

# Continuing Training and Professional Performance of Primary School Teachers in Tchad: The Case of Teachers in the Farchana Refugee Camp

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**Abstract :** The article on the continuing training and professional performance of primary teachers in Tchad is intended to reflect on the performance of primary teachers, particularly those of the school in the Farchana refugee camp to ensure quality education to effectively address the real problems of learners and the educational community. The article therefore raises a problem of ineffectiveness of teachers in this concern. It is the continuing training which allows teachers to adapt to professional requirements and the modernization of teaching practices through technological tools and new didactic materials. Continuing training is therefore an essential factor in enabling teachers to achieve the best educational and professional performance to guarantee quality education. However, it is essential that this training be carried out under appropriate conditions taking into account all the institutional, conceptual and practical arrangements for training.

**Keywords:** *Continuing Training, Teacher, Primary Education, School in the Farchana Refugee Camp, Pedagogy, Teaching Materials and Professional Practices.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The problem of inefficiency and lack of qualification of community primary teachers in the Sudanese refugee camp in Tchad is becoming increasingly worrisome in view of the challenges and particularities faced by schools in the refugee camps. It is therefore necessary to question the effective implementation of training for primary teachers in general and community teachers in refugee camps in particular. Moreover, we must ask ourselves how this training is practiced in our educational system? In other words, what are the elements that constitute the continuing training of teachers in primary education in Tchad ?

Indeed, the camp of Farchana is created on 17 January 2004 with about 15,752 refugees. To date, this camp has 50,307 refugees divided into a main camp and two (2) extensions. It brings together thousands of children in need of quality education. However, these children come from different horizons, with realities and difficulties multivariate according to their countries of origin and the reasons for their refugee cases. It is therefore fundamental to reorganize and reorient the practice of the teaching function in terms of teaching content, context and pedagogical practices that would promote the emergence of individual knowledge,

professional, contextual and pragmatic for each child. From the above, we can say that this study is in the field of socio-professional research and quality of training for primary school teachers in general and those in refugee camps in particular. Its importance on the academic and professional fields is no longer to be demonstrated as it enters into the dynamics of capacity building of teachers through quality continuing training taking into account the existential requirements and needs of education for each company and period. Its general objective is to highlight the almost indisputable importance of continuing training for a better practice of the teaching profession and above all the development of contextual and adequate pedagogical skills of teachers.

## II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Education is a lever on which a nation builds its growth and guarantees the development and fulfilment of its people. As such, it plays a key role in the economic, socio-cultural and political change of each society. To achieve this noble mission, quality education is essential. This inevitably requires a qualified teaching staff, well-equipped both pedagogically, structurally and contextually. This is what makes some education researchers think (PERRENOUD,

1996; TARDIF et al., 1998) that the quality of education in terms of skills and aptitudes is determined by the quality of training, which takes the form of initial and continuing training. (Sadik, 2005; p186) will say to this effect that: 'Like any educational action, the training of personnel is designed as a double strategic action. It is an action on Men, for Men. Training is thus an element of promotion and ascension'.

#### *A. Continuing Training as an Instrument of School Performance*

If the initial training of teachers appears to be discontinuous and awarded with a certificate of aptitude or an equivalent diploma, continuing training, as the name suggests, should remain permanent in order to strengthen the capacities and skills of teachers in the practice of their profession, taking into account economic, civilizational or cultural developments, as well as social and environmental issues to provide teachers with a set of pedagogical practices, techniques and knowledge appropriate to current requirements. It is in this sense that (Altet 1994; p.3) will attempt to define continuing training as "an interpersonal, intentional process that essentially uses verbal communication, the finalized dialogic discourse as a means to provoke, foster, and make learning successful". Continuing training is thus no doubt the key to redefining the professional trend of teachers and strengthening their professional performance. It should be noted, however, that this training seems to be beneficial not only for teachers but also for the whole training system in particular and the education system in general. Because if it contributes to a better professional deployment of teachers, it also allows to revitalize teaching practices learning by applying an approach based on new and universal educational requirements such as the Skills Approach. The latter is an important and indispensable factor because it brings a new dynamic that allows to strengthen the achievements at the same time practical, contextual and theoretical for a comprehensive learning of the learners that guarantees an application of knowledge in concrete life situations. Continuing training also makes it possible, so to speak, to make teachers available; training and teaching strategies that ensure their effectiveness and improve their professional autonomy, which will enable them to respond adequately to the expectations of the educational community in general and particularly those of students.

#### *B. Continuing Education: an Imperative for Schools in Refugee Camps in Tchad.*

The schools in the refugee camps in Tchad in general and in Farchana in particular are more concerned with the situation of levels and professional skills of teachers. Moreover, the notion of ethics in education challenges educational institutions in several ways as to the performance of teachers, educational strategies and the integration of new information and communication technologies, which are now an important lever for education. Taking all these aspects into account ensures a more objective training of learners and promotes the integration of all values, both educational, social, cultural and economic.

The situation of schools in refugee camps in Tchad therefore remains a major concern for an objective and adequate education for young refugees in view of the institutional, pedagogical and socio-cultural deficiencies observed in these schools. These are mainly :

- Inadequate classrooms or classrooms in poor condition (room built during the emergency or by the community), latrines and school furniture for current strength;
- Negligence in the maintenance and hygiene of establishments;
- Half of the children are not enrolled in primary school, and those who are enrolled are late for school at Rentrée due to limited community interest in education and prioritization of other activities for their survival;
- Many refugee children are educated outside the camp (even if in Progress), which slightly distorts the school attendance rate.
- Many refugees enlist in a camp live outside the camp or often travel, for example during the rainy season or for cross-border trade, which makes it difficult to monitor students, register and/or attend.
- Large gap between educational attainment and age for many students;
- Overcrowding in classrooms;
- Lack of teaching and didactic tools: textbooks, teacher guides, thematic maps and other teaching tools but also sports equipment;
- Lack of innovation and adaptation to new pedagogical methodologies.

UNHCR states that "... it is observed during pedagogical follow-ups that teachers still have significant difficulties in mastering the preparation of teaching, curricula, classroom management with a positive pedagogy, etc. Continuing training can therefore be seen as a key factor in building the capacity of the refugees to develop appropriate pedagogical practice for the refugee camp, especially in order to keep pace with changes and new demands of society. It is essential to understand that an absence situation in this case would inevitably justify the difficulties teachers may encounter in exercising their profession. In particular, the lack of professional performance observed among the latter has a significant impact on the quality of teaching and the performance of learners in particular and the collapse of the education system in general.

Continuing training is seen as an essential value for the promotion of the teaching profession, it enables each teacher to better meet the needs of society in general and those of learners in particular. As a result, it strengthens learners' learning and level in reading, writing and knowledge production and, by extension, success rates among learners. It also ensures an objective and optimal education for each learner so that they can easily fit into their direct environments. In addition, continuing training provides (OUELLET, 1995) the acquisition of new expertise in the areas of planning, management and evaluation of education.

### C. *Modelling Continuing Training*

Continuing teacher training differs from initial training in that it is carried out simultaneously with the practice of teaching. Indeed, it is clear that this involves both retraining and further training, capacity building for teachers, enabling them to be up-to-date with the ever-changing changes in the teaching profession in general.

Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) thus demonstrate that continuing training activities can guarantee academic success. As a result, it must be noted that the effectiveness of continuing training is primarily related to teachers through contextual and procedural knowledge and practices. It is in this logic that Guskey (2000, 2001), drawing inspiration from the continuing training model, identifies five fundamental components which clearly define the links to be taken into account in the continuing training of teachers. It is about :

- Education policies (enhanced through training activities);
- Teaching practices (taught in training activities);
- Strategies for organizing activities (location, duration of training);
- Knowledge and skills (to be acquired by the teacher at the end of training activities);
- Organizational supports (supported by the administration and local community)

These guidelines are organized in several institutional activities of continuing training and supported by the administrative authorities of primary education in Tchad in general and refugee camps in particular. These activities are then grouped into five main categories, listed as Institutional arrangements by TRAORE (2009, p.40) among others:

- Retraining courses and training seminars;
- Educational conferences;
- Class visits;
- The educational animation groups
- distance learning.

These different activities are broken down as follows according to TRAORE (2009) :

- Retraining courses. They are organized at the primary school district level early in the school year to retrain former teachers and allow new teachers to observe and present lessons, followed by feedback on adherence to methodology. Training seminars are occasional and are organized when there are innovations or changes in the school or teaching system.
- Educational conferences. They are annual and focus on a theme of reflection that concerns the whole of a basic education district or a group of neighbouring districts. The teachers in the pedagogical animation groups reflect on the theme of the conference before it is held as a preparation.
- Class visits They are organized by the superiors of the teachers and consist essentially, on the part of the superior, in observing the teacher practice one or more lessons in his class and giving him a feedback, indicating whether or not they have followed the methodology and providing advice.

It is appropriate in view of the foregoing to show the relevance of this training in a context where teachers are recruited without any real initial training in the field of education but only on the basis of their school diplomas (GCE or Bachelor) and also according to their availability and community commitment. According to TRAORE (2009), this training should be crowned with “the achievement of a professional certificate or diploma through examinations or competitions...” to give statutory and administrative value to this training.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This article adopts a qualitative research with the maintenance guide as the main data collection instrument. Therefore, the methodology of this article is developed around points such as :

### A. *Population and Sample*

The study population of this article is mainly made up of academic officials including a principal of the Farchana camp school and teachers in charge of providing education in the Farchana refugee camp.

The refugee camp was chosen for both humanitarian and academic reasons.

On the humanitarian front, quality education for all is a priority. To achieve this priority, CONFEMEN (2011) stated that special attention must be paid “... the quality of education by aiming at improving it in all aspects with a view to excellence, so as to obtain recognised and quantifiable learning outcomes for all, particularly in reading, Writing and numeracy and life skills.” This objective is all the more important in a particular context of refugees or boarders and especially the youngest need practical skills and knowledge to integrate easily into an environment that is foreign to them but also sometimes very hostile in terms of social integration.

On a purely academic level, the choice of this site is challenging in terms of the quality of the people who work there as teachers. However, quality education depends essentially on the quality of teachers; quality at all levels including pedagogical and socio-contextual practices.

As a result, our study population is made up of six (06) teachers and one (01) school director at the Farchana refugee camp.

### B. *Data Collection Instruments: The Maintenance Guide*

The interview guide is a data collection tool that allows you to collect questions that need to be addressed in the interview. It has many advantages but also some disadvantages.

With regard to the advantages of the maintenance guide, we can say that it provides more precise information. It allows the problem to be examined in depth and appropriate solutions to be found.

As for the limitations of the interview guide, we can say that it is more difficult to do a statistical analysis of the responses collected in the interview; Also, the respondent's intervention with longer answers can prevent more questions from being asked.

There are three types of maintenance guide, among which we have the semi-directional type guide that is used in this study. Also called qualitative or in-depth interview because its main objective is to collect information that provides details on the research. It is in this logic that (Lincoln, 1995) states that: "semi-directive interview is a technique of data collection that contributes to the development of knowledge promoting qualitative and interpretative approaches relevant in particular to constructive paradigms". The semi-structured interview guide is then structured by a series of open-ended questions which the researcher prepares in advance to gather precise information about his research subject. This one behaves in turn of two subtypes including the interview with free answers and the conversation centered or targeted.

The choice of this type of maintenance guide is justified by the organization of our work and the objectives set. The semi-directive maintenance guide us to understand more deeply the problem of this research and provide more appropriate solutions to solve it. The first part consists of the introduction and presentation. This section presents the research work by specifying the subject of the research and showing the contribution of the interview to the research. The second part mainly consists of the identification of the survey and the third part consists of all the questions asked in the interview.

### *C. Transcript of the Interviews.*

The duration of interviews varies between one hour and fifteen minutes (1h15minutes) and two hours (2h). This difference in time or duration of the interviews is justified by the fact that the majority of interviewees were more motivated to our questions; this interview could therefore have a favourable echo for them. In view of the importance that continuing training is now assuming in general and particularly for teachers who do not have adequate initial training in education. That is why we have given them all the time they need to express and further develop their point of view on the situation.

These results were presented according to the sections and modules that form the basis of the maintenance guide. Therefore, the various questions related to these sections and modules are developed on the basis of findings, facts and assessments made by the researcher with a view to improving and strengthening this activity for teachers.

### *D. Analysis of Interview Data*

The analysis of these data allows us to understand the views of both the head and teachers of the school in the Farchana refugee camp. This analysis is based on the various sections and methods which have furnished these interviews and also, and above all, which form the backbone of continuing training.

In the first instance, an interview with the director of the school in the camp of Farchana.

Section 1 dealt with the practice of internship. To this end, several questions were addressed to the director of the said school to clarify the situation. Several responses were given, among which the practice of the internship has «no particular interest just for teacher training». That these internships take place exclusively "during leave" however, a report of observation of the internship is required from teachers. However, teachers are not required to share their pedagogical experiences, so professional development activities are not offered. In addition, the only available teaching method offered is the face-to-face course and finally, no pedagogical innovation is required of teachers.

In view of the answers to the first action, which is the practice of the internship, There is a rather important shortcoming in the latter since the internship should be part of the activities that furnish the school year and allow teachers to build their capacities during the year. In addition, their experiences must be shared as well as pedagogical innovations to ensure the effective professional development of each teacher.

This is sufficient proof of the school's inability to provide quality education for its students.

Section 2 on the educational activities of the training was developed by several questions that allowed us to evaluate the implementation of these at the FARCHANA refugee camp school. It is therefore noted that pedagogical supervision is not carried out in this school, that model lessons are not done. Moreover, the only available teaching materials are «chalk, books, rules and other technical material».

Anything that does not promote a complete and quality training to students and does not allow teachers to stay in effective continuing education because there must be regular pedagogical supervision in which several pedagogical approaches and methods are presented to teachers in order to strengthen their operational capacities. In addition to conventional teaching materials, the school should equip itself with technological and other learning-facilitating materials such as images and play objects.

However, it should be noted that according to the respondent, there is a particular focus on programs that need to be developed in the CPA model. That the latter must be convergent and also take into account technological innovations.

However, we can note an inadequacy on the consideration of technology in educational practices as the respondent seems to overlook the fact that the level of integration of educational technologies into curricula is appreciable. When asked whether they think the learning content offers innovative learning resources and teaching aids, respondents say "we think so" this answer leaves some doubt as to the effectiveness or veracity of this concern.



At the end of this second section, It should be noted that several shortcomings are evident in the consideration of all pedagogical aspects related to these activities such as didactic materials and educational technologies through ICT and innovative pedagogical approaches. These are the elements to be taken into consideration in order to ensure proper continuing training for teachers and adequate education for learners.

The last section of this interview dealt with the actual practice of continuing training. This allowed us to see that the continuing training although not sufficiently effective at the school in the refugee camp of FARCHANA remains important and is considered essential for teachers to «strengthen the capacities of teachers» thinks the respondent. It also states that the activities related to continuing education are aimed at “improving the educational system”. In this way, it becomes clear that the courses which are not sufficiently implemented by his school place a strong emphasis on the acquisition of teachers' theoretical and practical professional knowledge. Although he has doubts that continuing training activities are always in line with the identified needs of teachers and students. This state of affairs allows us to specify that not only the continuing training of teachers must be emphasized and effective in order to enable teachers to be better equipped to fulfil their responsibilities effectively and carry out their pedagogical activities; This continuing training should, however, take into account the specific needs identified among teachers and their capacities of resources necessary to respond effectively also to the needs of learners.

The second part of the data collection was carried out among teachers in the same school.

This interview consisted of a single section on initial and continuing teacher training. However, this section is organized into modalities which is to determine the questions accurately.

The first modality concerns the practice of the internship. On this point, most respondents are unanimous on several questions. To know how they judge the training sessions planned for them, most respondents believe that the internships are an important moment in their activities and explain the fact that these internships are unfortunately not regularly organized he states that during these internships it is important to explain to them what to do pupils. In relation to their reports on the course they all start from what they had to do during the course. Thus, all respondents believe that these courses allow them to acquire new knowledge. However, some points are not unanimous, such as the one on the didactic materials used in the courses; respondent 3 refers only to «practical books chalk» while others add other materials such as the table, Notebooks, books and math tools. Furthermore, when asked whether teachers everywhere think that teaching days are still respected, while the majority respond positively, respondent 3 says “no” and respondent 6 says “no, there are those who are not interested”.

So, at the end of this first analysis on this first point relating to the practice of internship, we can note that internships are a necessity for teachers because they even recognize their usefulness for their continuing training and in the exercise of their duties. Emphasis should also be placed on the activities carried out in order to respond effectively to teachers' concerns. It is also necessary to ensure, while motivating the teachers, that they all participate in these different courses which must be organized on a regular basis.

Modality 2 deals with the pedagogical activities of training. On this point too, several teachers are also unanimous on a number of questions. Regarding the activities organized during the training, most respondents refer to lectures as a function of educational programs. Other rather important concern seems to remain unsubstantiated among teachers in the vast majority. Still concerning the activities carried out during the educational days, two respondents in this case, respondent 4 and respondent 6 speak of “open days for student orientation and knowledge games” This enables us to understand that a special emphasis should be placed on educational activities which enable teachers to acquire new pedagogical knowledge both in theory and in practice to build their capacities. Also when asked if they think they have received enough knowledge about the digitization of teaching, only respondent #2 says yes because it allows us to conduct online research. and the others said they were not sure. However, it should be noted that in reality this concern is always a priority for them because we can see that they do not really have the skills and even basic knowledge on digitalization. It is therefore also important to place a special emphasis on this when we are talking about educational technology. Indeed, every teacher must master the digitalization of teachers to make their teachers more attractive and modern.

With regard to the last point, which is the modality of training curricula, we can note that most teachers have enormous difficulties with curricula. For example, regarding the definition of course objectives that must be SMART, almost all teachers say they do not know what this means. Respondent 2 who thinks that “SMART is a mnemonic means to describe the objectives we want to express in a clear, simple to understand way and for which the results are achievable”. Respondents in their entirety refuse to comment on the cost effectiveness of their training compared with other health facilities. However, they are unanimous that educational programs are developed according to the competency-based approach in order to “enable students to move forward together and be well trained”, say respondents 1,3,4, 6. they all say that the degree to which programmes are aligned with the needs of pupils is highly appreciated. This allows us to see that the respondent in the vast majority masters the competency approach although some elements such as SMART must be better explained so that they can develop their courses well.

At the end of this analysis, we can note that continuing training is very much needed for teachers in the FARCHANA refugee camp school. They have a real need

for retraining and internships in order to improve themselves and adapt to the new educational requirements, both practical and technological. It is therefore necessary that capacity-building training sessions and educational days are regularly organized to help them in the exercise of their function.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

At the end of this study, which focused on continuing training and professional performance of primary school teachers in Tchad: the case of teachers from the Farchana refugee camp, with regard to the problem of performance that these teachers may encounter. We have been able to explore the conceptual framework of continuing training for teachers in general and those of primary education in particular. This study was conducted with the teachers of the school in the refugee camp of Farchana, which had six students, and also with the principal of the same school. Data collection was done using a semi-structured maintenance guide. At the end of this collection, we presented and analyzed the data collected that allowed us to find many shortcomings on the training of these teachers, including the mastery of didactic tools, different teaching methods, the use of computer tools and therefore educational technology, and even the implementation of the CPA model. In addition, we found that the pedagogical supervision, practical courses and teaching days are not sufficiently effective at this school, anything that causes real difficulties in the pedagogical practice of teachers and also in the performance of students who are called to respond adequately to the different tests and situations they will face in their existential environment of work or life. Continuing training is therefore a necessity in this context to strengthen the capacities of teachers and enable them to retrain themselves to be at the top and at the forefront of technological and pedagogical advances and to ensure quality education in line with real the concerns and expectations of society in general and of pupils in particular.

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