

## CAMEROONIAN OFFICIALS AND THE ISSUE OF RETIREMENT AFTER INDEPENDENCE FROM 1974 TO 2012

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**Abstract:** *Since Cameroon's independence in 1960, development challenges have been acute for the young ruling elite; this task of national construction will be the keystone of the new leaders and the Cameroonian government. The improvement of the living conditions of the populations is a data that is integrated in the duration and the search for the solutions a necessity. The public authorities will define proactive policies based on five-year plans to achieve their goal. The Administration, the secular arm of the State, will play a decisive role to implement and enforce the policies defined by the State. The Cameroonian official is therefore rightly an essential link, even essential for the realization of this ambitious project. Thus, the public authorities will build the structures and infrastructure that would welcome the officials and allow their development. The Cameroonian authorities, determined to make the Administration an ideal working environment, created Great Training School to civil servants to give them appropriate training and enable them to meet the requirements of efficiency. But despite all these good intentions and the willingness of the public authorities to improve the situation of civil servants, the problem of retirement remained like a sword of Damocles suspended on the head of the civil servants from where many cries of their part once the retirement arrival.*

**Key words:** *Cameroonian; Officials; Issue; Retirement; Independence*

### 1. Introduction

From the colonial administration to that of independent and unified Cameroon, there has been a profound transformation in the configuration of public service personnel, whose role is decisive in the construction of the Cameroonian political and administrative system. Formerly recruited locally according to need, there were two categories of indigenous public officials: the "literate" or "advanced" and the police. (Mbatso Nkolo, 2019: 98-99). We are witnessing, everywhere in post-colonial Africa, an Africanization of executives (Ziegler, 1964: 95-97). Even within the public service, the statutes are becoming more precise and are gradually being reinforced with the Africanization of administrative staff. The subsequent improvement in the material condition of civil servants allows them to gradually get out of the painful peasant existence from which they had only very insensibly distinguished themselves until then, and to assume their now acquired social and elitist political position (Owona, 1985: 75-78). Indeed, the notion of civil servant although having a polysemic sense, administrative jurisprudence recognizes the quality of civil servant only to the individuals belonging to a framework of the administration in which they were integrated. It only recognizes the path laid out by the French courts, particularly the Council of State and the Dispute Tribunal, who see it sometimes as "an agent invested with permanent employment in the framework of a public service", sometimes "the agent appointed to a permanent post included in the framework of a public administration". In the light of the texts of case law, the status of civil servant comprises several elements, namely the appointment, employment and tenure in a grade of the hierarchy of the State (Piquemal, et al. 1989: 80-83). With regard to retirement, it is understood as the social and financial situation of an individual who, having reached the minimum age required, ceases his professional activity, in general definitively, and regularly receives income in the form of pension paid by the State or of resources coming from its past contributions or from its patrimony.

Indeed, despite Cameroon's independence marking its accession to national and international sovereignty, Cameroonian officials were still governed by the French Civil Service Code. It was not until the advent of the first general statute of the public service in 1974 that Cameroon finally acquired a legal tool which frames and protects the rights, duties and obligations of civil servants. Henceforth, the conditions of access, the course of the career, the conditions of remuneration are laid down therein, also the conditions of cessation of activity as well as the various pensions and the various advantages are mentioned for retired civil servants. It should therefore be asked why is retirement considered to be a negative sanction by the civil servant in Cameroon, when it is displayed as a deserved right to rest? What explains the fears of retired Cameroonian officials? The answer to this question leads us to study public service retirement and pension plans, then the new life of retired public servants and finally analyze the bone of contention and consider some solutions.

## **2. Public service pension and pension plans**

In Cameroon, there are two main types of retirement which can be supplemented by two operations which are very commonly used.

### **2.2. The different pension plans**

It should be remembered that the funded pension scheme works on the principle of the accumulation by workers of a capital stock which is used to finance the pensions of these same workers who have become inactive. This means that the funds set aside yesterday finance today's pensions, and today's funds will finance tomorrow's pensions. However, this schematic diagram is modified by the fact that in steady state when a penny returns theoretically to form a capital for the one who pays it, another spring to pay the pension of a previous contributor (Bidias, 1982: 340-344). In Cameroon, the age required for the retirement of civil servants is fixed by the general statute of the public service of the State which limits it by category as follows:

- Category C and D: 50 years;
- Category A and B: 55 years old.

However, due to the nature or the specialty of certain functions, and in accordance with Decree No. 94/199 of 07 October 1994 laying down the general statute of the public service of the State, the President of the Republic may derogate from the provisions in particular of paragraph 1 of the said statute. It is in this logic that the special statutes were promulgated by the President of the Republic to the detriment of certain bodies of civil servants. In addition, it should be recalled that apart from the above-mentioned civil servants, others retire at 60 years of age in accordance with the signing of the special status of the body of teachers' civil servants by the Head of State in 2009, for example. These are officials in basic education and secondary education; national security officials; officials of the prison administration as well as those of the judiciary, who all benefit from special statutes. Retirement is well supported by the legal framework as well as the calculation of the civil servant's retirement pension amounts. These pensions are paid from the annual state budgets.

### **2.3. The distribution pension scheme**

Allocation is a system for funding retirement pensions in which deductions from wages and employers' contributions are distributed among retirees to ensure payment of their pensions (Ayissi Ntsa, 1989: 46-49). It has advantages which make it a privileged system in market economies based on democratic social values. The advantages recognized for it are greater stability during financial crises and a non-

existent redistribution capacity in the funded pension system. In addition, the collective choice of pay-as-you-go retirement avoids the financial and stock market drifts that may result from the management of pension funds. The Cameroonian retirement pension system is the distribution returned by France until 1951. The capitalization system, traditionally in force in the former English colonies and urgently in the former federal state of West Cameroon, was abandoned after the abolition of the Federation in 1972 (Owona, 1985: 168-169). The National Social Security Fund created in 1975 manages a retirement fund for the benefit of its contributors, who are the employees governed by the labor code (Ako, 1985: 56 -58). Civil servants and the military enjoy a different regime, more privileged than the general regime of the C.N.P.S. Legally and according to subject matter experts, this is the breakdown. But in reality, it is a fully budgeted scheme insofar as the pension burden is fully covered, not by a pension fund, but by credits entered annually in the general state budget and managed by the pension service, the actual payment of the meetings being ensured by the external works of the direction of the treasury. The essential feature of this system is the insistence of a pension fund (Nsangou Mama, 2000: 88-90). It's a very heterogeneous system. There is no single basic text governing all pension dependents, but there are seven categories of texts which may prove useful to study. The general system which is applied to all the personnel governed by the labor code had as a pension fund, the national social security fund where day workers and contract workers of the administration are affiliated. The civil service system brings together two categories of public officials who receive civil pensions and military pensions respectively. So-called civil servants, in opposition to the military, are grouped into five general statutes each comprising an infinity of specific statutes. They are civil servants governed by the general statutes of the public service, of the national assembly, the civil servants of the National Security, the magistrates of the judicial order, governed by the general statute as well as the personnel of the statute of the prison administration (Sharkansky, 1993: 215-223). As for army and civil service officers, they are classified into three categories, namely officers, non-commissioned officers as well as non-commissioned personnel, having served at least for the legal duration under a contract. However, it must be recognized that reserve soldiers in active service for whatever reason who have not been reinstated in the cadre are not entitled to pension (Lekene Donfack, 1994: 20-22).

#### **2.4. Premium pension schemes**

In addition to the two capitalization and distribution systems, there are plans with medium-tiered premiums. As far as the average premium system is concerned, it provides for a constant contribution rate and thus theoretically establishes at least a permanent balance in management. In general, the average premium is calculated on the assumption of the sustainability of the system, an assumption which is fully justified when it comes to compulsory pension insurance (Ayissa Ntsa, 1985: 34-35).

Under this scheme, for a relatively long period, the revenue from contributions greatly exceeds the expenditure on benefits and ancillary expenditure. For the staggered premium scheme, the general trend of the solutions adopted for compulsory pension insurance in a number of countries shows that there is a whole range of schemes which include the advantages of the two schemes mentioned above by seeking to minimize the disadvantages that they may present in relation to each other. When planning pension insurance, it is recognized that the financial system must be inspired by two essential conditions. On the one hand, it is important to guarantee the stability of the contribution rate for a sufficiently long period because too rapid an increase in the contribution rate is not in the interest of either workers or civil

servants; on the other hand, care must be taken that the accumulated technical reserves are not too high, since it is difficult after a certain time to maintain their real value because the purchasing power of money goes down general by decreasing (Saha, 2002: 62-64).

This system makes it possible not only to guarantee the stability of the contribution rate but also to accumulate a sufficient volume of reserves to support in compliance with the security and return requirements, a program of economic and social development of the country. The analysis of these systems allows us to better understand all the mechanisms related to the treatment of workers in general. Are we looking at pensions proper?

### **3. The different categories of retirement pensions and how they are calculated**

Our research in this area, as well as various interviews with public finance specialists, shows that there are six categories of retirement pensions in the public service system. Analysis of the facts presents the retirement pension for civil servants, which itself comprises two "sub-categories" grouped into five, namely the pension seniority and proportional pension, invalidity pension, survivor's pension and survivors' pension. We will rely on two cases to support them with concrete examples.

#### **3.1. The seniority and proportional pension**

Upon reaching the age limit in his context, the official may claim a retirement or proportional pension. The seniority pension is that which is paid to an employee who has at least twenty-five (25) years of effective service on the date of retirement. The retirement age limit is fifty (50) years for officials in categories C and D and fifty-five (55) years for those in categories A and B (Bondé, 2009: 4-6). It should be remembered that this age limit has undergone modifications for certain bodies of civil servants (Saha, 2002: 70-72). Indeed, the general statute of the public service of 1974 knew modifications since 2008 with the special statutes of the magistrature, in 2009 for lessons, of the police in 2011 and in 2012 with that of the penitentiary administration, their departure is now sixty (60) years old, this constitutes a significant development, even as the other bodies of civil servants are also awaiting this measure. As for the proportional pension, it is paid to the civil servant reached by the age limit in his framework without claiming a retirement pension which is twenty-five (25) years, or so when the civil servant is retired for total disability resulting from the exercise of functions or on the occasion of them; it can also be a revocation without cancellation or forfeiture of pension rights after twenty (20) years of service and finally, it is attributed to female officers having completed seventeen (17) years of service and having at least three children in charge (Babanta, 2009: (33-35).

The distinction between the retirement pension and the proportional pension has no legal basis since every civil servant is entitled to a retirement pension, it is only necessary to complete at least fifteen years (15 years) of service (Carcelle, 1969: 45 - 47). We can therefore understand the merits of the analyzes of Lieutenant-Colonel Eyo'o, a retiree who welcomes the decision to abolish this pension for the soldier because for him it is an unnecessary loss of energy. However, this pension has a few calculation methods. It should be remembered that services performed as an intern before August 26, 1974 were only taken into account if they were validated. There was therefore an evolution on the subject insofar as on the 26th of the same year, there was the beginning of the deductions for pensions made from the pension balance, which was only justice according to Abanda Bilogué, under -director of human resources at

the Ministry of Territorial Administration, interviewed on October 18, 2019, in his office. For him, "the interns who have done enormous service to the nation obviously deserve to be paid." For the actual calculation, it is necessary to determine the annuities heard as the number of times put into service. We put the following formula. Number of years = departure date at retirement - date of integration. This means that:

From 1 day to 2 months 29 days = 0 annuity;

-From 3 months to 8 months 29 days = 0.5 annuity;

-From 9 months to 1 year = 1 year.

How to calculate the actual pension? Monthly pension (PM) = gross basic salary (SBB) x number of annuities x 2%. A practical case.

Mr. X entered service in the Administration as a Post and Telecommunications Clerk intern (index 100), category "D" in the public service as of April 15, 1982. Born around 1954, Mr. X Post and Telecommunications Clerk 1st class. 2nd step (index 200) is effective from December 31, 2004, admitted to assert their pension rights. Basic salary related to the index 200 = 85 938. Frs PM = SBB x 22.5x2% = 85,938 x 22.5 x2% = 38,672 FRs. It is noted that there is little change in terms of retirement pension calculations. Certain provisions which determine the parameters entering into the calculation of the rights in this case, articles 4, 5, 9, 10, 24, 34, and 37 of decree n ° 74/759 of August 26, 1974 relating to the organization of the pension scheme civil, respectively relating to the services taken into account, to the validation of the precarious services not changed. The new general statute of the public service of the State did nothing but recall these articles which continue to be applied (Lekene Donfack, 1994: 57-59).

### 3.2. The invalidity and early retirement pension

The invalidity pension is a pecuniary allowance paid to the official who finds himself either in the definitive and absolute impossibility of continuing his functions due to illness, injury, or serious infirmity duly established by the competent and approved services for this purpose. , in particular the national health council is then in a situation of partial incapacity which prevents it from continuing to work. After being granted long-term leave of five years in the event of one of these illnesses declared, the official may be admitted to retirement if he has not recovered. These diseases according to the explanations of Dr. Mballa radiologist at the University Hospital Center of Yaoundé, interviewed in his office on August 3, 2019 are among others, tuberculosis, cancer, polio, mental illnesses and the list is not exhaustive. All of which is corroborated by Doctor Foé, a dentist in the same hospital. An official who becomes disabled before reaching retirement age can claim this immediate benefit pension; those who are partially incapacitated receive a disability pension with entitlement after being released retirement. For example, Mr. Y, born on October 15, 1949, was recruited into the Administration as a Clerk of Administration category "D" in the public service from March 11, 1974. Promoted by various competitions to the grade of Secretary of 'Main Administration of 2nd class 7th step (index 560) on January 22, 2003, he reached the age limit for admission to retirement on October 15, 2004 (Edoa Effa, 1976: 60-63). Victim of a dislocation of the lower left limb which caused him permanent and partial incapacity of 45% attributable to service, the person concerned is entitled to an invalidity pension which I will take advantage of at the time of his retirement. This is equivalent to 30 years 07 months 04 days, corresponding to 30 years 01 month 19 days or 30 annuities payable. It should be said that the invalidity pension is cumulative with the retirement pension. When calculating your retirement pension, you will ask: 234,118 his base salary x 30 x 2% = 140,470 Frs (one hundred and forty thousand four

hundred and seventy francs). The person concerned also benefits from an invalidity pension, calculated as follows:  $234,118 \times 45\% = 105,353$  Frs (One hundred and five thousand three hundred and fifty-three francs). The official in question will receive the total amount of pensions which is equal to retirement pension plus invalidity pension as follows:  $140,470 + 105,353 = 245,823$  Frs (two hundred forty-five thousand eight hundred twenty-three francs). It should be remembered that the same calculation procedure remains in use until today; however, administrative procedures have improved due to the multiplicity of basic health services that exist to initiate facilitation procedures for entitlement to a disability pension (Ako, 1985: 75-77).

The early retirement pension is a pension granted to a civil servant who requests early termination of activity. It comes into play when the latter has completed at least fifteen (15) years of actual service. (Negroniz, 2007: 209, 215-218). It should be noted that in addition to this pension, there are three main advantages such as the installation bonus, the bonus of a step and the increase in the number of annuities up to five (5) years. The installation bonus is a pecuniary benefit provided to an official who takes early retirement. The amount varies according to either the date of submission of the request, or the length of service to be completed before the normal separation from service. As for the step bonus, it comes into play when calculating the pension. The amount of the pension is calculated on the basis of the index relating to the level immediately above that of the said official. With regard to the increase in the number of annuities obtained on the departure date, there is also an improvement in the number of years to spend in administration up to five (5) years (Bidias, 1982: 325- 327). What are the calculation methods? It should be noted that the installation bonus is calculated on the basic salary relating to the civil servant's index at the time of his retirement while the monthly pension is calculated on the basis of the immediately higher index. So: The number of years = date of cessation of activity - date of integration + improvement of the number of years to spend in administration up to 5 years. The installation bonus is equal to the basic salary x the number of months. How to calculate? Monthly pension = base salary of the next higher step x number of annuities x 2%. As an example, a case will be taken to support this demonstration. Mr. X, born on December 22, 1954 in Mbalmayo, Telecommunications engineer of 1st class 3rd echelon (index 1050) category "A" second grade of the public service since August 13, 2003, requests an early retirement to count from December 22, 2004.

The person concerned was recruited into the administration as a Telecommunications Engineer of 2nd class 1st echelon (index 465), category "A" second grade of the public service from August 13, 1980. This makes him 24 years 04 months 09 days or 24.5 annuities payable which lead to a retirement pension with immediate entitlement. Mr. X who has completed more than 24 years of service and who is 5 years from the normal retirement age limit is entitled to the installation bonus equal to 24 months of basic salary balance relating to the 1050 index; or  $391,516 \times 24 = 9,396,384$  Frs (nine million three hundred ninety-six thousand three hundred eighty-four francs). The person concerned also benefits from a bonus of five (5) years and his seniority increases to 29 years 04 months 09 days, or 29.5 years payable. The monthly pension will be: Monthly pension =  $412,395$  Frs x  $29.5 = 243,313$  Frs. The four hundred and twelve thousand three hundred and ninety-five (412,395) francs represent the basic salary on the 1115 index (Mbatsogo Nkolo, 2019: 360-362). It should be said that before the establishment of the general statute of the public service by the decree of February 18, 1974, there was not a legal act protecting the rights and the duties of the civil servants in a general way. There have been improvements with the decree of February 21, 1975 creating a technicality bonus for the benefit of certain

civil servants, then the decree of October 18, 1976 modifying and then supplementing certain provisions of the decree of February 18, 1974 general statute of the public service, then the decree of January 29, 1976, modifying the remuneration of the civil servants of the state, of the decree of January 27, 1981, revaluing the remuneration of the civil servants of the State, are as many acts having improved the functioning of the public service on all points.

#### **4. The changes awaiting the retired official**

Defense and coping mechanisms are most often used to protect against unpleasant actual experiences. In other words, retirement will trigger emotions that the person will try to control by various psychological means (Bertaux, 1997: 53-55). The representations linked to "retirement" go beyond control, and it is then that bankruptcy or insufficient defense or adaptation mechanisms cause anxiety or anxiety (Babanta, 2009: 62-64). Besides these two terms, we can group under the same label of timeric states: fear, fear, dread, apprehension, worry, panic, terror ... all these states have in common a unpleasant physiological experience. These are both thoughts, negative cognitions and bodily sensations depending on the intensity of the anxiety experienced, we can observe in these people breathing difficulties, palpitations, discomfort or chest pain, feeling of suffocation. We understand it now, retirement produces effects that some people find it hard to avoid or contain. The main characteristic of the change is that it puts an end to practices, habits and benchmarks already anchored in the functioning of the civil servant, and leads to new ones (Makube Nam, 1995: 58-60). The examination of some of them is necessary.

##### **4.1. Loss of bearings and identity**

For many years, the public servant has developed habits which have become mechanical and which are already part of his functioning. These are, for example, the time you wake up, leave and return from work. In retirement, this routine stops and changes in lifestyle are made on several levels. At the level of spaces, interpersonal and intellectual, the civil servant most often if he has not built, changes neighborhood sometimes of city in search of the conditions which adapt to his new situation, which involves the loss of his landmarks. For example, he still misses the pharmacy, the food store and even the usual newspaper seller in the area (Bertaux, 1997: 45-47). Officials who sometimes decide to settle in the village run the risk of being rejected if not the jealousy and even the wickedness of their village brothers who live in poverty. At the relational and intellectual level, the civil servant loses the atmosphere that he lived in the office, the friends and the buddies related to his job or his previous geographical position. On an intellectual level, the public servant may no longer be subject to the intellectual challenges that he faced daily for years.

As for the loss of identity, society is organized in such a way that identity is linked to occupation or social status. The observation is often made, when the civil servant retires, he has difficulties in presenting himself, preferring the prefix "ex", for example ex-regional delegate of agriculture and rural development. While it is easier for doctors, engineers and teachers to present themselves publicly without embarrassment after retirement, this is not the case for many civil servants whose identity is based on their function as well as their reputation. Becoming aware of the reality of retirement turns out to be the first shock suffered because the worker or the official realizes that it is not a dream.

If the rupture does not take place in the spirit, it is the suffering which settles down as says Mr. Obate, When I left my service the last night, I realized that an

important part of my life was coming to an end. I had to mourn this environment that had allowed me to live my childhood dream for 30 years. It took me about seven months to celebrate this milestone. Then I realized that it was part of a cycle: something dies, something is born by (Mfou'ou Obam, 2010: 80-83).

In short, if retirement is not well managed, it can lead to stress characterized by loss of sleep, anxiety, fatigue, errors in judgment, loss of sharp analytical skills, disorganization, abuse of television, anger towards the spouse and children, the tendency to isolate oneself. For example, when an official has invested in real estate, agriculture, he is not worried because he will take care of the management of his investment himself. This is why Owono Désiré, a state graduate nurse, told us in the interview he gave us on September 15, 2019 that "I can't wait to see this day to go and take care of my fields".

Apart from this loss of identity, there is the loss of the advantages linked to the function, the decrease income and increased family responsibilities. Indeed, the public service is a guarantee of permanent employment and civil servants benefit from the prestige linked to their function which opens doors to material, financial and honorary advantages (Nfeubang, 1974: 30-32). The loss of all of these benefits is often frowned upon by some public servants. The testimony of Mr. Ekoa Akou'afan former Secretary General of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development who said in an interview on October 10, 2019 in Yaoundé that "after spending six years in this ministry, I took the retirement while losing all my benefits until the driver ". He adds by the way, "I have repeatedly failed to run the engine of my vehicle because I did not have the reflex of its maintenance". It is obvious that this loss is sometimes a difficult learning process for certain officials. In addition, the retiring official also sees his family growing with additional burdens and enormous financial demands on him, but his salary decreases and he can no longer take care of his family properly, especially if there is still unemployed and young children. Mr. Mvondo Oscar chief clerk, in an interview with us granted on October 20, 2019 in Yaoundé thinks that "When the retirement arrives, it is necessary to rest well but, it is difficult to live especially when one has still unemployed children and to young ages". One of the problems the retired civil servant wants to solve is the drop in income. Indeed, the amounts of retirement pension are "small" and are no longer sufficient to meet all the needs which become enormous, which is the source of the shocks suffered by civil servants when retirement occurs (Kisso, 2009: 83-85).

#### **4.2. Retirement planning: a pledge for a rest without cries of distress**

After understanding the very concept of retirement, it is important to take a break and plan for retirement. Planning first involves making a self-assessment. Then, reorient themselves through either the creation of a company, an association, or the return to employment. The following four phases identify the constraints and opportunities of the environment to which the individual belongs, in order to develop a realistic plan. Retirement is thus gradually prepared throughout working life. Above all, you should not wait until the day before retirement to find out about the procedures, the calculation methods and the constitution of the files. Officials interviewed who give their opinion on the post function believe that it is very difficult to get hold of their retirement pension. Retired officials spend a lot of time collecting their pensions. Mr. Fotso Gutave, Retired Police Inspector, maintains that "I went on retirement on July 23, 2013, so far I have not yet received my salary". It is worth noting sometimes the ignorance of civil servants on the texts in force on retirement. For example, when an official's retirement file is incomplete, his file cannot be successful, because there is a



range of documents that must be supplied and their supply poses problems for the preservation of archives in administration, which can help find solutions to grievances raised by officials. The folder is built up at home as soon as you obtain your social security book. Six types of information are to be sought, among other procedures of the pension fund, the rights and duties vis-à-vis its pension fund, the documents constituting the various files relating to the pension, the possibilities of setting up pensions. Complementary, the calculation of pensions as well as government programs and measures for retirees (Négromie, 2007: 359-360). For this purpose, certain documents must be carefully stored and classified, such as the integration certificate, the first balance sheet and the last, the birth certificates of the children. At the end of the financial year, we must take stock of the current financial situation as well as the financial situation on the eve of retirement. This exercise allows you to assess the income you need in retirement, to put in place a strategy to improve income and to develop a budget adapted to the new way of life. After the assessment phase, the retired official is informed of his situation and the constraints it releases.

These constraints must be opposed to the opportunities available to him to choose the orientation he wishes to give to his new life. Most conversions go through training, which is an important moment between the old and the new professional integration. Boutinet, stresses in this regard three conditions that must be met to finalize a training project (Boutinet, 1993: 45-47). To this end, a dialectical space, personal or professional, must be set up. The relationship formed during the training with the trainer and others can allow us to see other perspectives. The training constitutes a learning school which can lead, like a formal school, to part-time professional integration due to age or to the creation of a business. As Cathérine Negróniz states, training time is often tied up with fear of failure, the feeling of having little recent knowledge, the fear of not having the necessary skills to successfully reset. You should know that the decision to retrain is a risk-taking. It is a decision to stay active during retirement or to opt for a rest which can easily lead to immobility and various illnesses.

#### **4.3. The development phase of a new life project**

Until the end of the 1970s, retirement was seen by "collective memory" as synonymous with old age and it was no longer conceivable to make long-term forecasts because we were on the final stretch to death. Psychologists like Dominique Besse, a research engineer at the National Research Center, in France also wonders about the formulas of retirement, about this "social death" while medical research is trying to reduce limits of physiological death. Medical prowess is increasing life expectancy in many countries today and improving living conditions (Guillemard, 1972: 145-147). In Cameroon and according to the World Health Organization and the Cameroonian Ministry of Health, this life expectancy is 54 years. Under these conditions, retirement constitutes not only a well-deserved rest for the civil servant but also a new start for retraining for new activities (Babanta, 2009: 78-79). This finds its meaning in Cameroon because the feeling that emerges makes Mr. Minlo an agricultural engineer say that Cameroonian civil servants in the general administration retire very early, 55 years, while life expectancy is increasing. Retired civil servants who are still able are thus faced with an extraordinary opportunity to turn a page and rewrite a new one. This new page begins with an internal organization, a new way of thinking, of conceiving life, new objectives, in short it is a question of giving a meaning to her life if it did not have one. What is the meaning to be given after the service? One of the fundamental questions facing the future retired civil servant is the meaning of life. It is

a good thing to take stock of your life before entering your first or second retirement. Even if it is normal to establish a new life plan, it is worth asking what is the purpose of all this? What is its purpose? These are the essential questions that should be confronted. We therefore remain questioning as a 17 year old girl had written in her diary. "I would like to live, live consciously, I would like to know why I live and I would like to enjoy life, but this is impossible for me until I have defined the meaning of life and thus set myself a goal of 'valid life'" quoted by Guillemard. Retirement is a good opportunity in this regard to achieve self-sufficiency and carry out the activity of one's choice. This is not something ephemeral like love passion, but a life passion, we can cite some examples of passion namely music, decoration, gardening, travel, supervision of children, alternative medicine. It is no longer a question of passion, but of concrete achievements on a personal, family and social level, very little time devoted to one's family, poor financial management, abusive uses which can be corrected. In fact, many civil servants since 1960, say they have experienced financial ease thanks to their activities after retirement. Mr. Alioum, civil administrator, says that I went into retirement without much, but since my retirement, I have embarked on pastoral activities and I am proud of the result today. When you have gone through the whole spectrum of what the public servant must do to have a good retirement, it should be stressed that he needs a lot of discipline to get out of trouble. First because the remuneration of Cameroonian civil servants does not make it possible to make good savings, then the weight of responsibility because he is the head of a large family and finally the high standard of living (Gamassou, 2004: 46- 48). Consequently, it will be difficult for him to claim a scholarship, especially for lower-grade civil servants whose wages are already very low. It is therefore understandable why retirement poses a threat to certain civil servants and collected testimony, which sometimes leads to death (Olama Omgba, 1969: 42-43). Another and not the least important problem is that of the retirement of civil servants who frustrate certain civil servants.

## **5. Difficulties due to the harmonization of retirement**

Before April 2008 and in accordance with the general statute of the public service of February 18 1974, civil servants retired at fifty (50) years for categories C and D and fifty-five (55) years for categories A and B.

### **5.1. The categories of retirement**

Only, we have been witnessing for some time a multiplication of special statutes of certain bodies of civil servants, with a common denominator, a retirement longer than that provided for by the new statute of the public service of the State. Indeed, since 2008 and in particular the officials of the magistracy, then in 2009 the teaching staff, in 2011 the police officers and in 2012 those of the prison administration saw the retirement age increased to sixty (60) years by the President of the Republic, following the signing of their special or special statutes. Indeed, one of the arguments that prevailed at the time of the creation of a special status for teachers, for example, was that vocations had to be created in order to make up for the shortage of educators in high schools and colleges.

### **5.2. The start on the special status**

However, the observation that emerges according to the proponents of the harmonization of the retirement age of teachers is that the deficit persists despite the increase in recruitments because, many teachers desert the classrooms, have careers in other administrations, while retaining the advantages linked to their integration into the public service (Atangana Mebara, 2009: 97-99). Originally, there was Decree no.

74/138 of February 18, 1974 on the general status of the public service. These particular statutes which were created did not respect the provisions of said statute. The exercise of rewriting the statutes of different bodies has therefore given rise to case-by-case management, which enshrines unequal treatment and a feeling of frustration among those of civil servants whose retirement age has remained unchanged. Above all, however, one must ask why the extension of the length of service is claimed and celebrated as a victory by the beneficiary bodies, then as an abandonment or disavowal by the bodies of officials not concerned.

## 6. Conclusion

At the end of our study, it was a question of understanding and analyzing why retirement is it considered negatively by Cameroonian officials when it is displayed as a deserved right to rest? In other words, what explains the fears of retired civil servants? The answer to this problem has led us, with regard to the general statutes of the public service of 1974 and 1994, to present the different retirement and pension schemes, analyze the advantages and take examples of calculation for each type of pension. We analyzed the changes awaiting retired public servants and looked at the frustrations surrounding the age of retirement. We have observed that the pensions of civil servants are paid from the state budget. A kind of plea is made against the authorities to alleviate the living conditions of retired civil servants. For example, during retirement, the file used for recruitment should be the same during retirement. This would prevent retiring civil servants from still spending large sums of money on the preparation of the file, which sometimes takes long procedures. The establishment of health insurance must also take into account retired civil servants, who are most often exposed to illness without the financial means necessary to be able to seek treatment. Finally, harmonizing the retirement age can work for all civil servants and avoids what non-beneficiaries consider an injustice. On the part of the retirees themselves, that they take appropriate measures upon entering the public service regarding savings and investment in rental housing for example, to have a happy retirement.

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