude to life. Examples of latent functions are: the allocation of income and enhanced social status, escape from traditional society and so on. We argued that perception of education is a function of the latent functions of education. In other words, parents perceive education or schooling essentially in terms of the latent functions which the school performs in society.

The research hypothesis which we posited for testing was: Parents'
attitude toward the reform is a function of their perception of the latent functions of education.

To test this hypothesis, parents were divided into three groups. Those who perceived education essentially in terms of the latent functions it performs were put in the high perception group, those who perceived education partially in terms of its manifest functions and partially in terms of its latent functions formed the average perception group and those who perceived education essentially in terms of its manifest functions formed the low perception group.

Using age, sex, state of employment, awareness of the reform and socio-economic status as control variables, statistical techniques for the analysis of variance were used to test whether there was any relationship between perception of the latent functions of education and attitude toward reform.

The results of the treatment confirmed the major hypothesis of the study that, attitude toward the reform was influenced by perception of the latent functions of education. Parents with a high perception of the latent functions of education seem to have been unfavourable toward the reform. This is so because the reform is geared toward the ruralization of the school curriculum and thereby keeping graduates in the rural areas to engage in farming and other manual occupations whereas parents with a high perception of the latent functions of education see schooling in terms of academic training and white collar jobs in the cities.

Out of the five control variables used, only socio-economic status significantly influenced attitude toward reform. Even though the relationship was rather weak compared to that between perception of the latent
functions of education and socio-economic status, there is an explanation for its presence. For most cameroonians, education is an instrument of social mobility (Calvert: 1925). It provides an escape from traditional society and its subsistence economy which condemns people to be tillers of the soil, to the modern society with its cash economy and other attractions such as, cinema houses, bars and cars. For the elite, it serves as an instrument of reproduction and for the masses it plays the role of an equalizing factor - it brings them at par with the elite.

Even though parents with a high perception of the latent functions of education tended to be unfavourably disposed toward the reform in general, they seemed to be in favour of the inclusion of moral and civic education in the school curriculum. We did an analysis of the relationship between perception of the latent functions of education and attitude toward moral and civic education, using age and socio-economic status as control variables. Perception of the latent functions of education seemed to have been chiefly responsible for the variance in attitude toward moral and civic education. This indicated that parents with a high perception of the latent functions of education were in favour of moral and civic training at school.
CONCLUSION

Within the limits of the sample chosen, the results of this study demonstrate that parents still prefer the system of education which was inherited from the colonial past as opposed to an indigenous system of education. This preference can be explained by certain socio-economic factors. In Cameroon of today, high premium is placed on academic training. Those who receive academic training enjoy higher salaries and more prestige than those who receive vocational training. Socially, bureaucrats command more respect than farmers and other such manual workers.

Academic training patterned on western lines has created certain needs and aspirations which the reformed curriculum does not guarantee. Youngsters go to school so that they could pass exams and get certificates which will enable them get white collar jobs, live in the city where they could go to nightclubs, cinema and so on.

There is a need for change in people's perception of the reformed school. For this to happen, certain changes have to take place in the social and economic structures of the society. The income for people engaged in manual occupations should be made more attractive than that for people engaged in white collar jobs. The psychic and material rewards for these jobs should be very attractive. We argue that if the psychic
and material reward for manual occupations are made higher than those for white collar occupations, people's perceptions of the former are likely to change.

Even though awareness of the reform did not significantly influence attitude toward the reform, parents' attitude could be made favourable if attempts are made to disseminate as much information as possible to educate the public about the reform. Parent/Teacher associations can play an instrumental role here. They could be used as a medium of communication between reformers on the one hand and parents and teachers on the other. People are always sceptical about innovations and it is the duty of the change agent to try as hard as possible to convince his clients that his innovation would not threaten the existing social structure. Parents should be convinced that the reformed curriculum will be just as good as the old one in terms of the material benefits that their children would get.

At this point, it is important for us to make mention of the fact that the findings of this study cannot be stretched too far. First of all we cannot on the basis of this study essay a prediction of all parents' attitude toward the reform. This is so because attitudes are not constant. They are generally influenced by several factors and it is only when all such factors have been identified and investigated that one could establish a causal relationship between a variable and an attitude. In this study, only five control variables were used and there are very many more which can influence attitude toward reform. Therefore all we can say is that there is a tendency for parents with a high perception of the latent functions of education to have an unfavourable attitude toward the reform.
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE ON PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE TOWARD PRIMARY SCHOOL REFORM.

Dear parent, as you may be aware, the government has launched a reform programme aimed at changing the aims, structure, methods and curriculum of our primary school system in order that it may better serve our children. Your opinion on these subjects will be of great help to those responsible for actualizing the reform programme.

Kindly express your opinions by either agreeing or disagreeing with the statements in this questionnaire. Please you do not have to sign your name on this questionnaire - all that we request of you is a sincere and honest expression of your opinion about our school system.

How to respond to the statements

For each statement you may choose one of the following responses: HA for highly agree, A for agree, U for undecided, D for disagree and HD for highly disagree.

Examples

1. Women should not be educated.
   If you highly agree with this statement all you do is encir-
2. School is bad. You may disagree with this statement in which case you will have to encircle D as shown in example 2.

Statements

1. The more education a child has the better he is able to enjoy life.

2. Education increases the chances of earning more money.

3. Education does not help in getting a job.

4. To be respected in Cameroon you have to be well educated.

5. It is not profitable to continue education after the primary level.

6. An education leading to a career in the government is most paying.

7. It is foolish to send a child to school if he can get a job.

8. Agriculture should not be taught in school.

9. Education does not help in getting a well paying job.

11. An indigenous Cameroonian type of education is not better than a Western European type.

12. Child needs a good amount of education to get ahead in the occupation world.

13. Time spent in school is wasted.

14. Academic training patterned on Western European lines is best for our children.

15. Higher education does not command respect in the community.

16. A good education should aim at enabling the child get a well paying job in the civil service.

17. A primary school certificate is sufficient for getting a prestigious job.

18. Agriculture can be better learnt at home.

19. After primary education children should take up employment.

20. Higher education gives more power in the community.

21. A trade learnt locally can give as much prestige as one learnt at school.

22. An education leading to a career in professions such as: law, medicine, engineering, etc, is the best for our children.
23. Education does not help in making a person respected in the community.

24. A good education is one that brings the child closer to his community.

25. Only academic subjects such as European history, etc, should be taught at school.

26. A good primary education should permit the child to employ himself gainfully if he cannot be employed by the government.

27. Our system of education should train only clerical workers.

28. The job of school is to offer the kind of courses that will enable children to enter those professions and economic sectors where the need for manpower is greatest.

29. It is degrading to become a farmer after attending school.

30. Education should prepare children for solving the problems which confront them in their daily lives.

31. Traditional culture should not be taught at school.

32. Both vocational and academic subjects should be taught at school.
33. Occupations such as: carpentry, bricklaying, etc, should not be taught at school.

34. The school should train the child to think for himself.

35. At the primary school only a general education in the three Rs leading to higher education is necessary.

36. Children should be trained to be innovative.

37. Vocational education does not pay in Cameroon of today.

38. Our system of education should reflect national needs such as: rural development, etc.

39. Education is bad because it makes children question our traditions.

40. Our system of education is too bookish.

41. Education is bad because it makes children independent from the influence of parents.

42. There is dignity in manual work such as farming, etc.

43. Our system of education should be exactly the same as the one in Europe.

44. Education should not lead to estrangement from traditional culture.
45. A Cameroonian system of education is not good for our children.

46. A good education should open the child's mind for questionnaire traditions such as witchcraft, etc, which block social progress.

47. Training for manual work is not better than training for an office job.

48. The school should teach children about the way our ancestors lived.

49. The school should offer only those courses that children ask for.

50. We need more practical people than book people in Cameroon of today.

51. Character training is the job of the home.

52. Civic values such as: national pride, sense of community, respect for public property and respect for others should be part of school programme.

53. Positive changes in the community will not come through the school.

54. Character training should be part of school programmes.
55. The school should help in making our children better citizens.  

56. The school should help in bringing positive change in the community.  

57. The community should be independent of all influence from the school.  

58. Our schools should play the role of storehouse of our cultural heritage.  

59. The mission of the school is to teach all courses that parents desire for their children.  

60. Through our schools we can improve the way of life in the rural areas.  

Now to finish, please spare us a few more minutes for some questions about yourself.  

61. First of all encircle the age group to which you belong. (Years) 20-30, 30-40, 40-50, 50-60, 60+  

62. Your sex. Male Female  

63. Are you aware of the reform of primary education which is being undertaken by IPAR? Yes No  

64. What is the highest education you have achieved ..........................................................
65. Do you have a job at present?  Yes  No

66. What kind of work do you do? ................................

Please make sure you have given a response to all the questions and permit us to thank you very much for your kind participation in this research effort. Feel free to use the space below and overleaf for any other opinion(s) you may wish to express concerning this questionnaire.

SUGGESTIONS


10. EDWARDS, Allen L., "Techniques of Attitude Scale Construction",


15. GUTTMAN, Louis., "A Basis for Scaling Qualitative Data", American Sociological Review, 9, 1944, pp. 139-150.


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