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**GOOD GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT: CASE STUDY OF BUEA MUNICIPALITY**

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**Abstract**

Good governance is a vital pre-requisite instrument for the improvement of community development of every country. This is because the improvement in any government agencies largely depend on good governance. It is through good governance that development projects and programs are realized in a community. In a state where good governance is practice, accountability of governmental institutions is a priority. But in Cameroon, particularly in Buea, good governance is thrown overboard, because there is no public accountability. This poor governance is directly linked to the nature of leadership and governance in practice, nationwide. The leadership style does favor the development of good governance. Government structures lack effective coordination, transparency and public accountability. This has greatly limited active public participation in governance. The study seeks to examine the role of good governance on community development in Buea Municipality. The research made used of Community Economic Development approach or theory propounded by Blakeley in 1994. The research instruments used included both closed-ended and opened ended questionnaires. Results from the field were analyzed quantitatively with the use of chi square. It was examined that; good governance plays a positive role in community development. The study recommending that, for good governance to exist in Buea, there should be the rule of law, encouragement of community participation, transparency and accountability.

**Key words:**

*Good Governance, Community Development, Buea, Municipality.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Good governance is one of the pillars for the successful social and economic development of a country. Good governance usually plays a key role in areas like health, education, infrastructure, capital market, regulation, macro-economic stability, safety net provision, legal system, creation of a good business environment, all of which are pre-conditions and



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basic features of the developed economy (Alaaraj, 2015:1-2). If government does these things well, the economy is likely to prosper. If government does them poorly through inefficiency and corrupt practices, community development in such communities is bound to failed. Good governance is about how the state and other organizations (institutions) interact and how they relate to the citizens.

In European countries, institutions can be considered as the 'set of rules' that find out the behaviors of individuals within civil society. The role of institutions in the development of economic growth has long been emphasized by Douglas North during the Nobel prize-winning economic historian. He argues that the role of institutions and governance has not been incorporated formally into the economic theory of growth. The European Union (EU) as a major organization in Europe, is not accepted in the area of promoting good governance and community development among its members. The EU has been among the first to include good governance, together with human rights, democracy and the rule of law in its cooperation agreements with external partners. Development discourse in the late 1908s in Europe has not just associated 'governance' with its normative partner, 'good' but it also highly politicized. 'Good governance' has come to be associated with a set of technocratic variables pertaining to the functioning of a government.

African governments, on their part, have expressed their concern with the politicization of 'governance,' especially with how this is used as conditionality. There is general consensus on the continent that 'governance' must be defined in a less prescription and technocratic manner. This definition will have to take into account the relationship of 'governance' to development, democracy, state effectiveness and the market. From this perspective, governance can be defined in terms of state-society relations and internal structures and processes within governments as a principal organ of the state. There is a correlation between good governance and socio-economic development in Africa. There is widespread agreement that good governance matters intrinsically and for improvement in economic and social outcomes.

In trying to trace the roots of the concept of good governance which became very prominent in Cameroon only in the 1990s, it is important to establish the internal degeneration of the state apparatus as a result of poor governance mechanisms and of course the external pressure that ensued from the Breton Woods and other international donor agencies. There is no single day that Cameroon's media, radio, television and newspapers will not carry articles on the good governance concept from different perspectives. But, in reality, there is much trumpeting of the concept than putting in place mechanisms that will ensure it realization. The zeal to realize this concept is not backed by good will and determination to see this dream come true in Cameroon. Cameroon having hardly recovered from the convalescences of her colonial dependence, still has the trapping of a fragile State because of political fragmentation based on the cultural diversity between the Anglophones and Francophobes (Awasom, 2009:9). The fragmented nature of the political state of Cameroon which can partly be attributed to its complicated colonial past, has been further compounded by the multiplicity of ethnic groups that are found in the Country. The natural differences on ethnic configuration were further complicated by the kinds of colonial inheritance which did not only turn the

Country into a bi-cultural State but the colonial structures inherited exhibited bad governance in the kind of clientelist governance structures that was left behind at the departure of the colonialists. This kind of inherited structure only helped to intensify fragmentation on the ethnic lines and has complicated the process of statehood in many different domains.

This has mysteriously established grounds for gross imbalance in the distribution of resources and for community development in Cameroon. It is this poor governance mechanisms that has increased poverty and underdevelopment rate in the Country. This has also increase pressure on the government to institute good governance. The void and null Theory of Regional Balance in resource allocation and distribution of State resources highly preached by the government may present itself as a very important principle of good governance, but the truth is that the implementation of this principle allows much to be desired and it is the interest of this study to make critical examination of good governance and its impact on community development in Cameroon and particularly in Buea Municipality.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Improve performance of government agencies in every nation largely depends on good governance. It leads to an increase in people's living standards and socio-economic growth. It is through good governance that development projects and programs are realized in any community. In a state where good governance is practice, accountability of governmental institutions and progress of such states are likely to be realistic. But in other states like Cameroon, where good governance is thrown overboard, accountability of governmental institutions and progress of the State is likely to be unrealistic. Therefore, Cameroon's community development challenges are directly linked to the nature of leadership and governance. Governance and leadership styles in Cameroon communities are marked by inequality, social deprivation and political turmoil, which are vices that need to be addressed for the country to prosper in her quest for community development.

Good governance is a vital pre-requisite for the improvement of the citizens. But, regional and local governance in Cameroon is not addressing their services to citizens in a manner that is effectively contributing to equitable service delivery at the community levels. Government structures lack effective coordination, transparency and public accountability. And as such, there is lack of active community participation in development projects. These causes slow policy implementation which eventually ends up affecting community development level of the country (National Statistics Agency Report, 2011). The present level of local governance practice in Cameroon, particularly in Buea Municipal Community portray a lax picture of good governance. This lax picture of good governance is manifested in their provisions of essential services such as: clean water, sanitation, education, health, electricity and road network. With this kind of slow provisions of essential services, community development cannot take place.

In addition, this poor and slow provisions of service, which if left unattended by, may have long-term detrimental socio-economic effects for the Nation at large and the residents of Buea Municipal Community in particular. The possibility for good governance to work well depends on institutional structures and economic resources available for

ensuring good governance. This study therefore seeks to examine the impact of good governance on community development in Cameroon, with specific reference to Buea municipality.

### **RESEARCH QUESTION:**

What role does good governance play on community development in Buea municipality?

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

To examine the role of good governance on community development in Buea municipality.

### **HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY**

H<sub>0</sub>: Good governance plays no significant role on community development in Buea municipality

H<sub>1</sub>: Good governance plays a significant role on community development in Buea municipality.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Conceptual Review**

##### **The Nature and Concept of Local Government**

Governance is the exercise of power or authority which can be; political, economic, administrative or otherwise to manage a country's resources and affairs. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their differences OECD (2013). It is also ' a process of managing public affairs at all levels in which power and authority are exercised in a collective manner. Governance is the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented. Governance can be used in several contexts such as, corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance. In this study, the mention of governance refers to the national and local governance. In addition, good governance according to OECD (2013) is the exercise of authority through political and institutional processes that are transparent and accountable and encourage public participation. OECD (2013) further explains that good governance makes institution to be democratic making them create avenues for the public to participate in policy making through formal or informal consultations. It also establishes mechanisms for the inclusion of multiple social groups in decision-making processes, especially on a local level.

Furthermore, Mutahaba (2012:21-42) views good governance as transparent and accountable management of human, natural, economic and financial resources of a country in the drive towards equitable and sustainable development. Good governance generally implies a number of institutions, which regulate the behavior of public bodies, stimulate citizens' participation in government and control public-private relations.

There are several actors involved in the process of governance and government is one of the actors in the process. Other actors vary depending on the level of government under

consideration. Government according to Armstrong 1990: 20, is a group of individuals exercising legitimate authority, protecting and adopting the community by making and carrying out decisions. The group of individuals shares a defined responsibility for exercising power. This government can be at various levels including the national, regional and local levels, local indicating a level below the first two mentioned. This study however, is concerned mainly with local government as an actor in the local governance process.

### **Definition of Local Government**

The UN defines local government as ' a political sub-division of a nation, which is anticipated by law and has substantial control of local affairs including the powers to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such an entity is elected (locally) or appointed (by the personnel in the higher level of government). O'Neal (2012:58), local government is viewed as “a system of territorial unit with defined boundaries, a legal identity, an institutional structure, powers and duties laid down in general and special statutes and a degree of financial and other autonomy”. Alaaraj, 2015: 14 also see local government as “the authority constitutionally empowered to raise and spend money for local purposes on grassroots or local levels, especially on matters within its jurisdiction”. From the foregoing definitions, local government in this study is considered as all sub-national units of government below the central and state government that have legal personality, specified powers to perform certain specific functions, involves effective citizen participation and having a substantial budgetary and staffing autonomy in the promotion of the development of its area of jurisdiction. This definition therefore prepares the platform for a discussion on the characteristics of a local government.

### **Characteristics of Local Governments**

A prospective local government from the above definitions should have the following characteristics:

- i) Be at the sub-division level:** For a form of government to be referred to as local government, it should be below the national or central level of government. This level of government can be at the regional, district or at the community level. This unit should not be a unit of a central government ministry or department at the local level, but a unit that has all the powers in resemblance to a form of government.
- ii) A legal personality:** Local government as a specific institution or entity should be created by national constitutions or state constitutions or by ordinary legislation of a higher level of central government or by provincial or state legislation or by an executive order to deliver a range of specified services to a relatively small geographically delineated area. The legal backing depends on the forms of government being practiced in a particular country. This indicates that there should be a legal or constitutional provision and laws establishing and sanctioning this form of government. It should also have the power to sue and be sue and enter into contracts.
- iii) Weld specific powers:** Local government is identified by the specified powers that lead to the development of the local area under its jurisdiction. It should also have

the power to employ and fire its own staff, mobilize revenue in a manner that is accountable and should be subjected to limited central control.

**iv) Specific geographic area and population:** A local government should have defined spatial jurisdiction under its control and authority. It should also take charge over the population of this space where it operates.

**v) Elected/selected representative:** Finally, a local government should be composed of elected or appointed representatives of local people to ensure effective citizen participation in that local government.

### **Responsibilities of Local Governments**

Local governments are seen as the handmaidens of a higher government order, Dayanandan, (2013:6-9). They are seen to be extensions of state or national governments and act on the behalf of these higher level's government. In many cases, especially in a unitary state system, policy development, standards of service and policy performance are determined at the national level. The local governments are then to carry out oversight implementation at the local level. In the promotion of local socio-economic development, local government within this style are seen to implement policies, programs and projects on behalf of that higher order of government. From this, it could be deduced that local governments are not autonomous and only exist to advance the interest and wishes of higher levels of government. This may affect adversely the participation of the local people and local institutions in local decision making and issues directly influencing the development of the local area. Also, programs and projects that may be implemented may not be on the interest of the local people as their needs may not be captured in the process and adequately catered for. This notwithstanding, the standards of service and policy performance determined by the center may serve as a check on the activities of the local governments. This can help keep the local government to pursue agenda not outside the national interest.

Again, local governments have the responsibility as independent facilitators of creating public value. This places significant emphasis on the government as an agent of the people to serve public interest and create public value which indicates measurable improvement in social outcomes or quality of life. This concept is directly relevant to local and municipal services, for which it is feasible to measure such improvements and have some sense of attribution. This is useful in evaluating conflicting and perplexing choices in the use of local resources and in defining the role of local governments

The role of public managers in local governments in this direction is to tap local free resources and push the frontiers of improved social outcomes beyond what may be possible with meagre local revenues. This responsibility makes it mandatory for local governments to seek the interest and welfare of the local people. It has the right to use resources at its disposal for the good of all. Local governments are again expected to facilitate network form of local governance. They have the opportunity to both interest-based and hope-based network in improving social outcomes for local residents. To play such a role, local governments must develop a strategic vision of how such partnership can be formed and sustained. In doing this, they should separate policy services but not necessarily as providers. Local government may have to outsource services with higher

provision costs and subject in house providers to competitive pressure from outside providers to lower transaction costs for citizens. The question one may ask is that, are local governments really doing this?

### **Rationale for Local Governments**

According to Dayanandan 2013:17-20, decentralized decision making and a strong role for local governments in local development is supported by many accepted theories on the grounds of efficiency, accountability, manageability and autonomy. In the first place, he identifies two principles of jurisdictional design. He states that the closer a representative government is to the people, the better it works. Also, people should have the right to vote for the kind of public services they want. In the light of these principles, decision making should occur at the lowest level of government consistent with the goal of allocative efficiency. Furthermore, the decentralization theory proposes that “each public service should be provided by the jurisdiction having control over the minimum geographic area that would internalize benefits and cost of such provisions” because local governments understand the concerns of the local residents. Local decision making is responsive to the people for whom the services are intended, thus encouraging fiscal responsibility and efficiency especially of financing of services is also decentralized. He also postulated that; unnecessary layers of jurisdiction should be eliminated while inter-jurisdictional combination of public services consistent with local people’s references encouraged. Providing incentives for the efficient provision of such services is very necessary. The final theoretical support in the discussions is based on the subsidiarity principle. By this principle, taxing, spending and regulatory functions should be exercised by lower levels of government unless a convincing case can be made for assigning them to higher levels of government. This principle evolved from the social teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and was first proposed by Pope Leo XIII in 1891. Subsequently, Pope Pius XI highlighted the principle of subsidiarity as a third way between dictatorship and a laissez-faire approach to governance. This principle is the opposite of the residuality principle typically applied in a unitary country, where local government are assigned functions that the central government is unwilling or think it is unable to perform.

### **Elements of Good Governance**

O’Neal (2012: 9-11) examined the following elements of good governance;

**Rule of law:** Good governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially. It also requires a full protection of human rights, particularly those of minorities. An impartial enforcement of law requires an independent judiciary and an impartial and incorruptible police force.

**Transparency:** This means that decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations. It also means that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement. It also means that enough information is provided and the information is provided in easily understandable forms.

**Responsiveness:** Good governance requires that institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable time frame.

**Consensus oriented:** There are several actors as well as many viewpoints in a given society. Good governance requires mediation of the different interests in society to reach a broad consensus in society on what is in the best interest of the whole community and how this can be achieved. It also requires a broad and long-term perspective on what is needed for sustainable human development and how to achieve the goal of such development. This can only result from an understanding of the historical, cultural and social context of a given society or community.

**Equity and Inclusiveness:** A society's well-being depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream of society. This requires that all groups, particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.

**Effectiveness and Efficiency:** Good governance means that processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal. The concept of efficiency in the context of good governance also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment.

**Accountability:** This is a key requirement of good governance. Not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. Who is accountable to whom varies depending on whether decisions or actions taken are internal or external to an organization or institution, in general, or actions. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law.

## **Empirical Review**

### **The Role of Good Governance on Community Development**

Mutahaba, 2012: 22-15 conducted a study on the impacts of good governance on community development and found that, the absence of good governance practices hinders community development in the country. Good governance is more effective where it can overcome different forms of discrimination. Good governance is the only way that equality in development in Cameroon communities can be achieved. Good governance is directly linked to accountability and transparency which are key factors in fighting corruption and boost local government performance, which can lead to community development. Accountability and transparency are the two among the four pillars of good governance, the others are predictability and the rule of law. Good governance leads to good management, good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and ultimately, good outcomes. There, good governance is essential precondition for sustainable development of the community.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study adopts Community Economic Development Theory, propounded by Edward Blakeley (1994:137-139). Community economic development theory is a comprehensive approach that aims to strengthen local economies and improve the wellbeing of communities. Initiatives and strategies are driven by a community's social, environmental and economic priorities. It emphasizes the active involvement and participation of community members in shaping the economic development initiatives and decisions that

affect their lives. Community economic development approach is not just about attracting outside investment, it is about nurturing local entrepreneurship, fostering innovation and promoting equitable community development that benefits everyone.

This approach seeks to create employment opportunities and stimulate inward investments to a particular local area through the implementation of a range of activities. The theory cuts across many other approaches on community development mentioned by Blakeley. This approach focuses on a particular territory or local area to ensure its social and economic development. It involves the development of financing scheme institutions which will supply start-up capital for community projects and activities, provision of technical assistance and work spaces for localities to initiate their own economic activities for socio-economic development. It also focuses on the provision of facilities and the facilitation of small community-based enterprises and integrates community-based initiatives into the overall local economic development process. The specific tools of this approach include the establishment of community development corporations, community cooperatives, local enterprises agencies, worker ownership, community employment and training boards.

### **Weaknesses of the theory**

Nancy et al, 2010:35-36, are of the view that this approach to local economic development can be very simple as providing a variety of services for local people, business or as complex as attracting foreign direct investments. But, they caution that, the approaches to be adopted should be based on local circumstances. This reveals the limitations of the theory. However, critics have criticized the theory that it is difficult to determine whether the communities are effectively reaching their goals, with the long-time lines that the approach has and the fact that programs are not health-specific. They prefer 'softer' qualitative and capacity-building indicators.

### **Relevance the theory to the work**

In the realm of economic development, where strategies and approaches continually evolve, the concept of community economic development approach has emerged as a transformative force, empowering communities to drive sustainable growth, create jobs and enhance quality of life for their residents. Community economic development offers numerous benefits within the community and it is relevant to this study of good governance and community development or change, by ensuring that communities shape their local economic future both strategically and practically.

Again, it fosters local empowerment through extensive engagement with community members in decision making processes, providing them with the ability to actively shape the future of the community. This approach strategies also promote economic resilience, encouraging diversifying local economies and reducing dependency on external factors. This approach doesn't only improve the overall economic wellbeing of the community but also enhance social cohesion and quality of life for residents.

Furthermore, this approach is relevant in trust building. By building trust and engaging with the community through open dialogue and participatory decision making, economic development professionals can address cultural and social barriers that hinder socio-economic change of the community. Involving community members in the planning and

implementation processes allows economic development professionals to foster a sense of ownership and collective responsibility, which aids in overcoming resistance and gaining development initiatives.

Finally, community economic development approach is a crucial strategy for fostering sustainable and inclusive growth in today's rapidly changing world. Economic development professionals play a pivotal role in driving this transformation, as they possess the knowledge, skills and resources to empower communities and unlock their full potential. By adopting a comprehensive approach that considers the unique needs and assets of each community, professionals in the field can leverage their knowledge and skills to drive towards positive change, which is the ultimate focused of this study.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

Ndue, (2017:86) regards a research design as an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance with the research purpose. It is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted. It constitutes the blueprints for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. Ndue (2017:87-89) identifies four types of research designs: descriptive research design, experimental design, case study design, and cross-cultural research design. This study makes use of descriptive research design, which is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering questionnaire to a sample individual. This design allows researcher to establish a clear picture of collecting people's opinions on how good governance affects community development in Cameroon. This study also makes use of case study design, which seeks to describe a unit in detail, in context and holistically. It is a way of organizing data and looking at the object to be studied as a whole giving room for a great deal to be learned from a few examples of the phenomenon under study (2017:89). The case study of this study is Buea Municipality; in which the researcher conducted an in-depth investigation of the problems of good governance in local government in Cameroon.

### **Area of the Study**

To Ndue, 2017: 50, case study is the intensive investigation of one unit which may for example, be an organization or a community. Case study is sometimes conducted because the case chosen is itself of intrinsic interest to the researcher. The rationale for case study rests entirely on the belief that a full and satisfactory analysis of single case can be relevant to our understanding of the wider community or society. Buea is a political institution establish to govern and serve the people residents in Buea Municipal Community. Buea Municipal Community is located at the Slope of Mt Fako, found in the South West Region of Cameroon, borders as follows: North by tropical rainforest of Mt Fako, South by Mutengene Town, South West by Limbe, East by Muyuka and southeast by Tiko Town. It has a surface area of about 870km<sup>2</sup>. Buea was the colonial capital of German Kamerun from 1901-1919. It was the capital of the Southern Cameroon from 1919-1961 and the capital of West Cameroon until 1972, when Ahmadou Ahidjo abolished the federation of Cameroon. Buea Municipality started in 1922 as the Bakweri Clan Council under the leadership of Chief Endeley, when British local government was still practiced. It only began in full fledge by the Presidential Decree No 77/202/ of June 1977 to became Buea Rural Council. Buea Council has grown into a Modern Council Institution following

the Law of Decentralization in Public Administration in Cameroon, with the following services: the legal affairs and mayor cabinet, the human resource service, the secretary general service, the general affairs service, the hygiene and sanitation service, the social and cultural service, the treasury service, the communication service, the information and technology unit, the municipal police service, the economic and finance service, and the mail registration service. Following the leadership pattern in local government in Cameroon, the mayor has a mandate of five years renewable. The following have been mayor of Buea Council: from 1984-1987 Hon. Ray Lyonga Ikundi; from 1987-1995 Becke Smith Molua; from 1995-1996; Gladys Silo Endeley; from 1996-2002 John Mokake Endeley; from 2002-2013 Mbella Moki Charles; from 2013-2019 Ekema Patrick Esunge, and from 2019- present, Barrister David Mafani Namange.

### **Population and Target Population Used in this Study**

To Simon, 2015: 10-11, a population is the aggregate or complete collection of individuals, objects or elements from which an investigator wants to generalize the study findings. The study population includes the entire Buea Council staffs or officials who are 260 staff members, following the official released in the Employment Lists 2023. This list clearly excluded all the deputy mayors and councilors but includes all the head officials. Out of these 260 staffs, the researcher targeted a population of 100 staffs, to constitute the study respondents. The targeted population were administered questionnaires randomly.

### **Sample and Sample Size**

Sampling is the process of selection of a subset of individuals from the population to estimate the characteristics of the whole population. The number of individuals in a subset of a population is selected for analysis. On the other hand, sample size can be defined as the number of observations used for determining the estimations of a given population. The size of the sample was drawn from the population. The population of the case study was about 260 staffs of the Council, in which the researcher has chosen to have a sample size of about 100 respondents from the total population.

### **Sampling Procedure and Sampling Techniques**

Sampling procedure is the process of selecting a sample from the target population. There exist two main types of sampling techniques, the probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The probability sampling technique includes: the random sampling; stratified random sampling, and the systematic random sampling. Meanwhile, the non-probability sampling technique includes: quota sampling; convenience sampling and the purposive sampling. The researcher used a simple random sampling technique for this study. Simple random sampling technique according to Simon (2015:67) is a complete random way of selecting study participants. This sampling technique is highly recommended and appreciated by many scholars in the field of social sciences. Scholars like Adetero (2005:22) explains that the random sampling method allows every member in the population an equal opportunity for being selected. The researcher used the method to give every staff member of the Council and the right to participate in the study. This method is found to be reliable, as it limits chances of bias.

## **Instruments of Data Collection**

The tool used to obtain data or information from the study respondents or participants is referred to as research instruments (Neumann, 2014:153). In this study, the researcher used a structured questionnaire as the main instrument of data collection. A questionnaire is described as an instrument adopted to gather data on variables of interest, which consists of a member of items or formalized questions read and answered by respondents. The researcher preferred the questionnaire because it enables the collection of data from a big sample and facilitate a more detailed analysis to be done on data obtained. The questionnaire was formulated in English and administered to respondents using the self-administered technique. It contained both open-ended and close-ended questions. The researcher used both open-ended and close-ended questions so as to combine the advantages and eliminate the disadvantages associated to them. Furthermore, a likert scale format of five options was used, which are: strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree and no opinion.

## **Method of Data Collection**

There are two main sources of data collection use by researchers in social sciences. There are primary and secondary sources.

### **Primary Sources of Data Collection**

Primary sources of data collection are gotten straight from the horse's mouth, (Gary, 2009:31). According to him, examples of primary sources of data collection include: autobiographies, diaries, government documents and statistics letters and correspondence (including electronic kinds such as email), original documents, photographs and audio or video recordings, speeches and technical reports. The primary source of data used by researcher in this study was the questionnaire. The researcher structured questionnaires and administered to study respondents at the council to answer. The items found in the questionnaire are conceived from the empirical, and conceptual framework of the study, found in chapter two.

### **Secondary sources of Data Collection**

On the other hand, secondary sources are gotten from sources which are already available and were collected from secondary sources of data such as: journals, newspapers, reports, websites, publications and other documents available in libraries including research reports from distinguished academicians. This secondary data was collected by going through various documents concerning the institution like books, journals, websites which are relevant to the theme of this study, for the purpose of gathering information.

### **Administration of Questionnaire**

The researcher personally administered the questionnaire directly to the staffs of Buea Council, found at Clark Quarter, nearer to Bongo Square. Questionnaire administration usually takes place after the prescription of a sample given to the study supervisor for approval. The questionnaire had an introductory letter, which contains the researcher personal information, the research topic, and the purpose for the study. In the letter, the researcher emphasized the fact that, the study was strictly for academic purposes and nothing else, encouraging participants to participate freely without fear of what might

happen, (for nothing is going to happen, the raw questionnaires will not reveal anything related to anyone). Self-administers questionnaires help respondents avoid misreading or mismarking and can give them the sense that questionnaire is easy to complete.

### **Reliability and Validity of Instruments**

To determine if a research study is of quality, the validity and reliability of the study is considered.

These are important concepts that every researcher has to consider before conducting research.

### **Validity of the Instruments**

Validity entails the extent to which a study accurately assesses what the study intends to assess and not something else. Validity is an important phase as it offers an elimination point of inaccurate and irrelevant data when study variables are measures, (Wiid et al, 2009:134). This means that the necessary and correct study validity are ensured through adopting a structured questionnaire that has not been used by existing researchers. The researcher formulated the questionnaires and ensured that, they tied with the conceptual and empirical reviews of chapter two. The sample questionnaires were administered to other experts in the field of Public Administration, for examination of items and to make expert judgement.

### **Reliability of the Instruments**

Reliability means the extent to which a test produces consistent reproducible results. This means that the results must be stable, dependable and relatively free from errors measurement. He further asserts the use of a highly structured questionnaire like the one the researcher used in this study, has many attractions. It enables the collection of large quantities of data from large numbers of people. This can be done relatively easier, depending on the way it is administered and in a relatively short space of time. This is also because each respondent was asked the same questions and in the same way, administered questionnaires using the self-administered technique. The response options score high on reliability.

### **Method of Data Presentation and Analysis**

Amin (2005:306), data processing involves a number of closely related operations, which are performed with the purpose of summarizing the collected data and organizing them in such a manner that they answer the research questions and hypotheses if they exist. Data analysis is the process of extracting, compiling and modelling raw data for purposes of obtaining constructive information that can be applied to formulating conclusions, predicting outcomes or supporting decisions in business, scientific and social science settings. Data were presented in tabular form using frequency distribution tables and percentages. The frequency tables indicated the various distributions of variables used. Moreover, the data collected from the administered questionnaires were presented using statistical methods such as pie chart. Chi-square ( $X_2$ ) is applied to test the hypothesis in the study. The Chi-square as a test tries to establish if observed frequencies agree with the expected frequencies and if not, whether the difference between the two under the hypothesis can be attributed to sampling variation or to non-change factors. The Chi-

square  $X_2$  is used to test the inter-dependence of two variables. The information is usually presented in a contingency table.

### Ethical Considerations

Ndue, (2017:138) report that, the data collection phase is critical in research and often associated with various ethical principles that researchers need to adhere to. Ethics is defined as a code of conduct or behavior that is considered to be correct. There are many keys ethical principles that exists such as permission to conduct research, informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity, avoiding harm among others. The researcher collected an authorization letter from the head of department to facilitated the collection of information needed for the study. To ensure the adaptability with the ethical considerations in this research, the researcher attempted to establish honesty, objectivity, integrity, confidentiality, legality and non-discrimination in the course of data collection.

### PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

#### The Role of Good Governance on Community Development in Cameroon

This section presents findings related to the role of good governance on community development in Cameroon, specifically in Buea Municipality. Here, the researcher raised five items and obtained the following results as shown on the table below.

#### Distribution Table Showing Respondents' Responses on Issues Raised Specific objective of the Study

No	Issues Raised by Researcher	Frequency F Percentage P	Strongly Agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Disagree (D)	Neutral (N)	Total
1	Does the absence of good governance practices hinder community development in Cameroon?	F	37	36	2	6	8	89
		P	41.6%	40.4%	2%	7%	9%	100%
2	Good governance is the only way that equality in community development in Cameroon can be achieved.	F	29	43	4	7	6	89
		P	32.6%	48%	4.5%	7.9%	7%	100%
3	Good governance is directly linked to accountability and	F	21	32	9	16	11	89

	transparency, which are key factors in fighting corruption, that are							
	lacking in Cameroon and community development remains hindered by corruption.	<b>P</b>	24%	36%	10%	18%	12%	100%
4	There are four pillars of good governance that are lacking in Cameroon communities, which are: accountability, transparency, predictability and the rule of law.	<b>F</b>	35	46	2	3	3	89
		<b>P</b>	39%	52%	2%	3%	3%	100%
5	Good governance is and remains essential precondition for sustainable development of the community.	<b>F</b>	32	37	5	6	9	89
		<b>P</b>	36%	41.6%	5.6%	6.7%	10.1%	100%
n=5		<b>CF</b>	154	194	22	38	37	445
		<b>CP</b>	173.2	218	24.3	43	41.5	500
		<b>TP</b>	34.6%	43.6%	5%	8.5%	8.3	100%

**Source:** Fieldwork by the researcher 2025. CF=Cumulated Frequency, CP= Cumulated Percentage and TP= Total Percentage.

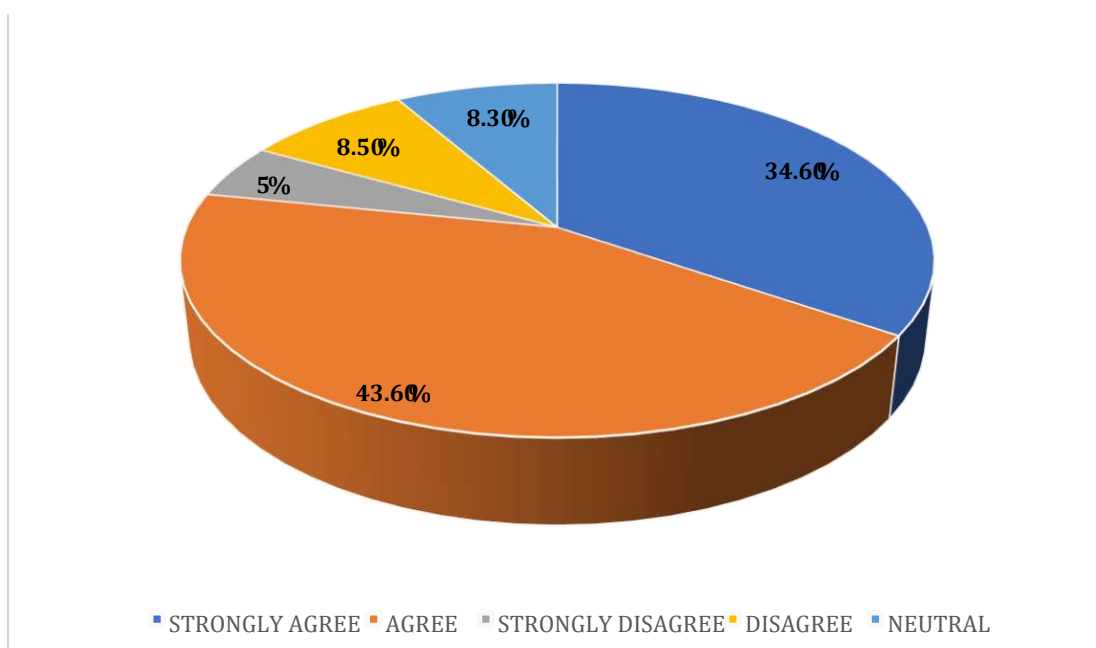
**Distribution Table Showing the Total Perception of Respondents According to Various Responses on Issues Raised**

Types of Responses	Cumulated Frequency	Total Percentage
Strongly Agree	154	34.6

Agree	194	43.6
Strongly Disagree	22	5
Disagree	38	8.5
Neutral	37	8.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Fieldwork by the researcher, 2025

**Pie-Chart Showing the Total Perception of Respondents According to Various Responses on Issues Raised**



Source: Fieldwork by the Researcher 2025

According to table above, the specific objective of the study reveals that good governance plays a significant role in community development in Buea Municipality. This is backed by a high general agreement rate of 78% as opposed to general disagreement rate of 14% and 8% neutral of all the issues raised.

Beginning with the first issue raised by the researcher, a majority of the respondents in the sample (82%) agreed that the absence of good governance practices hinder community development in Cameroon, particularly in Buea Municipality. However, 9% of the respondents disagreed and 9% were neutral of the issue. Secondly, when the researcher raised the issue to know if good governance is the only way that equality in communities’ development in Cameroon can be achieved, 80.6% of the respondents agree while 12.4% disagree and 7% neutral about the issue. Thirdly, 60% agreed while 28% disagreed and 12% neutral about the issue that, good governance is directly linked to accountability and transparency, which are key factors in fighting corruption, that are lacking in Cameroon and community development remains hindered by corruption.

Fourthly, 91% of the respondents agreed that the four pillars of good governance such as public accountability, transparency, predictability and the rule of law are lacking in Cameroon; only 6% of the respondents disagree and 3% neutral about the issue. Finally, 78% of the respondents agreed while 12% disagreed and 10% neutral about the issue stating that good governance is and remains essential precondition for sustainable development of Buea Municipality.

From the above statistical analysis, it is categorically clear that a majority of the respondents in the sample accepted that the good governance plays a significant role on community development in Buea Municipality.

### **HYPOTHESIS TESTING**

Tuckman (1972:8) recommended five inferential statistical tools to test the hypotheses, which are: the T-test, pearson product movement correlation coefficient, chi-square, and spearman rank-order correlation. But, for the purpose of testing the hypotheses of this study, the researcher makes use of the Chi-square ( $X_2$ ).

**$H_0$ : Good governance plays no significant role on community development in Cameroon, particularly in Buea Municipality.**

**$H_1$ : Good governance plays a significant role on community development in Cameroon, particularly in Buea Municipality.**

To test this hypothesis, the researcher uses the Chi-square goodness-of-fit test to calculate and verify the above claim. This is done by employing the Chi-square Formula and frequency distribution table to accept or reject the hypothesis.

$$\text{Chi-square } (X_2) = \sum (f_o - f_e)^2 \div f_e.$$

Where  $X_2$ =Chi-square,

$F_o$  = Observed Frequency (Respondents' Responses)

$F_e$  = Expected Frequency (Calculated Frequency)

$F_o - f_e \div f_e$  = Square, divided by observed responses the  $F_e$  numbers.

**A Chi-square Distribution Table Showing All Respondents' Responses on all the Issue Raised in the Specific Objective of the study**

No	Cell	Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(Fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(Fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> ÷Fe
1.	R1C1	37	30.8	6.2	38.44	1.25
2.	R1C2	36	38.8	-2.8	7.84	0.20
3.	R1C3	2	4.4	-2.4	5.76	1.31
4.	R1C4	6	7.6	-1.6 0.6	2.56	0.34
5.	R1C5	8	7.4	-1.8 4.2	0.36	0.05
6.	R2C1	29	30.8	-0.4	3.24	0.11
7.	R2C2	43	38.8	-0.6	17.64	0.45
8.	R2C3	4	4.4	-1.4	0.16	0.04
9.	R2C4	7	7.6	-9.8	0.36	0.05
10.	R2C5	6	7.4	-6.8	1.96	0.26
11.	R3C1	21	30.8	4.6	96.04	3.12
12.	R3C2	32 9	38.8	8.4	46.24	1.19
13.	R3C3	16	4.4	3.6	21.16	4.81
14.	R3C4	11	7.6	4.2	70.56	9.28
15.	R3C5	35	7.4	7.2	12.96	1.75
16.	R4C1	46	30.8	-2.4	17.64	0.57
17.	R4C2	2	38.8	-4.6	51.84 5.76	1.34
18.	R4C3	3	4.4	-4.4 1.2	21.16	1.31
19.	R4C4	3	7.6	-1.8 0.6	19.36	2.78
20.	R4C5	32	7.4	-1.6	1.44	2.62
21.	R5C1	37	30.8	1.6	3.24	0.05
22.	R5C2	5	38.8		0.36	0.08
23.	R5C3	6	4.4		2.56	0.08
24.	R5C4	9	7.6		2.56	0.34
25.	R5C5		7.4			0.35
N=RxC						<b>33.73</b>

Source: Fieldwork by the researcher, 2025

**Step 1: Compute the Expected Frequency**

Following table above, the researcher raised five items as against five likert scale responses related to the role of good governance on community development in Cameroon, particularly in Buea Municipality. Therefore, to calculate Fe, the researcher multiple row total (R) by column total (C) division by grand total of all the frequencies (T).

$$Fe = 154 \times 89 \div 445 = \mathbf{30.8}; 194 \times 89 \div 445 = \mathbf{38.8}; 22 \times 89 \div 445 = \mathbf{4.4}; \dots$$

**Step 2: Compute the Derivation (Fo-fe) for each frequency**

$$Fo-fe = 37 - 30.8 = \mathbf{6.2}$$

$$(f_o - f_e)^2 = (6.2)^2 = \mathbf{38.44}$$

$$(f_o - f_e)^2 \div f_e = 38.44 \div 30.8 = \mathbf{1.25}$$

**Step 3: Add all the Values to Compute**

$$X_2 = \sum (f_o - f_e)^2 \div f_e$$

$$= 1.25 + 0.20 + 1.31 + 0.34 + \dots + 0.35$$

$$= \mathbf{33.75}$$

**Step 4: The Degree of Freedom in the Table is calculated from the formula**

$$DF = (r-1)(c-1)$$

$$= (5-1)(5-1)$$

$$= (4)(4) = \mathbf{16}$$

**Step 5: Look Up the Critical Value of  $X_2$  for 2 df at Certain Level of Significance**

In the table and calculations above, the  $X_2 = 33.75$  while the critical  $X_2$  or table values = 17.64 at  $df = 16$ , at 0.05 significance.

By comparison, the calculated  $X_2 (33.75)$  is greater than the table values (17.64) at 0.05 significance. Consequently, the research alternate hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) has been accepted while the null or statistical hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) has been rejected. This means that, good governance plays a significant role in community development in Cameroon, particularly in Buea Municipality.

## **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

### **The Role of Good Governance on Community Development in Buea Municipality**

Data collected and analyzed for the objective of the study reveals that good governance plays a significant role on community development in Buea municipality. These results is backed by a high general agreement rate of 78% as opposed to general disagreement rate of 14% and 8% undecided of all the issues raised. Scholars in the field of Public Administration have emphasized the fact that fair and effective governance is critical to ensuring that community development which benefits both people and the society at large. Good governance entails good processes, decisions and outcomes that sustain natural resources alleviate poverty and improve the quality of life in the community.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

### **The Role of Good Governance on Community Development in Buea Municipality**

Good governance is and remains essential precondition for sustainable development of the community. Good governance is directly linked to accountability and transparency which are key factors in fighting social ills (like corruption, tribalism, favoritism, nepotism, among others) in a community. Good governance also is the only way that equality in the community development can be achieved and the absence of good

governance practices therefore hinders community development by first hindering community participation. An investigation into these issues reveal that of all the issues raised, there is 78% general agreement rate as opposed to 14% general disagreement rate and 8% neutral. A calculated  $X_2 = (33.75)$  is greater than the table value (17.64) at 0.05, the research alternate hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) has been accepted which stipulates that good governance plays a significant role on community development in Buea Municipality. With these results, it can be said with certainty that this specific objective of the study has been attained.

## **CONCLUSION**

Indeed, good governance plays an essential role in community development and the absence of good governance has a lot of devastating effects on the community. It is somehow very difficult to recount all the parameters of bad or poor governance in Cameroon, but this research has identified few above. In this conclusion, it is also important to state that the concept of bad governance system in Cameroon emanated from the very poor structures that were inherited from the colonial systems and this was further exacerbated by greedy politicians that took over power in Cameroon at independence. This political class that was largely a colonial creation came with a clientelist agenda that only contributed enormously to imbalance, inequality and poor governance. Poor governance is manifested in the high-level corruption, embezzlement and mismanagement of state funds that has characterized post-colonial governance in Cameroon. Ethnicity, regionalism and fragmentation based on certain artificial classes that were inherited from the colonial structures have left the state of Cameroon very fragile. Attempt of fighting these ills so as to bring about good governance has registered very little success because of the increasing poverty, that is caused by misguided government policies and the inability of the government to generate an encouraging economic growth rate. The State has not taken the appropriate measures to generate employment and create a vibrant private sector that would encourage foreign investment. These estranged policies have left the state populace at the troy of poverty and poor living standards. This has made Cameroonians to be voraciously greedy and to have an insatiable appetite to accumulate wealth even as the detriment of the public interests. Against this back drop of poor management, the dream of Cameroon becoming an emerging nation in 2035 remains a far-fetched dream(untrue) without good governance. For this dream to be realized, the government has to create ombuds structures that will fight corruption, embezzlement, mismanagement and misappropriation and guarantee public accountability and the bottom top approach of decision making. Adopting this approach will increase the chances of broad base participation which is a very essential principle so far as good governance is concerned.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the study findings, the researcher has drawn some insights and made the following recommendations, hoping that if the recommendations are taken into consideration, they can help to improve governance system in Cameroon, particularly in Buea Municipality.

## **The Rule of Law**

The researcher strongly recommends that, the government should enforce the practice of the rule of law, for it is the key requirement for the development of good governance system in Cameroon. The rule of law ensure equality of all behind the law, equal opportunities and meritocracy in the recruitment of public officials or employees. This will bring about effectiveness and efficiency in public service delivery.

## **Achievement of Good Governance Objectives**

During the process of this study, it came to light that good governance practices will not achieve the intended objectives in the absence of democratic principles such as the: rule of law, public accountability, transparency, integrity and openness and active public participation. So, public officials or authorities should work hard in upholding and respecting these good governance virtues rather than compromising them for their benefits.

## **Provision of Conducive Environment**

Instability promotes corruption practices while stability promotes investments and a prosperous economic environment. The government therefore should provide a conducive environment that encourages stakeholder investments in policy implementation in order promote economic growth that will bring about sustainable development of the community.

## **Encourage Public Participation**

Public participation in governance is very essential for community development, because, it is a proof of public trust in governance system. People don't participate in what they don't trust. Corruption has played a great negative role in erasing trust in governance system. So, public authorities in Cameroon should encourage and promote public participation in governance; by so doing they can gain back public trust and contributions in socio-economic development of the Municipality.

## **Transparency and Accountability**

The government should encourage public authorities to be accountable to the public instead to government or senior high officials of the same sector. Public accountability will boost public confidence in good governance and show transparency in the governance in place. This can do good in developing a vibrant governance system that is responsive to public demands.

Finally, other recommendations can be effective implementation of anti-corruption reforms, effective implementation of public policies, effective practice of democracy, efficient management of natural resources, among others.

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