Learning Content in Moral Education and Pupils' Behavior

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Abstract- This study aimed at investigating the relationship between teaching moral education in school as far as learning content is concerned and pupils' behaviour. The hypothesis which guided this study was "there is a significant relationship between learning content related to moral education and pupils' behavior". Through a survey design where 50 teachers randomly selected from 11 primary schools in Santa sub-division, the findings revealed that the correlation between learning content, and pupils' behavior was significant. The study confirmed also that if most pupils showed a disruptive behavior, it was because most teachers did not involve children in activities that permitted them to develop life skills and competences.

Index Terms - Teaching moral education, learning content, pupils' behavior

I.   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between Learning content in the Moral Education teaching process and pupils' behavior. There is a high rate of misbehavior among children in the society as well as in school. It is admitted that the solution of those related problems are also linked to the teaching of moral education in our schools.

Education at this level should be that which involves the child in practical issues that enable him/ her to build up a moral conscience. According to Kant cited by Kizito (2004) education must see to the moralization of man. Socrates cited by Tambo (2003) believes strongly that, people should endeavor to live a life of moral excellence. He advocated that people should live wisely and act rationally. Hence moral education should teach pupil, how to think as well as to act according to principles, law, and moral imperatives.

Brief history of Moral education in Cameroon system of education

Every enduring community has a moral code and it is the responsibility and the concern of its adults, to instill this code in the minds of its youths. Since the advent of

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schooling, adults have expected the schools to contribute positively to the moral education of children. In Cameroon, when the first common schools were founded in 1844, moral education was the prime concern. The missionaries believed the moral code resided in the Bible (Tambo, 2003). It was therefore imperative that children be taught to read, thus having access to it grounding wisdom.

The need for moral education declined as time went on but today, it is increasingly gaining grounds in our educational system. This is effectuated with the law of orientation on education of 1998 section 4, which states that, the general goals of education is to train children for their intellectual, physical, civic and moral development and smooth integration into the society, bearing in mind the prevailing economic, socio- cultural, political and moral factors (Ministry of National Education,1998).

It might be surprising to notice that with the implementation of moral values in the educational law and moral education as a subject in primary schools, there is still a constant increase of violence, juvenile crimes, and aggressiveness, cheating during examinations, dirtiness, disrespect and irresponsibility which mark a disparity in pupils' behavior. On this note, most thinkers, educational practitioners and parents acknowledge that children are born helpless and need the care and guidance of adults into their teens and often beyond.

Children need to learn how to live harmoniously in society and the mission of the school has been to develop in the young, both intellectual and moral values. The domain of moral education will include honesty, responsibility and respect among others. According to Kizito (2004) the schools as curator of the great intellectual heritage of mankind, is a potent force in the moral life of men, for the school preserves and transmit the great literacy heritage whose very essence is ethical. That could be related to teaching moral education in school. As a subject matter moral education is differently taught from one class to another depending on the syllabuses and children's ages. Planning and teaching will greatly depend on didactic parameters which include learning objectives, learning content, forms of didactic activities, psychology of learning, transmission tools, starting point situation, evaluation.

Learning objective is simply a description of the change of behaviour or product which indicates that learning has taken place. To this study learning objective was a description of observable behaviour teachers want learners to be able to exhibit before they are considered competent. Learning content referred to facts, concepts, principles,

rules, attitudes, tasks or information to be mastered by pupils. Teaching/Learning activities were activities that the teacher puts forth during content presentation in order to make students realise the determined objectives. They corresponded to all the processes used in presenting subject matter, which facilitates learning. Evaluation of learning therefore meant determining significance of behaviour in relation to some accepted standards or determining the extent to which the students were able to solve problem situation in relation to some accepted standards. Pupils' behaviour referred to the observable act of pupils in a given problem situation, that could be measured in terms of satisfactory or unsatisfactory within a period of time.

II. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework is made up of Piaget's Theory of Moral development and Kohlberg's theory of moral development. Concerning the first theory of moral development, Piaget as seen by Ross Vasta (2004) underlines a set of stages that composes moral development. Firstly, the Heteronomous morality stage which is characterized by a strict adherence to rules and duties, obedience to authority and egocentrism that leads children to project their own thoughts and wishes onto others. Piaget talks of the moral realism stage where children's reasoning is based on objectives and physical aspect of a situation. The next stage of moral development is the stage of autonomous morality or the morality of reciprocity. Here children gradually learn that rules are agreements created by people to help or protect one another; obeying these rules is viewed as an autonomous or personal decision to cooperate with others. Piaget believes that both cognitive factor and social experiences underlines the development of moral reasoning. To conclude, Piaget suggested that schools should emphasized cooperative decision making and problem solving, and that teachers should provide students with opportunities for personal discovery through problem solving, rather than indoctrinating students with norms.

Regarding the second theory, Kohlberg's theory of moral development as seen by Santrock (2001) indicates that underlying changes in cognitive development promotes more advances moral thinking. He says children construct their moral thought as they pass through stages and that a child's moral thinking can be improved through discussion with peers and others. Kohlberg says a better approach to affecting moral behaviour should focus on stages of moral development, as they consider the way a child organizes his/her understanding of virtues, rules and norms and integrates these into a moral choice.

Kohlberg developed 3 levels of moral development and each level has 2 stages. Firstly, the *Pre-conventional level* (stages 1 and 2) is a level where the child shows no internalization of moral values. Moral reasoning is controlled by external rewards and punishment; secondly,

the *Conventional level* made up of Stages 3 and 4. Here the child's internalization is intermediate. The child abides internally by certain standards that are essentially imposed by other people such as parents or by society's laws. Finally, the *Post conventional level* (sage 5 and 6) is a level where Morality is completely internalized and not based on external standards. The children recognized alternative moral code that is best for him or her.

The importance of a child's moral development as emphasized by Kohlberg can be seen with the view of Ross Vasta (2004, p.630) which states that "a child needs to have achieved a high level of abstract thinking to evaluate his or her own or others intent and to have generalized and rational ethical standards as well as sensitivity to roles, perception and feelings of others".

Kohlberg appreciated the importance and value of moral dilemma discussion. In this light Arends (2001) affirms that within the school setting, teachers should help pupils increase their capacity and maintain a democratic learning community within the classroom.

Morality as an important code of conduct is reflected in the views of Awa (2000) who believes that, morality aids in the wholesome development of an individual because it kills the desire to destroy what God has created, the urge to commit fraud and misappropriation of public funds, it enhances the urges of being morally upright. To this morality is much more than obedience and acceptance, it is a process of making one's own decisions.

To sum up our discussion on the above theories, it is important to this study because as children begin to gain knowledge and understand certain rules in relation to moral standards as reflected in the last stages of autonomous morality and conventional level, it becomes very important and necessary for teachers and parents to inculcate in them the right moral values and moral virtues so that they can grow up with them. This aspects of the teacher responsibility is related to the learning content in moral education teaching process.

Learning content related to moral education

Because of the complex nature of the moral education teaching process, teachers need to understand the subject in pedagogic terms, and also needs to be very clear about the nature of the central activity in which they are professionally involved in order to foster positive behavior. Kourin as cited by Arends (2001) asserts that teachers need to consider time constrains and how it might affect pupils understanding in lesson planning. Teachers' know-how on moral education provokes pupils understanding and reduces misbehavior in school. What to teach is as important as how to teach it. Content material must match with the cognitive levels of the learners. Cooper (1982) expresses that, teachers must be familiar with children and their developmental stages as well as understand what is going

on outside the classroom and school in a bid to situate the content in line with teaching.

Thus subject matter includes knowledge of content of subject discipline. Tsafack (2003) holds that a proper knowledge of the syllabus of the course help delimit the scope and guides the study as well as in-depth understanding of what we want to teach. He further explains that sometimes and unfortunately too, because of lack of teachers, those available are assigned to teach subjects they did not study and this hinders pupils' behavior. Thus if teachers as well as learner have an in-depth of what they are going to learn it will increase understanding and pupils' behavior improved.

The knowledge of methods and techniques of teaching and assessment must not remain abstract when reflecting on the learning content. To improve on pupils' behavior, the teacher must master the general and special didactics specific to our subject. Adequate knowledge about the pupil's social milieu also permits the teacher to better situate the learning content that encourages pupils' behavior
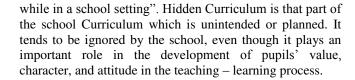
This implies that teachers must master the content of their subject matter if they want to teach efficiently and obtain good results (Carin, 1989). On this perspective, Nichodemus (2007) explains that to acquire skills of the subject matter to be taught, teacher must not only be highly knowledgeable in the subject matter, he or she should also be able to select the subject matter according to the level and other characteristics of the pupils.

The National forum for Education of 1995 calls up on all teachers to recognize the psycho pedagogical skills in the training of children for the challenges, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Thus teachers should acquire skills which will permit them equip pupils with knowledge to manage stressful situations , help children to easily come to terms with their own feelings and impulses and the teacher should be capable of drawing in all manner of children and building them up.

According to Eni (2009) developing learning content entails that teachers think of the approach that will develop current life skills in pupils. This is done through a participatory approach involving the NPA (critical and creative thinking and competence base approach).

Tchombe (2004) and Luma (1983) say that developing moral conduct or ethical values in children will depend on the quality of the relationship between pupils' and teachers. It depends on the sensitivity of the teacher in handling the various processes that form the child's social learning. It also depends on the teacher's awareness of the short and long term effect of the caring strategies in relation to the quality of social life encountered outside the home.

Another aspect related to the learning content in teaching Moral education is the Hidden curriculum. According to Moore (2001, p. 9) "a curriculum refers to all the planned and unplanned learning experiences that students undergo while in a school setting". Hidden Curriculum is that part of the school Curriculum which is unintended or planned. It tends to be ignored by the school, even though it plays an important role in the development of pupils' value, character, and attitude in the teaching – learning process.

Emphasizing on this Tambo (2003) holds that, it is related to how the school is organized as a social institution and also how the subject matter is organized. This organization enables the children to learn certain things that are neither prescribed on the timetable nor formally taught by the teacher. Children for example, learn many things just by observing the way teachers dress, communicate with each other and relate to their duties. Tsafack (2003) also points out that the teachers appearance must at all times and everywhere be of imperative neatness and dignity, neatness of his person and dressing. He urges that the teachers' style of dressing and appearance must be in conformity with good taste and moral rules. Teaching ethical values would depend on the way teachers relate to each other. Hence the unintended actions and instructional in the classroom should be well taken care of to encourage positive behavior in children.

The hidden curriculum is conveyed by the moral atmosphere that is a part of every school. Teachers serve as models of ethical and unethical behavior. Thus through school rules and regulations, value system will be infused into the children.

To sum up, the problem to be solved in this piece of research is the one concerning the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process of Moral Education.

The effectiveness of the teaching-learning process of Moral Education in question

As observed, Moral education as a subject is not given adequate time and seriousness like the other subjects.in addition, teachers hardly plan their lesson before going to class; some do not state clearly their lesson outcome (Eni, 2009). Furthermore, many teachers use only one means of evaluation. They do not follow up pupils activities in school. The use of only one technique of assessment cannot successfully measure pupils' behavior in school. Many teachers are real bad role models and children cannot relate what they say to what they do, which may negatively influence pupils' behavior. To this, Tsafack (2003) says that we cannot require a certain line of conduct and behavior from individuals, when we have not taken care to inculcate the same in them. To sum up, this piece of researcher on Teaching Moral Education in school and pupils' behavior deals with the problem of the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process of Moral Education.

Research question

Given the fact that moral development should be the center of education according to Kant as cited by Kizito (2004);

Luma (1983); there has been a decline in pupils' behavior in our schools and considering that teaching moral education may be responsible for this dilemma, the main question was raised: The main research question for this study reads thus: Is there a relationship between teaching moral education in school and pupils' behavior? In other words and to be precise: "is there a relationship between learning content related to moral education and pupils' behavior?"

The hypothesis of a significant effect of learning contents on pupils' behavior

From these questions were stated the general hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between teaching moral education in school and pupils' behavior. The research hypothesis suggested the existence of a significant relationship between the learning content related to moral education and pupils' behavior.

Objectives and significance of the Study

The study intended to find out if there is a relationship between teaching moral education in school as far as learning content is concerned and pupils' behavior. Concerning the significance, it was hoped that, this work would enable policy makers to identify the problems that teachers and pupils face in the teaching and learning process of moral Education. The research would also enable them to adopt and improve on the techniques and strategies that teachers use on the field. Through this work, teachers will identify their weaknesses concerning teaching Moral Education and this would serve as a source of inspiration for them to enrich their pedagogic competence. It would also enable parents improve up on their contributions to the success of teaching moral education in schools.

A three part analysis
After introduction, the methodological aspect is presented, then results and finally tracks for an efficient teaching/learning process of Moral education to improve the quality of pupils' behaviour.

III. A VERIFICATION METHOD OF THE HYPOTHESIS OF A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT OF LEARNING CONTENT ON PUPILS' BEHAVIOUR

Subjects of the study. The research design used was a survey design The subjects were selected from a population made up of all the public primary school teachers of Awing .using 61 teachers. A sample of fifty teachers was drawn from this population. The simple random technique was used. The area of study was chosen for many reasons: the problem of disruptive behavior that was noticed there, the insufficient number of teachers per school and also teachers' laxity in handling the pupils.

Instrument for data collection. The instrument used for this study was the questionnaire designed for pupils and teachers. To determine its validity and its reliability, the questionnaires mentioned above were constructed respecting the congruence between the objective and the content. Next specialists in construction of instrument and in measurement also appreciated them. In addition, a pilot test was conducted on two small groups of teachers from GBPPS Group II who were not among the sample but have the same characteristic as those included in the sample. The instrument addressed to pupils was also successfully tested on two occasions on a reduced sample of learners. The different results have been correlated.

Data Analysis. The collected data was analysed using comparing percentages and the Pearson product correlation was used to measure the degree of relationship between the two variables**.** The descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the information contained in the questionnaires. The degree of relationship was described in terms of small correlation, moderate correlation and strong correlation.

Main variables. As far as the main variables are concerned, the independent variable was "teaching moral education". From it, the working variable derived was the learning content. The dependent variable was "pupils' behaviour". Table 1 indicates the set of indicators and modalities for each of these variables.

Table 1: Recapitulative table of hypothesis, variables, indicators and modalities

Research hypothesis	Variables	Indicators	Modalities
There is a significant relationship between learning content related to moral education and pupils' behaviour	IV: Learning content	Knowledge know-how Attitude	- Very often, - often, - scarcely
	DV: pupils' behaviour	-School attendance -Personal hygiene/cleaning of school compound -Pupils' conducts during examinations -Pupils' handling of school properties -Pupils' conducts during lessons -Pupils' manner of talking to staff and administration -Pupils' punctuality	- Very satisfactory - Satisfactory - Unsatisfactory

V: Independent variable   DV: dependent variable
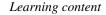
IV. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The set of data collected is presented in a descriptive manner. This first step is followed by the second one that consists of verifying the research hypothesis.

Presentation of the results related to teaching moral education and pupils' behavior

The results presented are related firstly to teaching moral education as far as learning content is concerned, that includes focus on the notion of knowledge, teaching material and focus on the Pupils' attitudes to be developed. Secondly, they are related to pupil's behavior that includes school attendance, personal hygiene/cleaning of school compound, pupils' conducts during examinations, pupils' handling of school properties, pupils' conducts during lessons, pupils' manner of talking to staff and administration, pupils' interaction with friends and school mates, pupils' punctuality.

Table 2: teaching moral education and of pupils' behavior

N°	Teaching moral education	Very often		Often		Scarcely	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
	Learning content (preparing and teaching lessons)						
1	Focus on the notion and knowledge	11	22,0	34	68,0	5	10,0
2	Teaching material that suit the age and level of pupils.	17	34,0	26	52,0	7	14,0
3	Focus on the Pupils' attitudes to be developed	5	10,0	26	52,0	26	52,0
	Pupils' behavior	Very satisfactory		Satisfactory		Unsatisfactory	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	School attendance	11	22,0	29	58,0	10	20,0
2	Personal hygiene/cleaning of school compound	7	14,0	19	38,0	24	48,0
3	Pupils' conducts during examinations	6	12,0	26	52,0	18	36,0
4	Pupils' handling of school properties	7	14,0	20	40,0	23	46,0
5	Pupils' conducts during lessons	5	10,0	24	48,0	21	42,0
6	Pupils' manner of talking to staff and administration	6	12,0	40	80,0	4	8,0
7	Pupils' interaction with friends and school mates	15	30,0	33	66,0	2	4,0
8	Pupils' punctuality	1	2,0	23	46,0	26	52,0

Learning content

Regarding the notion of knowledge when teaching moral education table 2, we observe that out of 50 respondents in the sample, 11(22.0%) admit that they very often focus on the notion of knowledge when preparing and teaching lessons in moral education, 34(68.0%) say they often do so and 5(10.0%) agree they scarcely focus on the notion of knowledge. This reveals that a majority of the teachers often consider the notion of knowledge to be acquired by pupils when preparing and teaching lessons.

About teaching material that suit the age and levels of pupils, table 2 above indicates that in the sample, 17(34%) teachers agree that they very often select teaching material that suit the age and level of pupils, 26(52%) teachers often consider pupils age and level while 7(14%) scarcely consider pupils age and level, when selecting teaching material.

With regard to pupils attitudes to be developed by the end of the lessons, table 2 shows the distribution of teachers' opinions as to whether pupils' attitudes to be developed by the end of the lesson are taken into consideration when teaching moral education. Concerning this, 5(10.0%) of the teachers said they very often consider pupils' attitudes, 19(38.0%) said they often consider, and 26(52.0%) scarcely do so. This indicates that many teachers do not take into consideration pupils attitudes to be developed by the end of the lesson.

Pupils' behavior

Concerning school attendance, the table above give the opinion of teachers regarding their pupils school attendance, out of the sample ,11(22.0%) of the teachers appreciate the behavior of their pupil as very satisfactory,29 (58.0%)were satisfactory with their pupils' school attendance and 10(20.0%)were unsatisfactory with pupils' school attendance.

Table 2 shows also the distribution of teacher's opinion concerning pupil's personal hygiene/cleaning of the school compound, it indicates that, 7 (14.0%) of the teachers were very satisfied with pupils hygienic condition, 19(38.0%) are satisfactory while 24(48.0%) are satisfactory. This tells us that most of the pupils appear dirty in school and do not use their initiatives in cleaning the school compound.

With regard to the distribution of teacher's opinions on pupils' conduct during examinations, table 2 indicates that 7(14.0%) of the teachers were very satisfied with pupils' conduct during examination, 20(40.0%) were satisfied with pupils' conduct during examination and 23(46.0%) were unsatisfied with pupils' conduct during examinations. This reveals that, despite rules that govern examinations, many pupils still cheat during examinations.

Regarding the distribution of teachers' opinions in the way pupils handle school properties, table 2 t tells us that 6(12.0%) of the teachers were very satisfactory with pupils manner of handling school properties, 26(52.0%) report

satisfactory while 18(36.0%) report unsatisfactory. we therefore conclude that many teachers in the sample are satisfied with the way pupils handle school properties.

About pupils conducts during lessons, table 2 shows also the distribution of teachers opinions concerning pupils conducts during lesson. The table indicates that 5(10.0%) of the teachers were very satisfied with pupils conduct during lessons, 24(48.0%) were satisfied while 21(42.0%) were unsatisfied with the way pupils conduct during lessons. This reviews that most teachers are satisfied with the way pupils behave during lessons thought a hand full of the pupils still display poor behavior.

On the subject of Pupils manner of talking to staff and administration, the table above shows the distribution of teachers' opinions concerning pupils' manner of talking to staffs members and administration. The table reviews that, out of the total sample of 50 teachers, 4(8.0%) reported that were very satisfactory with pupils' manner of talking to staff members, 40(80.0%) reported satisfactory while 6(12.0%) reported unsatisfactory. The findings show that many teachers were satisfied with the way pupils talk to staff members.

In connection with pupils interaction with friends and school mates, table 2 shows the distribution of teachers' opinions concerning pupils' interaction with friends and school mate. The table indicates that out of the sample of respondents 15(30%) of the teachers were very satisfied with pupils interaction with friends and school mates, 33(66.0%) were satisfactory while 2(4.0%) were unsatisfactory with the pupils interact with their class mates and friends. This finding reveals that most teachers are satisfied with the way pupils interact with friends. This also indicates that pupils-pupils relationship is cordial.

In relation to punctuality, table 2 shows the distribution teachers opinions concerning pupils' punctuality in school. The table reveals that 1(2.0%) of the teachers was very satisfied with pupils' punctuality in school, 23(46%) were satisfactory while 26(52%) were unsatisfied with pupils punctuality in school. This findings most of the teachers were unsatisfied with pupils punctuality to school. Many children are always late to school because they move and play on their way to school and also because of laziness.

The hypothesis of a significant effect of learning content on pupils' behavior

The Pearson correlations were used to test the research hypothesis. The statistical processing of the data was done through the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software (SPSS 11.0 for Windows®) as shown in the tables below.

Table 3: Summary of Results from the tested hypothesis

Null hypothesis	Test value (r_{xy})	Critical value (c.v)	P-value	Level of significance (α)	Decision	Coefficient of determination (r^2_{xy})	Magnitude
There is no significant relationship between learning content related to moral education and pupils' behavior.	.312	.2732	.028	.05	Ho is rejected	.097	Moderate correlation

After verification, the following results were obtained.
The coefficient of determination value is .083, showing that the proportion of common variance between learning content and pupil's behavior is 8.3%, which is small. The coefficient of determination value is 0.097, showing that the proportion of common variance between learning content and pupil's behavior is 9.7%, which is moderate.

This study was designed to investigate into the relationship that exists between *learning content* in teaching moral education process in schools and pupils 'behavior. The research hypothesis formulated was confirmed, implying that effectively, teaching moral education highly influences pupils' behavior.

V. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY ON LEARNING CONTENT AND PUPIL'S BEHAVIOR

The main assumption was that learning content in the moral education teaching process in school is significantly related to pupils' behavior. This hypothesis was stated in both the null and alternative forms. The descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyses the data. After the verification, it was realized that the test value (.312) was greater than the critical value (.2732), the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative retained. This reveals that implementations of learning content related to moral education are significantly linked to pupil's behavior.

The results of this finding are supported by Tsafack (2003) who holds that, a proper knowledge of the syllabus of the course help delimit the scope and guide the study as well as in-depth understanding of what we want to teach. Teachers who skillfully think of the multicultural and multiethnic environment in which we find ourselves in, when situating content help pupils to live in unity, which also influence their behavior positively. Tambo (2003) also affirms that those teachers who think carefully about, what they are going to teach, how to motivate pupils to learn and how to

find out if learning did take place often lead their pupils to better behavior.

In addition, adequate knowledge about pupils' social milieu, time-table, teaching methods and levels of pupils also permits the teacher to better situate the learning content that encourages pupils' behavior.

VI. CONCLUSION

This piece of   research was aimed at investigating the relationship between teaching moral education in school as far as learning content is concerned and pupils' behavior. The research hypothesis suggested the existence of a significant relationship between the learning content related to moral education and pupils' behavior. The results of the research confirmed this hypothesis, meaning that the effective teaching of moral education in school through adequate learning content will influence pupils' behavior positively. This learning content should include different types of knowledge (notional, know-how, attitudinal knowledge) to be acquired. It should be centered on behavior and competences to be developed and to be used in real-life situations and in harmony with behavioral principles which characterize the human being [Roegiers, 2006; Roegiers (coord.), 2010].

In addition, pupils, parents and the other members of the school community should be involved in the definition and the realization process of learning content related to moral Education. They should work in collaboration with the teachers in school to promote pupils' behavior. Because as teachers, "they can be positive role models,(…) revealing to students what it means to be a moral person" (Bart Engelen, Alan Thomas, Alfred Archer & Niels Van de Ven, 2018). They should encourage discussion and the exchange of ideas which aim at breeding in the pupils 'habits of rational decision making.

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