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## School education for social and economic development in Equatorial Guinea

### *Educación escolar para el desarrollo social y económico en Guinea Ecuatorial*

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#### Abstract

Education helps man to approach his culture, to understand himself, that is to say, what he is; to be aware of what he has and what he can; it makes him capable of understanding, dominating and transforming his socio-cultural environment to live better, so that a school education adapted to the social needs of a country can contribute to the social and economic development of the country. The objective of this research was a study on the adaptation of school education in Equatorial Guinea, to contribute to the formulation of a new educational reality, adapted to the economic and social needs, which favors the social and economic development of the country, to relate the school to the local culture and to the social environment of the Equatoguineans. Methodologically, the study was framed under a qualitative, non-experimental, descriptive approach; the interview was used as a method of data collection, supported by a documentary design. Among the most relevant results, it was obtained as a general claim, the urgent need for the introduction of Equatoguinean values and socio-cultural elements in school education. And as the most significant conclusion, it can be affirmed that there is no social or economic development if school education is not adapted to the socio-



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cultural reality of the people, if it does not offer them the adequate tools to be able to face the different challenges of their vital environment.

## Keywords

Culture, education, school - man, socio-economic development, society.

## Resumen

La educación ayuda al hombre al acercamiento de su cultura, a la comprensión de sí mismo, es decir, de lo que es; ser consciente de lo que tiene y de lo que puede; le hace capaz de poder comprender, dominar y transformar su entorno sociocultural para vivir mejor, por lo que una educación escolar adecuada a las necesidades sociales de un país, puede contribuir al desarrollo social y económico del mismo. El objetivo de esta investigación fue un estudio sobre la adaptación de la educación escolar en Guinea Ecuatorial, contribuir a la formulación de una nueva realidad educativa, adaptada a las necesidades económicas y sociales, que favorezca el desarrollo social y económico del país, relacionar la escuela con la cultura local y con el entorno social de los ecuatoguineanos. Metodológicamente, el estudio estuvo enmarcado bajo un enfoque cualitativo, no experimental, descriptivo; se usó la entrevista como método de recolección de información, apoyado en un diseño documental. Entre los resultados más relevantes se obtuvo como reclamo general, la necesidad urgente de la introducción de los valores y elementos socioculturales ecuatoguineanos en la educación escolar. Y como conclusión más significativa, se puede afirmar que no hay desarrollo social ni económico si la educación escolar no se adapta a la realidad sociocultural de las personas, si no le ofrece las herramientas adecuadas para poder hacer frente a los distintos desafíos de su entorno vital.

## Palabras clave

Cultura, educación, escuela -hombre, desarrollo socioeconómico, sociedad.

## 1. Introduction

School education is a key element for the development of a society when it considers the reality and socio-cultural environment of the country. That is to say, it must adapt to the needs of man in his environment and allow him to be the main actor and promoter of social change. Relating the school to the local culture; many elements and factors of teaching and learning must be analyzed for this yearning; in this sense, Burbano et al. (2021) say: "the teaching and learning process is tinged by various factors that participate in the development of activities and the achievement of the purposes of education" (p. 1).

School education for social and economic development in Equatorial Guinea is a school educational proposal whose desire is to adapt school education to the social, cultural and economic reality of the country; that is, the school, in its pedagogical practices and teachings, must have approaches that promote and favor direct contact with the socio-cultural environment. It should not be an implanted foreign reality that is far removed from the real problems of society.

The issue is raised in the context of the social and economic underdevelopment that affects Equatorial Guinea; it is noted that, despite the country's great economic potential, the desired social and economic welfare has not been fully achieved. But the studies carried out so far in the country on the subject of social and economic underdevelopment affecting the society have focused mainly on a descriptive and quantitative perspective, in



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this sense Esono (2004) says: "the problem of Guinea's underdevelopment has been looked at so far in a descriptive and quantitative perspective: analyzing the gross national product (GNP), establishing relationships between imports and exports to determine the trade balance" (p. 9).

The issue of school education for social and economic development is important because it is justified within the framework of the promotion of man as the true axis of all development. The problem of social and economic development is investigated here from the school education field; in this same vein, Esono (2004) says the following: "school education is the key to social and economic development, since it enables man to be aware of his status, his responsibilities, his rights and his obligations" (p. 9); natural resources are important, but not sufficient for socioeconomic development. The current problem of school education in Equatorial Guinea is: the school does not take into consideration the values and socio-cultural reality of the Equatoguinean man, and this has created a kind of dichotomy between what is given in school and what is really lived in society. On the other hand, school education has as its obligation, "to help the person to the approach of his culture and to the understanding of himself, that is to say, to be aware of what he has and what he can" (Esono, 2019, p. 1); so as to improve his individual and social life.

The hypothesis here is the need to introduce sociocultural values and traditional pedagogical aspects suitable for the improvement of school education. It is noted that school education does not take into account the sociocultural reality of Equatorial Guinea. Instead, says Lobrot (2016) that education "plays a capital role in the knowledge of the culture and history of man; it is a transforming engine of sociocultural elements" (p. 18)

Education must give man access to his sociocultural reality by making him capable of discovering himself and his environment and what it contains. To educate is "to contribute to bring out the best in a person, to mobilize his resources, potentialities, to recognize and value the positive aspects of his being, his contributions and questions. It is about emphasizing positive resources rather than deficits" (Crespo-Balderrama and Tapiá-Figueroa, 2021, p. 40); that is to say, the person is accompanied to be sensitive to the issues of his sociocultural environment; to be honest, honest, responsible, humane, and intellectually, to contribute with his proactive, creative and critical participation to social change.

In view of the above, the objective of this research was a study on the adaptation of school education in Equatorial Guinea, to contribute to the formulation of a new educational reality, adapted to the economic and social needs, which favors the social and economic development of the country, to relate the school to the local culture and to the social environment of the Equatoguineans. In this sense, the introduction of certain traditional educational practices in school education is nowadays a necessity.

For reasons of order and scientific rigor, the article is structured as follows: an introduction, the state of the question, the defense of the thesis, the methodological framework, the conclusion and the bibliography.



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## 2. State of the art

A concern and a preoccupation motivate this work. Education, by its definition, helps the person to approach his culture, to understand himself, that is to say, what he is; to be aware of what he has, of what he can; it makes him capable of understanding, dominating and transforming his socio-cultural environment, in order to find truth, happiness, individual and collective well-being. Education is one of the sectors of human life that deserves special attention for the development of man and society.

In this order of ideas, Granados and Granados (2010) say: "education brings the person to life, it is a new birth, no longer simply to life, but to personal life, assuming what it means to lead to its fullness" (p. 22). In other words, education imposes two dimensions on man's life: one is dynamic, and the other is relational. Dynamic, because man is called to something greater, to create something new in his life; relational, because the person is called to relate to others and to his environment. In this context, to educate someone "is not to educate an imitator, but a creator; it is not to inform about some contents, nor about some values, but to shape the subject from a truth" (Granados and Granados, 2010, pp. 22-23).

In other words: "the importance of education as a basis for the future of people and of our society deserves every effort" (Tébar, 2003, p. XIII). Education for social and economic development implies an activity in constant search of educational solutions; in this same sense, says Tebar: "The search for didactic answers is a constant challenge of renewal and creativity, if we want to find educational answers, in which children and young people must be trained" (Tebar, 2003, p.1). It is precisely children and young people whom education must involve in the task of social and economic development of society from the school, so that all socio-cultural values, economic reality and the social environment are not foreign or separated from school activity. Pedagogy, didactics and learning methods should help the learner to know and master his or her social reality.

But this is not the case in Equatorial Guinea; the fact is clear; the education offered today in the Guinean-Ecuadorian school, the one inherited from the colonial educational system, does not fulfill this function; and the most striking thing is that it continues to be the most important instrument, considered adequate to form, educate and humanize the Guinean Ecuadorian. In the same vein, Durkheim, quoted by Aretio (1989), says that "the mission of education is to develop in the learner the physical, intellectual and mental states required of him by the political society and the social environment to which he is destined" (p. 15). All social, cultural and economic development is based on the conscious, responsible man, capable of recognizing what he has, what he can and what he must. For this reason:

We proclaim that, for us, when we speak of development, our thoughts and our efforts are directed towards the human person we want to transform so that he/she becomes responsible and an actor in the construction of his/her personal, individual and community well-being (Rafenoarisoa, 1979, p. 3).

However, we realize that the education given to the man or woman of our society has so far not been effective in determining the required socio-economic development, nor has it been entirely conducive to ethical-moral well-being. The socio-cultural environment and all that it contains is not being offered from the school as it should be. The Equatorial Guinean man or woman is still unable to activate the mechanisms that lead the country to a harmonious social development.



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The school is not connected to the socio-cultural reality; on the other hand, the school is "everything that is apt to educate, form, instruct; example: school of life..." (Foulquié, 1991, p. 147). One finds in this definition that the objective of the school is the acquisition of life; the obligation of the school is to make the man or woman capable of realizing his or her vocation as a man; that man comes to discover his or her nature, to put it in the words of the philosopher Aristotle in some of his reflections on education, to develop in all its dimensions (moral, intellectual, spiritual and material).

The mission of the school is to affirm, identify and defend the originality of each society, each culture and each individual. And it can be affirmed in this logic that the school "is both the product of a society and one of the factors of social evolution, and it would not be at all pleasant if, under the pretext of modernization and internationalization, it were uprooted, if it were to lose its vital lifeblood" (Mialaret, 1990, pp. 29-30). The school is "the place of human promotion and an important factor for individual and collective development" (Rafenosrisoa, 1979, pp. 3-4); according to Topieu, cited by (Esono, 2004), the school "is a factor of social promotion" (p. 15) and "favors learning and the insertion of individuals in active life and develops the acquisition of autonomy in individuals" (Tedga, 1994, p. 19).

The school has a function of socialization of individuals. In this sense, Cortés, quoted by (Esono, 2004) says: "socialization is one of the fundamental functions of the school. And if adequate socialization does not occur, one can rightly speak of a failure, at least a partial one, of the school..." (p. 15). That makes us see that the school is an engine of change, it is "the place where sociocultural values are transmitted to young generations and allows their transformation for proper social integration" (Esono, 2019, p. 9). But many of these functions attributed to the school in an official and mandatory manner are registered with much deficiency in the Guinean-Ecuadorian school. One could even underline here the fact that some traditional socio-cultural values are increasingly losing their importance, they disappear fraternity, hospitality, "healthy" solidarity, priority to the person before the material, community spirit... Moral principles such as responsibility, dignity, honor, respect for persons and social laws tend to disappear and, are, more and more, left to the detriment of a strange behavior that denaturalizes and depersonalizes our youth.

In the cultural field, there has not been much success in our society, since "the indigenous person, by his racial condition, is a being lacking in conscience and intellectual lucidity to interpret the origin of the facts..." (Edjó, 2019, p. 3), that is to say, a null being in a null environment. Spain, the colonizing country of Equatorial Guinea, did not value the indigenous cultures, the colonization belittled the vital traditional customs. Traditional languages, despite their importance in the environment and in communication, do not count in the educational system, they are not taught in school. The ecological environment and all that composes it are ignored by school education. All this shows the extent of the formation of the Guinean-Ecuadorian man in his society, a man artificially made of a structure alien to him, a man who hardly appreciates, loves, values, transforms what is within his reach, what is his. This reality makes us think and reflect on what kind of education should be applied today in the Guinean-Ecuadorian school; an education that gives man the ability to "know how to do", "know how to be" and "know how to live" in society.



In this sense, and for the purposes of this scientific research, we concentrate our attention on one society or one of the many cultures that make up Equatorial Guinea, the Fang<sup>1</sup> society, where we have conducted a study on the two educational realities that have been, so far, experienced in Equatorial Guinea: the modern school education system, inherited from colonization, on the one hand, and the traditional Fang educational practices of Equatorial Guinea, on the other, with the intention of bringing to light the positive and valid aspects of the two educational realities that could help in the formulation of a new educational reality as a proposal.

It is not intended to idealize traditional Fang education as such, it is true that it has its negative aspects; but what is also true, that its pedagogy attracts us for being rather "practical", it is important to imitate it in the current educational field; it is believed that education should not be fundamentally theoretical, but rather practical: "education is not basically a theory, but rather practical. Like any practical fact, education is as much an art as it is a science. It is knowing and knowing how to do" (Lena 1981, p. 79).

In the same line, education is the means that should bring together the theoretical and practical elements or instruments that help man to walk and advance in the discovery of his immediate and universal sociocultural environment, and in this way it can be confirmed that education is:

A process through which the cultural, moral and behavioral aspects necessary to offer adequate responses to the vital situations encountered by the individual are instilled, so as to ensure individual, group and collective survival (Mariti Castro, 2003, p. 147).

In this order of ideas, education is also presented as "an action that will have the purpose of systematically presenting a reality" (Renés and Martínez, 2016, p. 227), that is, it is a transmission of social reality and of the cultural and scientific knowledge of the environment to the youth. Education, as teaching, "surpasses even the merely technical application in the classroom of a set of strategies designed by others" (Fortoul, 2008, p. 79), it includes the intention, attitudes and characteristics proper to the personality of the teacher, the dicent and the real environment, "one cannot speak with singularity of teaching if the act of teaching does not entail intentionality and reflective perception" (Chiang, 2013, p. 63); the intentionality of the one who teaches, from a sociocultural context, must create a reflective perception of the one who learns, thus creating a cultural, social, scientific debate in the classroom.

The pedagogy of traditional Fang education is taken here as a model for its practical aspect that allows the individual to live what is learned. It is a pedagogy that allows us to take seriously and carry out the real application of the vital values of our culture, the universal human values. Understanding here by culture all that we are and have within our reach, what allows us to go out of ourselves to go towards others, what identifies and characterizes us, what we can incorporate in our habits if it helps us to grow as humans, what can be transformed according to the needs of man.

The pedagogy of traditional Fang education could revive the good habits of culture in our youth, insisting on living certain values and attitudes that transmit life to others: solidarity, welcoming, fraternity, respect, sense of responsibility, etc.; in this way we will

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<sup>1</sup> Society, culture, ethnic group, language of Equatorial Guinea, occupies 82.9% of the population.



be able to form a responsible, honest, truth-seeking, happy man or woman who will bring happiness to his or her environment. Happiness in this context is life, social and economic development, good relationships between people.

### 3. Defense of the thesis

The thesis defended here is the following: school education must consider the sociocultural reality of Equatorial Guinea for there to be cultural, economic and social development; that is to say, certain sociocultural values and certain traditional pedagogical elements must be introduced in the proposed school education. Socio-economic and cultural underdevelopment in Equatorial Guinean society is registered because school education does not play its full role. The mission and objective of school education is to teach the person to: "know", "know", "do", "be", "live with others"; and to put the individual always in direct contact with his socio-cultural environment.

Cultural alternatives are currently relevant in our school because they offer possibilities of dynamization of our educational system; the introduction of cultural elements of Equatorial Guinea in the modern educational system is an urgent task. Valuing, utilizing, using, considering many cultural elements of the Fang society in the school, would help our school teaching to have a new philosophy and policy.

Some pedagogical aspects of the traditional Fang educational practices: methods, programs, educational agents..., are necessary, today, in the modern educational system to allow the social insertion of the graduates, since the traditional education does not value only the intellectual aspect (abstract intelligence), but also considers all the abilities and capacities that the individual has to be able to situate and fend for himself in the society.

The socio-cultural or economic development, apart from the knowledge of the socio-cultural environment and the mastery of the resources of the subsoil of a country, requires the man intellectually and morally formed; it is not enough to have a scientific knowledge, other facets are needed, other components that allow man to lead his intellectual, scientific, professional life towards the good, towards personal and community happiness. Therefore, the importance of basing everything on human values, so that all the actions of the intellectual man, his administrative life in society, his social relations and everything he does revolves around the good.

The intellectual, scientific, intelligent man, without human feelings, without living values, becomes a danger to society; he becomes manipulative, swindler, oppressor, demagogue, "super-powerful", selfish, ambitious, and eclipses the whole collective to perceive the light of truth, fosters ignorance in society to perpetuate and eternalize his dominance, because his feelings and desires are closer to any wild animal and very far from humanity..

All of this follows from the hypotheses discussed in this work. There are two hypotheses that guide our thinking and allow us to better achieve the desired objective. The first hypothesis is formulated from an observed reality, it is the "know-how" is not valued today in our society because school education gives more importance to the aspect "abstract intelligence", there is no direct contact between the school and the socio-cultural environment; the second hypothesis is deduced from another observation, the deterioration of good customs and habits, corruption in the administrative life that affects the Guinean-Ecuadorian society, is explained by the mere fact that school education does not take into account the moral dimension of the Guinean-Ecuadorian man.

The Equatoguinean education system must stop producing "homo-infantis" (Edjó, 2019, p. 1); that is, people who always depend on others, they do not learn or teach them to be



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able to master, to really know what they have nor what they are, they remain eternal children, they do not reach adulthood in their reflections, thoughts and deeds. They are people who, because of hidden interests or hidden policies, the educational system does not allow them to be themselves, they do not know how to fend for themselves.

The Equatoguinean education system today has to place the Equatoguineans in their social and cultural context, always taking into account their psychosocial, anthropological and religious dimensions and characteristics; in other words, "the education system is as an organized set of services and educational actions according to the psychosocial characteristics of the subject/educatee" (Edjó, 2019, p.2). School education, in Equatorial Guinea, must take into account the sociocultural reality of the Guinean Ecuatorians; the anthropological and psychological dimension of the learner must be a concern of the school in order to place man in his context.

In this vein, we find a reflection on education, research, and culture in Africa, which deals with the same reality of the school system in Africa.:

The African education system has been very expensive in order to achieve an uncertain, insecure basic education. Its negative results have done nothing more than to produce results that have not lasted long; the school has been a copy of the foreign school model. The fascination exerted by the educational systems of the North (the West) on African elites fixed the content of the programs, imposed a pedagogy and marginalized all cultural elements. In this sense, the colonial influence has caused Africa to turn its back on the principles of development it had already embarked upon. The post-colonial school followed the same process as the colonial one, it was a relay of the former (Pisani, 1988, p. 184).

## 4. Methodological table

### 4.1 Delimitation of the field of study

The field of study of this research was delimited in the Primary Cycle; starting from the historical steps, passing through the geographical area, bringing to light the anthropological and psychological dimensions of the subject - learner; thus, to study the problem of the maladaptation of school education in the Guinean-Ecuadorian society..

#### 4.1.1 Field of study

This is the field of study that is considered important to study and analyze the historical dimension of school education in Equatorial Guinea. The analysis of the educational problematic takes into account the colonial and post-colonial period in the educational model that was carried out in the country in those periods; we need to know the objectives that the colonizer and the new authorities of our society set or proposed for the men and women of Equatorial Guinea.

It would be difficult to understand, in a context of research on the reality of school education in Equatorial Guinea, the current programs and contents of our educational system by separating the period of colonial education from the period of post-colonial education; the two are very closely related.

#### 4.1.2 Geographic scope

The study focuses on one country, Equatorial Guinea. A country composed of six different ethnic groups. Our study retained the Fang ethnic group, its culture, and its educational



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practice, because it is the majority in the country; in fact, the other ethnic groups have many similar traits.

The educational practices of the Fang ethnic group stimulate us to review the multiple cultural elements (values) that can contribute positively to the elaboration of a new educational reality adapted to the objectives or needs of an endogenous socio-economic development.

The Fang ethnic group occupies an area of 25,983.46km<sup>2</sup> of the Continental Region of the country and extends over the entire insular part of Equatorial Guinea. It is located in a territory bordered to the north by Cameroon, to the south by Gabon, to the east by Gabon and to the west by the Atlantic Ocean.

#### 4.1.3 Anthropological field

The educational theme affects the human being and all his environment. In this sense, we have oriented, in the Fang society of Equatorial Guinea, the study towards the person as a being, a being surrounded by an environment, full of history, full of lights and shadows, with a will to live.

The objective here was to discover which were the socio-cultural values that made the traditional Fang man a "worthy, honorable, respected, responsible" being; we believe that these values that served in the past in our society can perfectly well be introduced nowadays in school teaching, they can contribute to the improvement of modern education. Along the same lines, we find that:

The balance and evolution of traditional education is one more aspect in the pedagogical search that can be carried out. Cultural anthropology can clarify, explain the various problems that our educational system has been causing today, and can even contribute elements of solution to these problems. But its contribution would need the help of the confrontation of other human sciences such as demography, sociology, psychology, and economics (Erny, 1987, p. 13).)

Therefore, we have to turn to psycho-sociology, since education is a multidimensional social phenomenon.

#### 4.1.4 Psychosociological field

The need for a study in the psychosociological field of our subject is considered very important, since education is a social phenomenon, a fact that directly affects individuals.

If the anthropological field discovers important aspects of our traditional cultures, necessary for a good progress of school education, which deserve to be integrated into the educational system, the psychosociological field allows to know the groups of individuals, people, who affect the development of education, including students. The psychosociological field also makes it possible to grasp the impact that the cultural encounter (Western culture + traditional Guinean Ecuatorian "Fang" culture) has on the young person in school education. It is detected that the student, in the school education system, faces a problem of acculturation, he is involved in a constant struggle between two cultures where the school is often opposed to certain cultural principles or vice versa, there is no consensus or agreement between the school and the surrounding culture, there is no dialogue or exchange of impressions; in short, this whole situation leaves the student in a confused situation, in an intellectual immaturity..., the person ends up without assuming anything or committing himself to anything.



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This phenomenon of acculturation, experienced by the student, between his family or his cultural environment and the school, creates another problem in him: the non-acceptance of his reality, of his personal and cultural identity, which later generates an inferiority complex that takes away all his personality and leaves him totally unadapted in society, he is left like a plucked bird in the middle of the desert without any possibility of movement to be able to fly.

In this same sense, Marc Richelle, quoted by Zinzindohoue, (1989), in one of the books he wrote during a study he made in 1960 on the phenomenon of acculturation in Black Africa; and in that study, it is found that:

On the one hand, the two educational environments imposed on the African child are dissociated, separated; modern education does not reach agreement with certain cultural principles; on the other hand, there is a discontinuity or lack of connection in school education: what is learned at school is not easily confirmed in real life, it has no application in the real life of the child or the pupil, he cannot verify it in his family environment..., it is thus limited to a theoretical level, pure abstraction; childhood does not prepare the entry to school, nor does school have a relationship with the socio-cultural reality, it does not prepare for adult life, which systematically results in a phase of maladaptation, instead of continuity, there is rupture, dislocation; education results heterogeneous and dualistic (pg. 22).

There is, therefore, an interaction between the individual and society from the educational point of view. This makes it necessary to find alternatives and means that help to reach a consensus between individual aspirations and the knowledge of modern science in order to achieve the objectives of endogenous development.

## 5. Methods of analysis

This is a qualitative, non-experimental, descriptive research. The interview was used as a method of data collection, supported by a documentary design which uses non-living sources, but documents to obtain the information, with a purposive probability sampling based on primary documentary sources consisting of scientific articles, books, official sources, technical reports, among others.

The historical-descriptive method allowed us to describe the details of the educational problem in Equatorial Guinea, after having interrogated, by a documentary analysis, the past to see, firstly, what was the evolution of the colonial educational system in our society; secondly, what was the responsibility of colonization in the problem of educational maladjustment today, in Equatorial Guinea. Without ruling out the responsibility of the Guinean authorities in the educational field after the country's transition to independence.

The comparative method helped us to study, on the one hand, the traditional "Fang" education in its general approaches in the traditional society; on the other hand, the school education, its general approaches, in the country.

The interviews, which were addressed to teachers, parents of students and students, aimed to know the philosophy and policy of the traditional "Fang" educational reality and the purposes of the school education system. The interviewed population is as follows: 8 teachers with a professional experience of 30 or 40 years and with a chronological age of 60 and 65 years (people who know the two educational realities practiced in Equatorial



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Guinea, the traditional and the modern one; 8 parents of students, with the intention of knowing two things; the first was to know what motivations encourage them to send their children to school, the second consists in knowing the point of view of each of them on the behavior of the students who finished the studies of the primary cycle in the school; Finally, an interview with 20 students between 13 and 18 years of age was conducted to find out what they think about social development and their aspirations for the future and about school education. The interviews were conducted in primary schools: group, individual and informal interviews.

## 6. Results

The instruments used in the research methodology reveal, after several reflections, readings, surveys and dialogues with teaching and non-teaching staff, the following results on the topic of education and social development. The question here is to know which aspects of school education cause problems to the social development of Equatorial Guinea, and which aspects of traditional Fang educational practices can contribute today in the elaboration of a current educational reality that favors the social and economic development of the country.

### 6.1 Teachers and professors have the following to say about the two educational realities:

**Traditional Fang education.** Its philosophy and its policy favored the social integration of individuals. It is an education with a collective character, involving the whole community, leading the generations of young people to the same destiny, to success; all students felt solidarity and had every obligation to fulfill their social duties. It is an education that left the students ready to face any activity of practical life. It always connected theory to practice, an apprenticeship for life. This version of teachers and professors on traditional education fang contrasted in Esono (2019), when he says that "the purpose of traditional education was the transmission of knowledge, knowledge-being, knowledge-doing and knowledge-living to the child, to cope with life and to be able to take care of his family and society" (pp. 14-15).

**Modern school education.** Its philosophy and its policy have been since colonial times a means to prepare the subalterns, the administrative collaborators in colonial times. The mission of the school was to eliminate the customs and ways of life of the native, to annihilate traditional cultures, to promote acculturation<sup>2</sup>, to adapt to the Spanish culture: the language, the way of doing and living in a socio-cultural context that does not correspond to the vital needs of the individual. It opens up to other cultures and favors individual freedom. In the same vein, Edjó (2019) says: "the structure, teaching grades and contents of the colonial school are aimed at a child who does not become an adult" (p. 3), since the educational system does not allow it.

### 6.2 Parents of students give their opinion on the school and on a New Educational Reality as an Alternative:

**School.** They all agree that they send their children to school so that they can live tomorrow like the Spanish, French, English...; that they can be airplane pilots, doctors,

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<sup>2</sup> It is the adaptation, forced or free, to a new culture, to new beliefs, to new behaviors. It is a process by which a group of people or a person, in direct and continuous contact with another group of people, ends up in a good or bad way entering the foreign culture.



engineers, economists..., etc. But it turns out that at the end of their studies many of their children cannot find a job in society, they cannot go to Spain or France, they cannot do field work, they do not know the names of the cultural elements of their society, they die of hunger because they do not know how to find a livelihood, in short, they are "useless" after so many years in school. For this reason, many parents think that it is necessary for the school to teach the children what is within their reach, to open their eyes to the Guinean-Ecuadorian socio-cultural environment, that the cultural elements of Equatorial Guinea are introduced in the school.

**The new educational reality.** Parents do not agree that the school should continue to function as it is now; it does not respond to personal and social priorities, needs and concerns. In this sense, they think and wish that the school knows how to combine and combine the positive aspects of traditional Fang education and the modern school education system; they insist that the desired new educational reality takes into account very much the valuation of cultural elements, for example, the introduction of mother tongues in school, moral and religious education, and that it also values the socio-economic reality of the country. The same vision is presented by Edjó (2019), speaking about School-Community integration:

It is a fundamental purpose of the Curriculum to take into account the strategic selection, planning and organization, as well as the activities that are oriented to promote the school-community integration, which entails the idea that the educational process must respond to the needs of the subjects within the society to which they belong. (p. 45).

### 6.3 The students provide information on two fundamental and related issues:

**Perception of school education and social and economic development.** Many affirm that they go to school to live like Europeans; all wish to occupy the high positions of the State administration (ministers, governors, president of the republic, chiefs of the army...); none speak of agriculture, cattle raising or craftsmanship. They consider farm work as a punishment, something old-fashioned and of unfit people. No student wants to work in agriculture, handicrafts, fishing or livestock; they all want to be administrative executives; these are the desires and hopes that the school gives them; and that is what Esono (2004) emphasizes when he mentions that "the purposes of modern education are: acculturation, the formation of administrative cadres..." (p.41).

**Perception of traditional Fang education and socio-economic development.** The students believe that the tasks performed by their parents and grandparents thanks to traditional education require much effort and sacrifice; they affirm that ministers, governors, technical secretaries and other state officials do not suffer so much to earn money and live well; and they would all like to go to Europe after their studies because they are better off there than in their Guinean-Ecuadorian lands. And all this perception of traditional Fang education and social and economic development is contrasted in Esono (2019) when he talks about the objectives of school education, its know-how, creativity and the promotion of manual labor, saying that "the spirit of creativity is not developed; manual labor is considered as a punishment, it is not considered in the sight of society. The school favors memorization and mimicry" (pp. 65-66).



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## 7. Discussion of results

It is retained here, after all the data collected, from the opinions of teachers and professors, parents of students and students, that the Guinean-Ecuadorian man could not carry out his model of socioeconomic development that, traditionally, he had undertaken for the simple reason of the brutal encounter between traditional education and modern school education; an encounter that had more divergent than convergent points for the formation of the Guinean-Ecuadorian person worthy, honorable, responsible and apt to promote the development and welfare of his society.

Points of Convergence. The reflections made and the results obtained from the surveys reveal that the philosophy and policy of modern school education have some positive points and aspects that could perfectly enrich the model or the traditional educational practices of Equatorial Guinea; that is, they are points that converge in substance with the broad lines of the Fang educational philosophy and policy. It is recognized that the school inculcates courtesy and hygiene; values work well done; opens to the outside world; favors individual freedom; initiates scientific research; breaks the mythological life... On the other hand, it is also recognized that there are aspects and divergent points existing between traditional education and modern school education that point to the discontinuity of socioeconomic development in Equatorial Guinea. These points are the following: there is a clear rupture, in many aspects, between school education and traditional education at the level of objectives, aims, pedagogical organization, pedagogical methods and educational agents:

At the level of objectives: traditional education transmitted to the learner "knowledge, know-how, know-how to do, know-how to live, know-how to be and know-how to be" by attending to his or her sociocultural environment. On the other hand, school education transmits fundamentally the Western, European cultural heritage, rejecting the sociocultural values of the environment.

At the level of purposes: traditional education aimed to make the child the adult of tomorrow, integrated into society according to his qualities or skills, he will never be unemployed, he will always find an occupation in social life, because the education received was an adequate and necessary means that society offered him for his social integration; in the same vein says Comoe-krou (1982)

Education is the set of means that society offers to children and young people for their human and spiritual fulfillment, for their social integration; it is a matter of transmitting to the child the knowledge, practices and appropriate values that help to ensure their active and effective participation in social life (p. 31).

On the other hand, school education aims to make the child a European living in Africa, outside his or her socio-cultural context, deprived of possibilities and means to start social and economic development from what he or she has learned at school.

In the pedagogical organization. Traditional education did not have a specific place to educate, it is life in its globality, in all its dimensions. But school education has its sacred sites for the development of education, the school establishment is the dedicated site.

In pedagogical methods. Traditional education is closely linked to nature, the socio-cultural environment, it is the practical life that is at stake, education and instruction go together. In modern school education, more emphasis is placed on the theoretical aspect, teaching is limited to verbal exchanges, the educational dimension sometimes seems to be



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absent, it is content to instruct children without worrying so much about their characters, nor sensitizing their consciences to the care of the common good. It is a pedagogy "of a culture of individual and personal success" (Freire quoted in Sikounmo, 1992, p.12).

In the educational agents. Traditional education, being of a collective<sup>3</sup> nature, those responsible for the education of the students tried to behave in an exemplary manner, to be coherent and models in their daily actions and actions; it is free, the educational agents do not charge, they are satisfied with the success of the young people. But modern school education requires people specialized in education: teachers, professors, many of them with a moral conscience perverted by social injustices and economic ambitions, corrupt acts and lack of work ethics; it costs a lot of money, the poorest do not have access.

All these results analyzed in a summarized form, allow us to make an interpretation of data to formulate a new educational reality in Equatorial Guinea for social and economic development. In fact, teachers, professors, and parents of students think and wish that the new educational alternative must consider the local culture, the technological and scientific elements of the Fang culture, that is to say, there must be the introduction of socio-cultural elements in the current educational system: programs, methods, pedagogical instruments, educational agents...

The new educational reality will have as its point of reference the love and truth that spring from ethical and human values; with which many intellectuals, scientists and scholars have worked for the development and salvation of humanity. Love, charity and truth are presented here as fundamental pillars or components in any educational action oriented towards socio-economic development, since the intellectual, scientific or professional man devoid of these values and virtues can do nothing to satisfy a society in search of well-being. In this sense, it is shown that:

The truth, in education, is to bet on defending man's capacity to reach the discovery of his reality, of his socio-cultural environment; it allows rigor, discipline in the sciences to reach the knowledge of man's personal and social reality. There have been no wise men without work and effort. Giving the necessary value to the social and cultural reality allows us to place the sciences and knowledge in the right framework of harmony with the rest of sciences, knowledge and experiences. Love is an extraordinary force that moves people to commit themselves with courage and generosity in the field of justice and peace. Education must propose areas of belonging and of life. The person needs to be educated and formed from the vital experience, from his life context, not from the cold and distant asepsis (Agejas, 2013, p. 195).

The sense and orientation of the new educational reality, after the study carried out, pursues three fundamental objectives: first, it goes in search of a solution to the first hypothesis of the work that accuses serious shortcomings in modern school education, the lack of emphasis on socio-cultural "know-how", and which in turn engenders vagrancy,

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<sup>3</sup> It must be said that the child, in traditional Fang society, belongs to all members of the village, the clan, the tribe. In this sense, all members of society are obliged to educate him, it is not only the task of the biological family.



unemployment, massive rural exodus; second, it promotes the introduction of local languages, e.g. Fang, in primary school curricula, since the development of a person, of a society, depends very much on the level of understanding of language, because "if socio-economic development depends on knowledge and know-how, it is likely that languages are a key element in everything, they play an important role, because all knowledge and all know-how pass through language; from the oldest tool such as the axe to the most modernized instrument such as the computer, they are all managed thanks to language" (Donneux, 1990, p. 46). 46); third, the last aspect that gives meaning to the new educational reality, to promote social and economic development in Equatorial Guinea, is the consideration of the moral and ethical dimension of students in school.

Thus, "knowledge", "know-how", "know-how to do", "know-how to live", "know-how to be" will revolve around the good and the truth as a model and reference, because no matter how intellectual, scientific and professional man may be, if his conduct and actions are not based on ethical values, he becomes a ferocious animal to crush and eliminate others. Ethical values are necessary in the new educational reality, because they help to seek the individual and collective good, they guide towards personal and community development. In this sense, to educate is "to build a different relational ethics and a profound dignity, to open oneself totally, in a transforming dialogue, to the "truth" of the other, of his reality...; ethics is present in the actions of people, in their conduct and in their relationships with others and with themselves" (Crespo-Balderrama and Tapia-Figueroa, 2021, p. 41).

## 8. Conclusion

What kind of education should be given to men and women in Equatorial Guinea today for social and economic development?

To this question we have tried throughout the work to give an answer. The education provided today in the Equatorial Guinean society cannot promote the desired positive social change, there are several reasons that justify this statement as has been demonstrated throughout the work. Therefore, the recourse to traditional Fang education is necessary and urgent to contribute to the adaptation of a new educational reality in the Guinean-Ecuadorian society.

An attempt has been made to highlight the philosophy and policy of each of the educational models (school and traditional) to bring out the valid elements for an adequate and adapted education. In this sense, mother tongues, for example Fang, could very well appear in the school education system as a means of knowledge transmission.

In the analysis of the two educational models, it has been noted, first of all, that school education seems to be limited to an abstract, theoretical teaching, it categorically ignores the socio-cultural environment of the person with all its values; while on the other hand, in traditional Fang education, there was no separation between education and instruction, that is to say, theory goes hand in hand with practice, there is no separation between one thing and the other: the two aspects of human formation are constantly and intimately related.

From this traditional Fang conception of education, we wanted to know to what extent a new educational reality can be inspired by the traditional Fang education, to restore and integrate the Guinean-Ecuadorians, who receive their education at school, in their true personality, since school education should be the appropriate means offered by society to children and young people for their human, intellectual and spiritual realization, so that



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they can be integrated into society and be the authors and actors of social and economic development.

The desire for social development required today in Equatorial Guinea would not be realized or true if education were limited to the intellectual and scientific training of man, it is also essential to train his ethical, moral and human dimension; the characteristic of the new educational reality is the ethical dimension, human values where love, truth, justice and know-how guide the conduct and actions in family life, in administration and in international relations; respect for the common good and for other citizens must be the common denominator that education inculcates in students; intellectual or scientific life must be based on the socio-cultural context of man and open to the universal context, because we believe that the best social and economic development of a society must start from within the same society. It is necessary to train students with a pedagogy, didactic methods, educational agents and to use all the appropriate instruments and means that allow the adaptation of school education in Equatorial Guinea for social and economic development.

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