

1 Managerial Innovation and SME Performance in Africa: The 2 Case of Cameroon

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5 **Abstract**

6 The introduction of new management practices has become a real imperative for any
7 company; it is more for SMEs because these companies are vulnerable and have a specific
8 management mode, based on the personality of their leader. Moreover, in a constantly
9 changing environment, the performance of any company is now based on this new situation.
10 However, while innovation in general, and managerial innovation in particular, has been
11 successful in the Western context, that of the African context remains unclear and does not
12 seem to be a major concern, especially in sub-Saharan Africa
13

14 **Index terms**— managerial innovation, performance, SMEs, cameroon

15 **1 Introduction**

16 he liberalization of markets and the globalization of trade, with the corollary of the intensification of competition,
17 are having their full impact on organizations, forcing them to use a good strategic sense to stand out of their
18 competitors (Gargouri, 2015). To face this new world order, companies in general, and SMEs, in particular,
19 are called to question a new form of management, better adapted to the need for agility, innovation, but also
20 the fulfillment of employees enabling them to boost their performance: this is managerial innovation. The
21 latter can be defined as a new combination of means, material and conceptual, already existing or new, in
22 the business management process (Gilbert, 1998). For Birkinshaw and Mol (2006), managerial innovation is
23 the implementation of new practices, processes and management structures, which are significantly different
24 from the usual norms. Hamel (2006) considers managerial innovation as a particular contribution to traditional
25 management principles, processes and practices. In a more recent paper, Birkinshaw, Hamel and Mol (2008) define
26 managerial innovation as the invention and implementation of a new practice, process, structure, or management
27 technique. Compared to what is known to better achieve the goals of the organization. It is, therefore, the
28 introduction of a novelty in an organization to improve its performance (Mol and Birkinshaw, 2009).

29 If this introduction of novelties has become a real imperative for any company, it is more for SMEs when we
30 know that they are vulnerable and have a specific management mode (Julien, 1997), based on the personality of
31 their leader (Quairel and ??uberger 2005, Paradas 2006). Moreover, in a constantly changing environment, the
32 performance of any company is now based on this new situation. Various studies have even shown in the past
33 that the failure of African enterprises has various causes (Grégoire 1991, Ouattara 1995, Kamdem 1999), the
34 most important of which is attributed to their lack of innovation. Thus, while in the Western context, companies
35 attach a lot of importance to innovation, the African case remains unclear and does not seem to be a major
36 concern, especially in sub-Saharan Africa (Nkouka Safoulanitou et al., 2013). Yet, it is a source of growth for
37 SMEs, which make up almost the entire business population in Sub-Saharan Africa and contribute more than
38 30% of GDP (Nkouka Safoulanitou et al., 2013).

39 The interest in conducting this study within SMEs is no longer to be demonstrated. Indeed, according to RGE
40 (2016), the Cameroonian productive fabric is marked by the predominance of SMEs. In fact, SMEs account for
41 99.8% of Cameroonian enterprises (79.1% of which are very small, 19.4% of SEs and 1.3% of MEs), which account
42 for nearly 72% of employment and 30% of SMEs. % of the country's GDP. SMEs are, therefore, an undeniable
43 factor in creating jobs and wealth.

44 According to Article 3 of Law No. 2015/010 of July 16, 2015, amending and supplementing certain provisions
45 of the Law No. 2010/001 of April 13, 2010, promoting SMEs in Cameroon, is considered SME, any business,

47 regardless of its sector of activity, which employs at most one hundred (100) people and whose annual turnover
48 excluding taxes does not exceed three (03) billion CFA francs.

49 Basically, this study aims to understand the impact of managerial innovation on the performance of African
50 SMEs, more specifically those of Cameroon and Nigeria. Managerial innovation seems like a competitive strategy
51 (Haji Karimi, Hamidizadeh, Nasrin and Hashemi, 2013); the determination of its influence on performance may
52 help to reduce the losses related to the lack of such a practice in African SMEs that employ more than half
53 of the active population (Boubakary, Boukar and Tsapi, 2017). In other words, the purpose of this research
54 is to contribute to enriching the empirical knowledge that we have about the role of SME innovation in their
55 performance. The thesis that we want to defend here is that innovation behavior variables, very often used to
56 explain differentiation strategies, can have an important explanatory role in improving the performance of SMEs.

57 The article is divided into three sections: the first section reviews the various existing works, the second
58 illustrates the methodology of our research and the third presents the results of the study.

59 2 II.

60 3 Literature Review

61 In this section, we will successively present: conceptual literature on managerial innovation, performance
62 conceptualization and theoretical link between managerial innovation and performance.

63 4 a) Conceptual literature on managerial innovation

64 According to the OECD (2005), an innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved production
65 of goods or services or processes, a new marketing method or a new organizational method in the practices of a
66 company, the organization of the workplace or external relations. For Hamel and Breen (2007), there are four
67 forms of innovation: product innovation that involves the design of new or technologically improved products or
68 services. It can be at the origin of considerable development of the organization, but it is easily imitable, process
69 innovation that relates to the production or distribution processes of the good or service. It has an undeniable
70 interest, but spread quickly from one company to another and therefore does not seem to be decisive in terms
71 of competitiveness; strategic innovation, which consists in offering a new economic model, which corresponds to
72 a break that could disrupt competition, but whose identification of the key factors of success remains relatively
73 easy, which prevents from proving decisive; the managerial innovation that is most likely to cause a lasting break.
74 It differs from other forms of innovation because it is based on a complex combination of resources and know-how
75 that is particularly difficult to identify and duplicate for a competitor. However, as part of this study, we will
76 focus on managerial innovation.

77 Introduced by researchers such as Mintzberg (1973) and Kimberly (1981), who have established the distinction
78 between managerial innovations and other types of innovation, in this case, technological innovation, managerial
79 innovation stands out from others by its propensity to influence the traditional decision-making process of the
80 company. It is considered an organizational means or strategy for managing uncertainty. Thus, for Kimberly,
81 a managerial innovation is defined as "any program, product or technique that represents a significant distance
82 from the state of management when it first appears and where it affects nature, location, quality or the amount
83 of information that is available in a decision-making process" ??Kimberly, 1981: 86).

84 For Damanpour (1984), managerial innovation is distinguished from administrative innovation, which is an
85 innovation that influences the social system of an organization, especially the relationships between individuals
86 who interact with one another to accomplish a task or achieve a specific objective. Van de Ven (1986: 591) argues
87 that "managerial innovation is a new idea that can be either a combination of old ideas, a schema that changes
88 the order of the present, a formula or a unique approach perceived as new by the individuals concerned".

89 For ??amel (2009), managerial innovation is the foundation for creating unique skills for the company.
90 According to the latter, it is the ability to develop managerial innovations that depend on the performance
91 of companies. However, it should be noted that, analysis of the literature on innovation reveals that managerial
92 innovation has several acceptances that are used interchangeably. It is in this sense that Kimberly (1981) argues
93 that managerial innovation is still called organizational innovation. Williamson (1975), Edquist, Hommen and
94 McKelvey (2002) and Sanidas (2005) have used the term administrative innovation. Nevertheless, all the terms
95 used reveal a common sense (Rowley et al., 2011).

96 Previous works dealing with managerial innovation (Hamel, 2006 require careful analysis of the adjustment
97 of new practices and an inappropriate management strategy to ensure broad and high adoption of fidelity those
98 results in maximum benefits. Finally, innovation occurs when individual practices and organizational strategies
99 are integrated into the social structure to support that innovation (Dodgson et al., 2013).

100 Management processes: According to Hamel (2006) and Birkinshaw et al. (2008), management processes refer
101 to the routines that govern the work of leaders, drawing on abstract ideas and turning them into achievable
102 tools, which typically include strategic planning, project management and, among other things, performance
103 evaluation. But Vaccaro et al. (2012) focused on how the work is done and include the changes in the routines
104 that govern people's work and the way compensation is set up.

105 The organizational structure: This is the way companies organize the communication system within them,
106 aligning and leveraging the efforts of their members that feed into the context in which the work is done. These

107 elements are linked to changes in the communication structure as a sign of different ways of doing things, for
108 example, by allowing different groups to exchange information (Vaccaro et al., 2012). Also, the formal structure
109 of the organization could be modified to bring about changes in communication, autonomy and discretion (Hamel,
110 2006, Birkinshaw et al., 2008).

111 Managerial innovation, therefore, includes the three facets, the practices that concern what leaders and
112 managers do, the processes that explain how they do it, and the structures that show the organizational context
113 in which the work is done (Hecker and Ganter, 2013). Thus, to implement managerial innovation, it is necessary
114 to introduce a change that reflects a novelty in the way the organization is managed through new practices,
115 processes or structures, including associated techniques (Khanagha et al., 2013). For Hamel (2006), managerial
116 innovation is an innovation that derogates from traditional management principles, processes and practices that
117 change the way work is done. Managerial innovation, therefore, consists of a set of rules and work routines that
118 are done within organizations (Birkinshaw et al., 2008; Damanpour and Aravind, 2011).

119 For Le Roy et al. (2013), managerial innovation is the adoption, by an organization, of new management
120 practices or methods for it, to improve its overall performance. This definition encompasses two meanings of
121 the concept: "(1) managerial innovation is the invention and adoption by an organization of a completely new
122 management practice or method about known management practices and methods; the organization develops an
123 innovation and implements it first; the success of this organization, because of this managerial innovation, leads
124 other organizations to adopt it; (2) managerial innovation is the adoption by an organization of a management
125 practice or method that already exists but is new in relation to its current management practices and methods;
126 the organization does not develop innovation and is not necessarily the first to adopt it; it is the success of the
127 organizations that have adopted this managerial innovation that has led it to adopt it as well" ??Roy et al.,
128 2013, p.85). In this study, we will retain these two definitions of managerial innovation. This choice is justified by
129 the fact that they seem to be more appropriate, because the managerial innovation, beyond being an invention of
130 a new practice or method of management by an organization, is also the adoption of a practice or management
131 method already existing but new for the organization adopting it.

132 **5 b) Performance conceptualization**

133 Business performance is a central concept in management science that many researchers have sought to define
134 for more than four decades (Couret, 2011; Marmuse, 1997; Bouquin, 1993; Lawrence and Lorsch, 1973). The
135 term performance is widely used, although its definition is not unanimous ??Bourguignon, 1995). According
136 to Marmuse (1997), the performance of an organization is the way it is organized to achieve its objectives.
137 For Lawrence and Lorsch (1973), the performance of the organization translates its capacity to satisfy the
138 requirements of the environment which includes actors who realize market relations with the organization (the
139 providers of resources necessary for its activities and the clients) but also the community in its broad sense which
140 is located outside the market. For Bouquin (1993), performance does not exist intrinsically, but in relation to
141 users.

142 Historically, corporate performance has been measured by financial indicators (Neely, 1999; Walker and Brown,
143 2004), which are considered objective and reliable and easily interpreted for evaluation or benchmarking purposes.
144 However, since the mid-1980s, many critics have been raised about financial measures as performance indicators,
145 notably due to: their short-term orientation, their lack of link with the strategy (Neely, 1999), their inability to
146 consider the interest of the various stakeholders and their tendency to want to "normalize" behaviors, which is
147 far from accounting for the reality and heterogeneity of SMEs (St-Pierre and Cadieux, 2011).

148 Several types of performance modeling are widely used in management science literature. The models most
149 cited by this literature are those of Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983), of Morin et al. (1994) and de Bourguignon
150 (1996). Each of these models takes a different look at performance but is unanimous on the multidimensional
151 aspect of this concept. By referring to the theory of Stakeholders or Stakeholders (Freeman, 1984), it is, in
152 fact, possible to interpret the performance according to the challenges of the different actors who make up the
153 organization or who hold an interest in it. For some, the financial or accounting dimension will be predominant
154 while for others, the consumer-product, socio-political or even employment dimension will be significant (Le
155 Louarn and Wils, 2001). In this perspective, Dyer and Reeves (1995) proposed different types of performance
156 level indicators, the most used of which are four: 1) the results of human resources such as absenteeism, turnover,
157 satisfaction at work and the performance of the individual and the group; 2) organizational results such as
158 productivity and quality of products and services; 3) financial results such as return on assets (ROE) and returns
159 on investment (ROI); 4) market efficiency (Tobin stock price or Q which is the ratio of a firm's market value to
160 the cost of replacing its assets).

161 Other authors, such as Kalika (1988), Bayad and Liouville (1998), have distinguished three dimensions for
162 measuring the performance of organizations. First, the social dimension of performance, which is broken down
163 into four indicators: work performance, working time, staff capacity to perform tasks and absenteeism. Second,
164 the organizational dimension of performance which is made up of three indices: productivity, innovation and
165 quality. Third, the economic dimension of performance, which is measured using four items: profitability, sales
166 growth, market share and customer loyalty.

167 Ultimately and as Louart (1996) pointed out, in its plurality of meanings, performance is based on multiple

6 C) THE THEORETICAL LINK BETWEEN MANAGERIAL INNOVATION AND PERFORMANCE

168 benchmarks: economic (profitability, competitiveness), legal (legal compliance, solvency), organizational (skills, 169 consistency and efficiency) or social (involvement, satisfaction, quality of life at work).

170 In the context of this study, we consider performance in a global manner, which is to say through its three 171 essential dimensions, namely: the economic dimension, the social dimension and the organizational dimension. 172 The advantage of these three indicators is that they are easily observable. Also, as we work in SMEs, it seems 173 more realistic to combine them.

174 Once the concept of performance has been identified, we will now dwell on the theoretical link that may exist 175 between this concept and managerial innovation.

176 6 c) The theoretical link between managerial innovation and 177 performance

178 Used for the first time by Kimberly in 1981, the term "managerial innovation" is motivated by a desire to recognize 179 innovations that have been neglected so far and are not technological (Le Roy et al., 2013). Indeed, public 180 authorities, companies, managers and researchers have always focused most of their attention on technological 181 innovation. They have shown little interest in other forms of innovation, such as managerial innovation (Le Roy 182 et al., 2013). In fact, managerial innovation, its context and innovation process, its innovator and its effect on 183 the performance of companies in general, and SMEs in particular, are very unpopular. Yet, according to Le Roy 184 et al. (2013), managerial innovation is the main factor that explains the company's performance.

185 For Van Auken et al. ??2008), managerial innovation can lead to increased market share, greater efficiency of 186 production, higher productivity growth, and increased bottom line. Managerial innovation thus enables SMEs 187 to adopt new practices in order to differentiate themselves from their competitors and improve their financial 188 performance (Zahra et al., 2000). Indeed, according to the latter, managerial innovation enables SMEs to 189 obtain higher financial performance by offering a greater variety of products (precious, rare, inimitable and 190 differentiated). For Keizer et al. (2002), managerial innovation is one of the most important ways in which SMEs 191 can compete and perform well. In the same vein, Barney (1997) pointed out that SMEs can gain a sustainable 192 competitive advantage through their managerial innovation.

193 According to Zhu, Zou and Zhang (2018), the implementation of CSR practices is a form of managerial 194 innovation for SMEs that helps improve their performance. In the same vein, Arnold (2017) emphasizes that 195 SMEs that place greater emphasis on managerial innovation, such as CSR, have a great capacity to improve their 196 performance. Bocquet et al.

197 (2017) also argue that managerial innovations such as CSR may be necessary for SMEs with strategic objectives 198 to improve their performance, such as growth. Thus, managerial innovation is a key lever for Cameroonian SMEs 199 to improve their performance through CSR practices. For Mattera and Baena (2015), managerial innovation 200 can interact with CSR practices that improve performance. Adam, Strahle and Freise (2017) also confirm that 201 managerial innovations, such as the implementation of a management system, interact with CSR practices in 202 order to improve the performance of SMEs.

203 Managerial innovation based on market orientation and organizational learning, therefore, has a significant 204 impact on the company's performance ??Besbes, Aliouat and Gharbi, 2013). According to the latter, the market 205 orientation is an information resource and learning, an organizational resource, and both, as dynamic capacities 206 crucial for the development of the company's competitiveness, have a significant impact on the competitive 207 advantage and SME performance. The authors thus combine the resource-based strategic approach of the firm 208 that the true source of competitive advantage and higher performance lies in the specific resources of the firm and 209 not in the unique positioning of the firm at the market level (Barney, 2001); and the capacity-based approach 210 of Helfat and Peteraf (2003) for whom an organization's ability to perform a set of tasks in a coordinated 211 manner using organizational According to Birkinshaw et al. (2008), managerial innovation that is seen as the 212 creation and application of a renewed management practice, process or technique achieves organizational goals 213 such as performance. In the same vein, Mol and Birkinshaw (2009) note that managerial innovations, which 214 are typically incremental and include new approaches to structuring the firm, new management techniques, and 215 new marketing methods, have only one ultimate goal, which is that of improving the company's performance. 216 However, Walker et al. (2010) find that the relationship between managerial innovation and performance is 217 subject to the organization's ability to put in place management systems, effectively manage organizational 218 processes, and implement its mission and strategies. Such a relationship first requires a competitive advantage 219 by referring to Hunt's "resourcebenefit" theory (1999), which conceptualizes the relationship between resources, 220 competitive advantage and superior performance.

221 For some authors (Adams, John and Phelps 2006; Birkinshaw et al., 2008), managerial innovation, about 222 product/service innovations, is generally intended to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of internal business 223 and administrative processes of the organization. It can include changes in structure, management systems, 224 knowledge used to perform management work and management skills that enable an organization to function 225 effectively and efficiently (Hamel, 2006). Thus, managerial innovation translates the adoption of new management 226 systems and processes to make management work more efficient, but also the use of new management and 227 information systems to improve the efficiency of systems and processes. The organization's operating performance 228 increases the company's performance (Damanpour, Walker and Avellaneda, 2009). The combined effect of

229 introducing new practices, processes and techniques to improve the organizational adaptation and effectiveness
230 that management innovation conveys enables the company's performance to be achieved. This view is championed
231 by proponents of theories of contingency and resource dependence that organizations are adaptive systems that
232 introduce changes to function effectively and improve their performance ??Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967;Pfeffer
233 and Salancik, 2003).

234 Managerial innovation plays a central role in the process of organizational change, facilitating the adaptation
235 of organizations to the external environment and increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of internal processes
236 (Walker et al., 2010). Boyne and Walker (2002) indicate that managerial innovation, such as total quality
237 management, has positive consequences for performance. Ndalira, Ngugi and Chepkulei (2013), in their studies
238 in Kenya, report empirical evidence that managerial innovation has a strong link to sales performance. Indeed,
239 for these authors, the tendency of owners to engage in new ideas, new practices, creative processes, results in new
240 products, services or technological processes that have a great influence on the performance of SMEs. However,
241 proponents of the institutional theory suggest that managerial innovation can have indirect effects on performance
242 because the factors driving adoption are initially focused on ensuring internal and external legitimacy ??Staw and
243 Epstein, 2000). Nevertheless, like the majority of previous work, we consider that managerial innovation, which
244 induces changes in the management processes of SMEs, positively and significantly influences their performance.

245 7 III.

246 8 Methodology of the Study

247 To provide some answers to the problem stated in this research, this study combines the theory of resources
248 and capabilities, thus bringing them closer to the performance of SMEs. The methodological elements presented
249 in this work concern the measurement of variables, the characteristics of the sample and the collection of data
250 as well as the statistical tools used. These items are measured by the 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "1 =
251 strongly disagree" to "5 = strongly agree".

252 Regarding the measurement of overall performance, we have selected three dimensions (each of which includes
253 two indicators) to understand this concept, namely: the economic dimension (asset profitability and financial
254 profitability); the social Volume XX Issue X Version I Year 2020 () A Managerial Innovation and SME
255 Performance in Africa: The Case of Cameroon dimension (social climate and quality of life at work) and finally the
256 organizational dimension (cost control and stakeholder satisfaction (customers, suppliers, employees, investors,
257 etc.)) over of three years. Financial indicators are measured using a three-point Likert type scale: "1 = decline;
258 2 = stable; 3 = rise. The social climate was also measured using a three-point scale: "1 = bad; 2 = good; 3 =
259 very good.

260 Also, we took into account in our analyses several control variables suggested by Kim, Cable and Kim (2005).
261 These are the size of the business, its age, industry and type of respondents. Indeed, these authors suggest that
262 the control variables retained must make sense conceptually. As a result, the literature analysis led us to include
263 four control variables in the model to be tested.

264 The company's performance has indeed been correlated with gender (Bauweraerts et al., 2017; Dang et al.,
265 2017 and Garnero, 2017), with men-led SMEs generally performing better than women-led ones. The size of
266 the enterprise has also been measured because it is likely to influence performance, as the larger the enterprise,
267 the more its structure offers standardized procedures and differentiated work methods, and more it is likely to
268 perform well (Mlouka and Sahut, 2008, St-Pierre, Julien, and Morin, 2010). The relationship between age and
269 the performance of business would be positive (St-Pierre, Julien and Morin, 2010). With age, the increase in
270 experience is concomitant with that of the competitive advantage, which increases the profitability of the company.
271 We controlled the business sector, whether industrial, commercial or service. This distinction appeared necessary
272 because Moati (2000) and Issor (2017) point out the diversity of performance from the sector of activity. Indeed,
273 SMEs are not a homogeneous category, but a convenient name which designates a diverse reality likely to be
274 differentiated by the sector of activity, by the technological degree of their productive system, but also their
275 appreciation of the performance indicators.

276 9 b) Characteristics of the sample and collection of data

277 Initially, our investigation consisted of 180 companies from the reference population (identified in a file of 203,482
278 companies, including 6,055 companies in Ngaoundéré, 6,789 companies in Garoua, 6,870 companies in Maroua,
279 49,970 companies in Yaoundé and 70,082 companies in Douala) (RGE, 2016). A nonprobabilistic sample, more
280 precisely by reasoned choice, given the growing insecurity in certain regions of the country, particularly the Far
281 North, North West, West, and South West where the phenomena of Boko Haram and separatists (or secessionists)
282 have made life impracticable and the environment inaccessible in these localities of the country. Moreover,
283 according to RGE (2016), the five cities account for nearly 75% of the country's enterprises, where Douala and
284 Yaoundé remain the main economic centers of the economic units, with respectively 37% and 27%. Also, these
285 five cities are representative of the different layers of the population of the national triangle, where the cities of
286 Ngaoundere, Garoua and Maroua represent the far north; Yaounde, the great south and Douala, the great west.

287 However, after eliminating the non-workable questionnaires and non-responses, we finally obtained a sample
288 of 163 companies. That is a response rate of almost 91%. For the most part, we administered the face-to-face

13 A) VERIFYING THE VALIDITY OF MEASUREMENT SCALES

289 questionnaire to managers of SMEs, because we also wanted to have interviews with them. However, we did not
290 receive a favorable welcome from all doors. The usable questionnaires collected in the five Cameroonian cities
291 are presented in Table 1 below. However, one should be cautious in interpreting these results because there is a
292 risk of bias due to inaccurate responses provided by respondents. Indeed, it is difficult for a leader to accept
293 that he has a degree less than the Baccalaureate. This is what would justify the low rate of leaders with a
294 level of primary education. However, this result shows that the entrepreneurial landscape of SMEs in Cameroon
295 is heterogeneous according to the level of study, and dominated by individuals with secondary education. In
296 addition, the companies in our sample belong to three sectors of activity, namely: the industrial sector which
297 constitutes the majority of the companies in the sample (38.6%), the commercial sector (31.9%) and the services
298 that come as a last resort (29.4%). Also, the sample shows that male leaders (62.6%) outnumbered females
299 (37.4%). This confirms the idea that men hold a more important place than women on the business scene in
300 Cameroon. Finally, we have a heterogeneous sample of the bridge of view of the size of firms. Indeed, 64.6% of the
301 companies in our sample are small businesses, 45.4% are medium-sized enterprises. If we see this predominance
302 of small businesses, this confirms the view that the Cameroonian entrepreneurial landscape is dominated by small
303 businesses. Of course, very small businesses are numerous, even though they are hard to find on the formal stage,
304 whereas we have the formal framework as a sampling base.

305 10 c) Statistical tools used

306 In the framework of this study, we have judged econometric modeling via the linear regression technique.
307 This choice is justified by the fact that our dependent and independent variables are variables with the
308 same measurement levels (metric/metric). The principle consists in integrating into the same regression the
309 independent variables (CMP and COS) and the control variables (size and sector of activity).

310 As a reminder, the modeling makes it possible to highlight the existence of an association (between the
311 explanatory variables and the explained variable) by a robustness test and measurement procedure. The most
312 commonly used association measure is the Pearson correlation coefficient. The objective pursued by regression
313 analysis is to determine the value of the parameters β_i , making it possible to identify the link between the
314 dependent variable and the independent variable. The linear regression method is based on the following statistical
315 indicators:

316 The correlation coefficient (R) which indicates the intensity of the relationship between the variables studied
317 and its value is between -1 and 1 (this value is good when it tends to 1 in absolute value);

318 The coefficient of determination (R^2) which is the usual indicator of the overall quality of fit. It measures the
319 percentage of the variance of the variable to be explained returned by the model; its value is between 0 and 1
320 (this coefficient is interesting when it is close to 1);

321 The t of Student, which measures the significance of the regression coefficients of the model, is significant when
322 its value is greater than two;

323 The Fisher-Snedecor (or F Fisher) test that measures the robustness of the model at the 0.000 level of
324 significance.

325 The equation of the estimate of our regression model can be as follows: AGE: a control variable expressing the
326 age of the enterprise; SIZ: a control variable, measured by the size of the firm; SEC: a control variable, measuring
327 the business sector of the enterprise; SEX: a control variable expressing the sex of the respondent; β_1 to 6: the
328 coefficients of the variables involved; ϵ : the error term of the model; β_0 : the constant. $OPC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{AGE} + \beta_2 \text{COS} + \beta_3 \text{AGE}^2$

330 11 IV.

331 12 Results of the Study

332 Here, we are talking about presenting our main results, namely: verifying the validity of measurement scales,
333 matrix of correlation of variables and regression analyzes.

334 13 a) Verifying the validity of measurement scales

335 Verification of the validity and reliability of the measurement scales used in this study was carried out using
336 principal component factor analysis under SPSS.20 software. The results of these analyzes are recorded in the
337 various tables 3 below. Managerial innovation is apprehended using a battery of nine items. The KMO has a
338 value of 0.794 (> 0.5) and can be considered satisfactory. Similarly, the Bartlett sphericity test result of 639,438
339 at the 0.000 significance level indicates that the correlation matrix is not unitary. Given these two elements, the
340 CPA is relevant to our data. The results in Table 3 reveal two factors, each of which has an own value greater
341 than 1. And both factors return the information to 81.965% of the total variance. On the other hand, the internal
342 coherences of these two factors are satisfactory about their Cronbach alpha coefficient. It thus emerges that the
343 concept of managerial innovation is two-dimensional since it has two relevant dimensions. The first is represented
344 by the first factorial axis (F1), which is strongly correlated with variables V1 to V4. The second, represented by
345 the second factorial axis (F2), is strongly correlated with variables V5 to V9.

346 It can be inferred that the first factorial axis represents the "change in management practices" that we call
347 CMP. In contrast, the second factorial axis represents the "change in organizational structure" that we call COS.
348 After analyzing the Pearson correlations between the items constituting the overall performance, it emerges that
349 these (items) are not orthogonal since there are significant correlations between them. This led to an ACP to
350 identify the relevant but hidden dimensions of the concept. The results of the analysis, contained in Table 4
351 above, are satisfactory. Indeed, the KMO index and the Bartlett sphericity test give a value of 0.864 and 1284.631,
352 respectively, at the significance level of 0.000. This shows that the structure of the correlation matrices for the
353 data of the study sample lends itself well to the PCA. This analysis retains, according to Kaiser's principle, a
354 single factor. All variables have a commonality greater than 0.5. The value of Cronbach's alpha for this factor is
355 satisfactory since it is greater than 0.65, which is the minimum threshold, which reflects acceptable reliability of
356 the scale used for measuring overall performance.

357 **14 b) Matrix of correlation of variables**

358 Multivariate analysis through the study of correlations indicates that there is no problem of multicollinearity
359 between the independent variables of the model since the correlation coefficients between the explanatory variables
360 are all less than 0.7. Indeed, the presence of the multicollinearity problem is a sign of redundancy of information
361 in the model and deteriorates its quality. Reading Table 5 leads to the observation that all the partial correlation
362 coefficients are low (all between 0.1 and 0.7) and significant (at the 5% threshold). According to ??nderson et
363 al. (2015), there is a presumption of multicollinearity when a correlation coefficient between two independent
364 variables is greater than 0.70 (or lower -0.70). Overall, the different explanatory variables are positively correlated
365 with each other and below 0.70 (Table 5). These weak correlations significant at the 5% threshold illustrate a
366 prediction made on the measures of managerial innovation. Similarly, while admitting that the sex of the leader
367 can be a confounding factor, the analysis following the gender aspect shows that the different dimensions of
368 managerial innovation are positively correlated regardless of age, size, sector of activity and sex and with a value
369 less than 0.7. These weak correlations at the 5% threshold suggest that there is no great disparity between the
370 managerial innovation of small and medium-sized enterprises, industrial sectors, trade and service, elderly or
371 otherwise, led by a man or woman.

372 **15 c) Regression analyzes**

373 The analysis of the results (carried out under EVIEWS 9) of Table 6 below shows that the coefficient signs of the
374 GPC and CSO variables are positive. The same is true of the student's t exam, which reveals the significance at
375 the 1% level of these two variables. In addition, the overall quality of the estimate is satisfactory. In fact, the
376 results show a Fisher statistic with a value of 76.186 and the associated probability is 0.000 (strictly less than
377 the 5% significance level). We reject the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypothesis. Thus, the model
378 is globally significant and of good quality. In fact, as the adjusted R² value is equal to 0.7997, this means that
379 79.97% of the overall performance of SMEs is explained by managerial innovation. Also, since adjusted R² is less
380 than DW (0.7997 > 2.545), according to Granger in 1983 and Engel in 1987, we can safely say that our regression
381 model is correct.

382 For control variables, the results show a positive and significant effect at the 5% threshold of all control
383 variables on the overall performance index, except the EGM. It can thus be noted that the age of the company
384 has no significant influence on the overall performance of the company, even though the experience conditions
385 are satisfied by this variable. The company's performance does not increase with age. However, "gender", "size"
386 and "the business sector" significantly influence the overall performance of SMEs. Thus, men-led SMEs seem to
387 perform better than women-led ones, and overall performance increases with "size" and depends on the sector of
388 activity (that is, industrial SMEs are more likely to performers than SMEs in other sectors).

389 The econometric equation of the estimated final model can therefore be written as follows: OPC = 0.587719
390 + 0.831641*CMP + 0.846104*COS + 0.364935*AGE + 0.628661*SEC + 0.034624*SEX + ? V.

391 **16 Discussion**

392 The results obtained allow us to make several observations, including their scope and limits to guide future
393 research. The results of the regression analyzed show that managerial innovation is positively associated with the
394 overall performance of SMEs. Maalej and Amami (2016), in their study aimed at understanding the influence
395 of managerial innovation on business performance. Thus, the adoption of new innovative management practices
396 and the change in the organizational structure within SMEs improve their overall performance. This confirms
397 once again the role played by innovation in value creation and improving business performance. As a result,
398 Cameroonian SMEs can improve their overall performance through the implementation of new management
399 practices, methods or techniques, new ideas and organizational structure. However, unlike previous work that
400 looked at performance from a financial or organizational point of view, in the context of this study, we appreciated
401 it from a global perspective. The differences observed in the regression coefficients compared to previous work
402 can be attributed to the performance indicators used, but also to the effect of the sample size.

403 This study also found two dimensions of managerial innovation (management practices and organizational
404 structures) having a positive and significant influence on the performance of companies, contrary to previous

405 work that found three (management practices, management processes and organizational structures) (Alzuod
406 and Kharabsheh, 2015). This difference can be explained by the nature, quality and number of items used to
407 apprehend managerial innovation. Indeed, Alzuod and Kharabsheh (2015) used fifteen items to measure this
408 concept, unlike us who only used nine.

409 17 Conclusion

410 At the end of this study, which aimed to analyze the influence of managerial innovation on the performance of
411 SMEs in Cameroon, we are convinced that managerial innovation, as most of the literature presents, is a lever
412 of performance in that, it allows the implementation of new management practices which, until now are little or
413 not explored by the company and which allow to increase the market share, the effectiveness of the production,
414 net results and, in turn, improve the overall performance of the company.

415 Empirical analyzes have shown that, in the Cameroonian context, managerial innovation is twodimensional
416 (innovation in management practices and innovation in the organizational structure) and the combination of
417 these different dimensions has a positive and significant effect on the performance of SMEs in these regions of
418 Cameroon. This ability of SMEs to develop a managerial innovation is therefore an internal force that produces
419 change in the company, facilitating the adaptation of the company to the external environment and increasing
420 the efficiency and effectiveness of internal processes. This is reflected in the implementation of new products,
421 services or technological processes that have a great influence on the performance of SMEs.

422 On the theoretical level, the direct links between managerial innovation and overall performance are rare
423 in the literature, therefore this research fills this gap by bringing additional results: previous studies having
424 apprehended the organizational or financial performance of companies, we have broadened our vision in this field
425 to the notion of overall performance, taking into account both the economic dimension (profitability of assets and
426 financial profitability); the social dimension (the social climate and the quality of life at work) and finally the
427 organizational dimension (cost control and stakeholder satisfaction (customers, suppliers, employees, investors,
428 etc.). Also, if managerial innovation was considered until then as a vague and abstract concept, because it was not
429 sufficiently operationalized to capture its various components, the present study makes it possible to overcome
430 this limit, distinguishing the two essential dimensions of managerial innovation, given the scarcity of empirical
431 work that has operationalized this concept.

432 In addition, this study supports theories of contingency and resource dependence, according to which
433 organizations are adaptive systems that introduce changes to function effectively and improve their performance.
434 Indeed, our contribution lies in the fact that the study explains by the managerial action of the valuation of
435 so-called strategic assets that allow creating value of the firm. Indeed, according to resource dependency theory,
436 the enterprise must focus on a minority of the resources that have the characteristic of being of value, rare,
437 difficult to imitate and substitute, and thus ignores other resources that do not fulfill any of these conditions.
438 However, in this study, we have apprehended managerial innovation as a strategic resource enabling the company
439 to perform well.

440 On the managerial level, our results showed the importance of SMEs to develop managerial innovation to
441 guarantee their performance. To remain efficient, SMEs must implement innovation their management practices
442 and their organizational structure. This study will thus enable SME managers to optimize the chances of
443 their companies' sustainability because managerial innovation is for them a source of creativity enabling them
444 to: differentiate themselves from their competitors by inventing new offers that "surprise and delight" More and
445 more demanding and volatile customers; to be agile in order to adapt to permanent changes in their environment;
446 to acquire the flexibility and responsiveness necessary to face future challenges; Attract and retain committed
447 employees who are passionate and eager to contribute to the success of their business. Moreover, this study
448 will allow SME managers to no longer be limited to the technological aspect of innovation (products, processes)
449 whose lifespan is constantly shortened by the evolution of science and technology, but also to grasp the managerial
450 aspect that allows them to develop a horizontal or network organizational structure and no longer on vertical
451 and pyramidal structures; to increase their capacity for innovation and promote happiness at work.

452 While this study has contributed to an understanding of the influence of managerial innovation on the overall
453 performance of SMEs, it has some limitations. The first limit is to have wanted an essentially explanatory
454 study. It offers few tools within reach of managers to make strategic decisions. Indeed, our choice to carry out,
455 exclusively, a quantitative study based on the administration of the questionnaire, do not allow us to have more
456 details and understanding of the studied phenomenon, compared to a qualitative study based on semi-annual
457 interviews directive (Gavard-Perret et al., 2012). The second limitation of this search is the sample size that can
458 be considered low. Indeed, although the sample in this study is statically acceptable (> 30), it is nevertheless
459 limited. This could affect the accuracy of the results and leave some doubts about the generalization of the
460 study to all Cameroonian SMEs. Also, much remains to be done to improve our knowledge of the links between
461 managerial innovation and the overall performance of SMEs in Cameroon. Intuitively, one can imagine that
462 cultural specificity plays, despite everything, an important role in understanding the performance of SMEs. It
463 would be interesting to take this factor into account to improve the quality of our ¹

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1

Cities	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Ngaoundere	26	15.95	15.95
Yaounde	33	20.25	36.20
Douala	47	28.83	65.03
Garoua	37	22.70	87.73
Maroua	20	12.27	100.0
Total	163	100.0	

Beyond the geographical aspect, our sample is characterized by other elements, as shown in Table 2 below.

Figure 1: Table 1 :

2

Characteristics studied	Response modalities	Frequency	Percentage
	Under 35	71	43.6
Age range of the leader	35 years and over	92	56.4
	Total	163	100.0
Level of studies	Primary	32	19.6

Figure 2: Table 2 :

3

Items	Components	Commonality	F1	F2
Implementation of a new production management method that improves efficiency and reduces delays (V1)	0.982		0.966	
The practice of a new method to reduce quality defects and increase customer satisfaction (V2)	0.980		0.963	
The adoption of new costing techniques more realistic (V3)	0.977		0.855	
The adoption of a new method to integrate information of a different nature necessary for the decision (V4)	0.959		0.843	
Implementation of a new structure to manage technological innovations and facilitate process and product innovations (V5)		0.939	0.838	
Establishment of a new structure to facilitate coordination between the different functions and the project type organization (V6)		0.925	0.833	
Establishment of a new organizational structure to manage multiple products and markets (V7)		0.913	0.825	
Implementation of a new structure allowing the launch of complex and innovative products (V8)		0.907	0.815	
Establishment of a new structure allowing problem solving by employees (V9)		0.812	0.759	
Own values	3.809	2.386	-	
% variance explained	51.414	30.551	-	
% cumulated explained variance	51.414	81.965	-	
Cronbach alpha coefficient	0.809	0.794	-	

Figure 3: Table 3 :

17 CONCLUSION

4

Items	F1	Commonality
Cost control	0.964	0.928
Quality of life at work	0.958	0.918
The profitability of the assets	0.943	0.909

Figure 4: Table 4 :

5

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. CMP	1.000					
2. COS	0.140	1.000				
3. AGE	-0.044	-0.041	1.000			
4. SIZ	-0.014	-0.031	-0.021	1.000		
5. SEC	-0.022	-0.021	0.043	0.651	1.000	
6. SEX	-0.041	-0.021	0.022	0.691	0.132	1.000

Figure 5: Table 5 :

6

Dependent Variable:

OPC

Method: Least Squares

Sample: 1 163

Included observations:

163

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	0.587719	0.046307	12.69193	0.2684
CMP	0.831641	0.055083	15.09809	0.0000
COS	0.846104	0.052314	16.17372	0.0000
AGE	-0.035225	0.040352	-	0.3847
			0.872926	
SIZ	0.364935	0.089104	4.095612	0.0001
SEC	0.628661	0.070699	8.892119	0.0000
SEX	0.034624	0.041047	0.843516	0.0408
R-squared	0.810323	Mean dependent var		0.587719
Adjusted R-squared	0.799687	S.D. dependent var		0.494418
S.E. of regression	0.221284	Akaike info criterion		-0.119307
Sum squared resid	5.239404	Schwarz criterion		0.048705
Log likelihood	13.80048	Hannan-Quinn criter.		-0.051120
F-statistic	76.18629	Durbin-Watson stat		2.545456
Prob (F-statistic)	0.000000			

Figure 6: Table 6 :

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