

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

Peace- Work- Fatherland

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND
EVALUATION



REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN

Paix- Travail- Patrie

MINISTERE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT
SUPERIEUR

UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE I

FACULTE DES SCIENCES DE L'EDUCATION

DEPARTEMENT DE CURRICULA ET
EVALUATION

**STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GRADUATES'
EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS IN THE UNIVERSITIES OF
YAOUNDE I AND BUEA IN CAMEROON**

*A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a degree of
Doctor of Education (PhD) in Educational Management (Educational Planning)*

Presented by

RHEA ETA AGBOR

Number: 16R3243

Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Educational Management

Supervisor

HENRI RODRIGUE NJENGOUE NGAMALEU

Professor

Co-supervisor

HELENE CHANTAL NGAH ESSOMBA

Associate Professor

2024 /2025



DEDICATION

TO

My husband and children

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this thesis entitled: “**Strategic planning and graduates’ employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon**” submitted to the Department of Curriculum and Evaluation, Faculty of Science of Education, University of Yaounde I, is the original work of **RHEA ETA AGBOR (16R3243)** and was carried out under our supervision.

Prof HENRI R. N. Ngamaleu

Supervisor

Prof HELENE C. N. Essomba

Co-supervisor

Date: 2024/2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A dissertation of this magnitude cannot be handled solely by one person but it is a combine effort of many people. In this regard, I will like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the following personalities:

To begin with, I would like to express my special thanks to my supervisor Professor Henri Rodrigue NJENGOUE NGAMALEU for his valuable comments, feedback, guidance, and help throughout all the phases of this research project, which enabled me to accomplish it. Despite his busy schedule, he devoted time to correcting and reorienting my ideas to produce this academic piece of work. His pertinent comments and corrections have contributed significantly to the realisation of this dissertation.

I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to my co-supervisor Professor Helene Chantal NGAH ESSOMBA for her valuable guidance, constructive feedback and constant encouragement throughout the course of this research. Her insight and expertise greatly enriched the quality of this work and helped me navigate key challenges.

I sincerely thank my lecturers in the faculty of education in the university of Yaounde I for their academic guidance, direction and continuous support which made this study a success. I am deeply appreciative of the time and effort they invested in my academic journey. I extend my sincere thanks to the head of the department, the academic and administrative staff who contributed in one way or the other to the success of this work.

I appreciate the faculty and staff of the university of Yaounde I and Buea for granting me access to their documents and for their valuable insights. My gratitude also goes to the student population of these universities for their openness, cooperation, time, collaboration and sincerity in providing all the necessary information needed for this research project.

I am equally grateful to my parents Mr and Mrs John Tabe Agbor and the entire Agbor's family, for their prayers, encouragement, assistance and support given to me during this period.

I equally recognise the relevant contributions of Adolf Tanyi (MC), Genevarius Nji (MC), Dr Kenneth, Dr Fossimock, Dr Yousouf Mohammed, Dr Giresse Ngowa, Dr Sonia Avom, Dr Joel Billong, Constance Agbor Ebot, Glean Tawe, Achille Abongwa, and other course mates and research fellows of the Faculty of Education in the University of Yaounde I. I am grateful, for their unwavering encouragement, pertinent corrections and moral support throughout this academic pursuit. Their useful advice and suggestions really helped me during this project.

ABSTRACT

This study seeks to investigate the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon. Lapses in graduates' employability skills, graduates' training, mismatch between academic programs and job-market needs, inadequacy in planning make university graduates unprepared when they graduate, as far as employment opportunities are concerned. This implies educational objectives may not be attained. To meet this societal need, the researcher decided to carry out this study under five specific research objectives. A methodology was developed in which 500 graduates were selected through random, snowball, and the purposive sampling techniques. The study made use of the quantitative research design and the instrument employed for data collection was the questionnaire. The strategic planning measurement scale was used to measure strategic planning indicators, and the employability skills assessment scale was also used to measure graduates' employability skills modalities. The validity and reliability of these research instruments were assessed and determined. The strategic planning theory, the theory of employability, and the Human Capital theory helped to give us a better understanding of our variables under study. Data collected was analyzed using the SPSS, the Pearson Correlation, and the regression analyses. The following results were obtained per hypothesis. The RH1 states that there is a relationship between university vision and mission statements and graduates employability skills as we had $r=.025$, $R^2=.21$, $p=.001$. RH2 states that there is a link between university goals and objectives and DV as we had $r=-.050$, $R^2=.013$, $p=.011$. RH3 says there is a connection between the strategic planning process and DV with results as $r=-.066$, $R^2=.010$, $p=.028$. RH4 states there is a linkage between the program content and DV is $r=-.078$, $R^2=0.22$, $p=.001$. RH5 states that there is a correlation between quality assurance and control mechanisms and DV as we had $r=-.176$, $R^2=.31$, $p=.000$. Alternatively, the level of significance is less than 0.05, which is the alpha. The research findings indicate a partially significant positive relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills. On this premise, we reject the null hypothesis and retain the alternative hypothesis, which states that there is a significant relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea. The acceptance of all the specific alternative hypotheses gives right to retain the general hypothesis. Based on the findings, the study recommends that graduates should be provided with professional, practical, numerical, and technological skills to permit them to be employable in the job market, the restructuring of the curricula of state universities to gear towards entrepreneurial and employability skills. Universities should equally conduct regular assessment of industry trends and job market demands. STEM subjects and the German apprenticeship model should be copied for the enhancement of skills and the amelioration of the university learners in particular and the Cameroonian educational system in general. Based on the aforementioned, it can be concluded that strategic planning is a predictor of graduates' employability skills in some state universities in Cameroon.

Keywords: Strategic Planning, Graduates, employability, employability Skills, Universities

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude cherche à examiner la relation entre la planification stratégique et les compétences en employabilité des diplômés dans les universités de Yaoundé I et Buea au Cameroun. Les lacunes dans les compétences en employabilité des diplômés, la formation des diplômés, le décalage entre les programmes académiques et les besoins du marché du travail, ainsi que l'inadéquation de la planification, rendent les diplômés universitaires mal préparés lorsqu'ils sortent de l'université en ce qui concerne les opportunités d'emploi. Cela implique que les objectifs éducatifs ne sont peut-être pas atteints. Pour répondre à ce besoin social, le chercheur a décidé de mener cette étude sous cinq objectifs de recherche spécifiques. Une méthodologie a été élaborée dans laquelle 500 diplômés ont été sélectionnés par des techniques d'échantillonnage aléatoire, de boule de neige et de sélection intentionnelle. L'étude a utilisé une conception de recherche quantitative et l'instrument utilisé pour la collecte de données était le questionnaire. L'échelle de mesure de la planification stratégique a été utilisée pour mesurer les indicateurs de planification stratégique, et l'échelle d'évaluation des compétences en employabilité a également été utilisée pour mesurer les modalités des compétences en employabilité des diplômés. La validité et la fiabilité de ces instruments de recherche ont été évaluées et déterminées. La théorie de la planification stratégique, la théorie de l'employabilité et la théorie du capital humain ont aidé à mieux comprendre nos variables étudiées. Les données collectées ont été analysées à l'aide du SPSS, de la corrélation de Pearson et des analyses de régression. Les résultats suivants ont été obtenus par hypothèse. L'H1 stipule qu'il existe une relation entre les déclarations de vision et de mission des universités et les compétences en employabilité des diplômés avec $r = 0,025$, $R^2 = 0,21$, $p = 0,001$. L'H2 stipule qu'il existe un lien entre les objectifs et les objectifs des universités et la VD avec $r = -0,050$, $R^2 = 0,013$, $p = 0,011$. L'H3 indique qu'il existe une connexion entre le processus de planification stratégique et la VD avec des résultats de $r = -0,066$, $R^2 = 0,010$, $p = 0,028$. L'H4 stipule qu'il existe un lien entre le contenu du programme et la VD avec $r = -0,078$, $R^2 = 0,22$, $p = 0,001$. L'H5 stipule qu'il existe une corrélation entre les mécanismes d'assurance et de contrôle de la qualité et la VD avec $r = -0,176$, $R^2 = 0,31$, $p = 0,000$. Alternativement, le niveau de signification est inférieur à 0,05, qui est l'alpha. Les résultats de la recherche ont indiqué une relation positive partiellement significative entre la planification stratégique et les compétences en employabilité des diplômés. Sur cette base, nous rejetons l'hypothèse nulle et retenons l'hypothèse alternative, qui stipule qu'il existe une relation significative entre la planification stratégique et les compétences en employabilité des diplômés dans les universités de Yaoundé I et Buea. L'acceptation de toutes les hypothèses alternatives spécifiques donne le droit de retenir l'hypothèse générale. Sur la base des résultats, l'étude recommande que les diplômés soient dotés de compétences professionnelles, pratiques, numériques et technologiques pour leur permettre d'être employables sur le marché du travail, la restructuration des curriculums des universités publiques pour se concentrer sur les compétences entrepreneuriales et en employabilité. Les universités devraient également effectuer des évaluations régulières des tendances industrielles et des demandes du marché du travail. Les sujets STEM et le modèle d'apprentissage allemand devraient être copiés pour améliorer les compétences et améliorer les apprenants universitaires en particulier et le système éducatif camerounais dans son ensemble. Sur la base de ce qui précède, il peut être conclu que, la planification stratégique est un prédicteur des compétences en employabilité des diplômés dans certaines universités publiques au Cameroun.

Mots-clés : Planification Stratégique, Diplômés, Employabilité, Compétences en Employabilité, Universités.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	i
CERTIFICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
RÉSUMÉ	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xvi
GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	1
0.1 Context and justification of the study	2
0.2 Statement of the Problem	14
0.3 Objectives of the study.....	16
0.3.1 The general research objective.....	16
0.3.2 Specific research objectives	16
0.4 Research questions	17
0.4.1 General research question	17
0.4.2 Specific research questions	17
0.5 Significance of the study	17
0.6 Justifications of the study.....	20
0.7 Delimitation and Scope of the Study.....	22
0.8 Operational definition of terms	23
0.9 Presentation of the work.....	25
PART ONE.....	26
CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	26
CHAPTER ONE	27
STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE UNIVERSITY.....	27
1. Review of the Cameroon Higher Education	28
1.1 The role of the higher education	30
1.2 Strategic Planning in universities in Cameroon	34
1.3 The university's vision and mission statements (basic aspirations)	36

1.3.1 The University Vision Statement	38
1.3.1.1 The vision of the university of Yaounde I.....	39
1.3.1.2 The vision of the University of Buea	41
1.3.2 The University Mission statement.....	42
1.3.2.1 Missions of the university of Yaounde I	43
1.3.2.2 The Missions of the University of Buea.....	43
1.4 The University’s Strategic Goals and Objectives	44
1.4.1 Goals of Universities in Cameroon	44
1.4.2 The Role of University Goals and Objectives in Strategic Planning	45
1.4.3 University of Yaounde I: Goals and Objectives.....	47
1.4.4 University of Buea: Goals and Objectives	48
1.4.5 Challenges in Setting and Achieving University Goals and Objectives	49
1.4.6 Impact of University Goals and Objectives on Institutional Performance.....	50
1.5 The Strategic Planning Process	51
1.5.1 Strategic planning in universities in Cameroon	51
1.5.2 The planning process proper	54
1.5.2.1 Stage one: Strategic analysis or Environmental appraisal	55
1.5.2.2 Stage two: Strategy formulation.....	56
1.5.2.3 Stage three: Strategy Implementation	59
1.5.3 Stakeholders’ Involvement in the University Planning Process	60
1.5.3.1 Key Stakeholders in the University Planning Process	60
1.5.3.2 Importance of Stakeholder Involvement in Strategic Planning	61
1.5.4 Elements of a Successful Strategic Planning Process	62
1.5.6. Benefits of Strategic Planning to educational institutions	63
1.6 Strategic planning of the content program	64
1.6.1. Content Program	64
1.6.2. The curriculum	69
1.6.3. Pedagogy in Public Universities in Cameroon and Its Relation to Employability	73
1.6.4 Strategic Planning and Professionalisation in Cameroonian Universities	74
1.7 Quality assurance and control mechanisms	74
1.7.1 Quality Assurance	75
1.7.1.1. Quality assurance agencies.....	75
1.7.1.2 Mechanisms for quality assurance in universities.....	76
1.7.1.3 Elements of Quality Assurance	77

1.7.4 The significance of Quality Assurance in the university	80
1.7.5 Control mechanisms (Evaluation and Control).....	81
1.7.5.1 The Concept of Evaluation.....	81
1.7.5.2 Significance of control mechanisms (evaluation and control).....	83
CHAPTER TWO	85
GRADUATES' EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS	85
2.1 The concept of Employability	86
2.1.1 Educational stakeholders view on employability Skills.....	87
2.1.1.1 University of Exeter	87
2.1.1.2 An Employer's school of thought	89
2.1.1.3 The Learners oriented school of thought.....	91
2.1.1.4 The British school of thought.....	93
2.1.1.5 The holistic school of thought to employability.....	93
2.2 The problem of graduate unemployment in HEI	95
2.3. Development of Job Market Insight.....	105
2.3.1 The future of jobs in the digital age	106
2.3.2 Graduates competition in the job market	107
2.3.3 Jobs that are harder to be replaced	108
2.3.4 New job opportunities	108
2.4 Measuring employability.....	109
2.5 Employability Skills Development	111
2.5.1 Factors Influencing Graduates' Employability Skills development	111
2.5.2 Assessing Graduates' Employability Skills	113
2.5.3 Employability Skills in Yaounde I and Buea Universities.....	114
2.6. How Strategic Planning affects Graduates' Employability	115
2.7 The importance of strategic planning to graduate's employability.....	116
2.7.1 The relation between Strategic vision and mission statements and employability skills	117
2.7.2 The benefits of strategic goals and objectives to graduate's employability skills	118
2.7.3 Strategic planning process and graduates' employability skills	119
2.7.4 The link between planning of program content and graduates' employability skills	121
2.7.5 Enhancing Employability skills through Quality Assurance strategy.....	126
2.8 Empirical Review on Strategic Planning and Graduates' Employability Skills	128
2.9 Operationalization of concepts in the Study	136

2.9.1 Independent Variable: Strategic Planning.....	136
2.9.2 Dependent variable: Graduates' employability Skills.....	139
2.10 Theoretical Framework on strategic planning and graduates employability skills....	141
2.10.1 Strategic Planning	141
2.10.1.1 Models on Strategic Planning	141
2.10.1.2 Theories on strategic planning	151
2.10.2 Explanatory models and theories on employability skills.....	156
2.10.2.1 Models on employability.....	156
2.10.2.2 Theories.....	162
PART TWO.....	174
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	174
CHAPTER THREE	175
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	175
3.1 Research Design.....	176
3.1.1 Justification of Correlational Research Design.....	176
3.1.2. Survey research design.....	178
3.1.3 Quantitative research.....	178
3.2 Area of the study	178
3.2.1 Reasons why these universities were selected for the study	179
3.2.2 Characteristics of the study area	181
3.2.3. The University of Yaounde I (UYI) – Ngoa ekele main campus.....	184
3.2.4. The University of Buea (UB).....	185
3.3 The population of the Study	186
3.3.1 Target population	187
3.3.2 Accessible population	188
3.4 Sampling and sampling techniques	189
3.4.1. Sampling Techniques	189
3.4.2. The Sample (participants)	190
3.4.3 Purposive sampling	190
3.4.4. Criteria for the selection of participants for sample.....	191
3.5 Presentations of socio-demographic variables	191
3.5.1 Respondent Characteristics by Gender	192
3.5.2 Respondents characteristics by age	192
3.5.3 Respondents characteristics according to employment status.....	193

3.5.4 Respondents' characteristics by number of years of employment	193
3.6. Operationalisation of research variables and hypotheses.....	194
3.6.2- Hypotheses.....	202
3.7. Sources of data, Instruments for Data Collection and Methods of Data Collection ...	202
3.7.1 Primary Data	202
3.7.2 Secondary Sources	203
3.7.3 Research Instruments	203
3.7.3.1 The Questionnaire	203
3.7.3.2 Weighting the Scale	204
3.8 Validation and reliability of Research Instruments.....	205
3.8.1 Validation	205
3.8.1.1 Face Validity	205
3.8.1.2 Content Validity	205
3.8.2 Reliability of the Instrument	205
3.8.2.1 Test-retest Reliability	206
3.8.2.2. Pilot testing.....	207
3.9 Administration of the instruments.....	208
3.10 Ethical Considerations.....	211
3.11 Methods of data analysis and presentation.....	214
3.11.1 Descriptive Statistics	215
3.11.2 Inferencial statistics.....	217
3.11.2 The Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS)	217
CHAPTER FOUR.....	219
RESULTS	219
4.1. Descriptive Statistics	220
4.1.1 Responses on strategic planning with respect to vision and mission statements	221
4.1.2. Responses on strategic planning with respect to strategic goals and objectives	224
4.1.3 Responses on strategic planning with respect to the strategic planning process	225
4.1.4 Responses on strategic planning with respect to program content.....	229
4.1.5 Responses on strategic planning with respect to quality assurance and control mechanism.....	231
4.1.6. Responses on strategic planning with respect to graduates employability skills.....	233
4.2 Influential Statistics	239
4.2.1 Analysis of primary Factors	239

4.2.1.1. University's vision and mission statements and graduates' employability skills ..	239
4.2.1.2. University goals and objectives and graduates employability skills.....	241
4.2.1.3. Strategic planning process and graduates employability skills.....	243
4.2.1.4. Program Content and graduates employability skills.....	245
4.2.1.5. Quality assurance and control mechanism and graduates employability skills	247
4.2.2 Analysis of secondary factors	251
4.3.1. Sex and graduates employability skills	251
4.2.2.2. Age and graduates employability skills	252
4.3.3. Level of education and graduates employability skills	254
4.3. Verification of research hypotheses	255
4.3.1. The university's vision and mission statements and graduate's employability skills (RH1).....	256
4.3.2 The university's goal and objectives and graduate's employability skills (RH2).....	256
4.3.3 The strategic planning process and graduate's employability skills (RH3).....	256
4.3.4 The strategic program content and graduate's employability skills (RH4)	257
4.3.5 Quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduate's employability skills (RH5)	257
4.4. Reliability and Convergent validity	258
4.4.1 Divergent Validity.....	260
4.4.2. Test for model fit.....	261
4.4.3. Ordinal logistics regression model.....	266
4.4.3.1. Model fit.....	266
4.4.3.2 Pseudo R-square statistics	267
4.4.3.3 Parameter estimates.....	267
CHAPTER FIVE	269
DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	269
5.1 Summary of the findings	270
5.2. Discussion of findings.....	271
5.2.1 There is a relationship between university's vision and mission statements and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon (RH1).....	272
5.2.2 There is a relationship between the university's goal and objectives and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon (RH2).....	275

5.2.3 There is a relationship between strategic planning process and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon (RH3).....	276
5.2.4 There is a relationship between the program content and graduates' employability skills (RH4) in the university of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon	280
5.2.5 There is a relation between quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduates' employability skills in the university of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon (RH5)	284
5.3 Implications of the study	287
5.3.1 To educational Planners	287
5.3.2 To the universities	288
5.3.3 To HEI Stakeholders	290
5.3.4 To researchers	292
5.3.5 Theoretical implications.....	293
5.3.6. Practical implications	294
5.4 Recommendations of the study	295
5.4.1. Recommendations regarding our objectives of study	295
5.4.2. Policy recommendations	300
5.4.3 General Recommendations	301
5.5 Contributions of the study to knowledge, social science and discipline.....	305
5.6 Limitations of the study.....	307
5.7 Suggestions for further research.....	309
GENERAL CONCLUSION.....	311
REFERENCES.....	319
GLOSSARY.....	365
APPENDICES.....	372

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Required Skills by universities in Cameroon.....	88
Table 2: Teaching strategies suited to the development of employability skills	124
Table 3. Graduates and Staff Population of the Universities of Yaounde I and Buea from 2017 to 2023.....	186
Table 4. Target population	187
Table 5. Accessible Population	188
Table 6. The sampling Table.....	190
Table 7. Distribution of Respondents according to Gender	192
Table 8. Distribution of respondents according to Level of Education	192
Table 9. Respondents Characteristics by Age.....	192
Table 10. Distribution of respondents according to employment status	193
Table 11. Distribution of respondents according to years of employment	193
Table 12. Recapitulation of Hypothesis	196
Table 13. Description of Questionnaire	204
Table 14. Reliability Statistics	207
Table 15. Questionnaires Return rate for graduates	211
Table 16. Description of Correlation Value	216
Table 17. Responses on Strategic Planning with Respect to Vision and Mission Statements	221
Table 18. Responses on Strategic Planning with Respect to Strategic Goals and objectives	224
Table 19. Responses on Strategic Planning with Respect to the Strategic Planning Process	225
Table 20. Responses on Strategic Planning with Respect to Program Content.....	229
Table 21. Responses on Strategic Planning with Respect to Quality Assurance and Control Mechanism	231
Table 22. Respondents views on Strategic Planning With Respect To Graduates Employability Skills.....	233
Table 23. Correlation between University vision and mission and Graduates employability skills modalities.....	240

Table 24. Regression of university vision and mission statement and the modality of graduate competitiveness in job market	241
Table 25. Correlation between university goals and objectives and the modalities of Graduates employability skills	242
Table 26. Regression of university goal and objectives and relevant acquisition of skills	243
Table 27. Correlation between Strategic planning process and graduates employability skills	244
Table 28. Regression of strategic planning process and employability skills development	245
Table 29: Correlation between program content and graduates employability skills	246
Table 30. Regression table of the program content and employability skills development	247
Table 31. Correlation between quality assurance and control mechanism and graduates employability skills	248
Table 32. Regression of quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduates employability skills	249
Table 33. Regression of quality assurance and control mechanisms and Sustainable access to the job market.....	249
Table 34. Regression of quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduate's employability skills	250
Table 35. Sex and graduates employability skills	251
Table 36. Age and graduates employability skills	252
Table 37. Level of education and graduates employability skills	254
❖ A summary of findings.....	258
Table 38. Recapitulative table of findings	258
Table 39. Reliability and convergent validity of variables	259
Table 40.. Divergent Validity using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion.	261
Table 41. Pearson's second coefficient of Skewness	262
Table 42. Implementation Timeline	265
Table 43. Model fit determination.	266
Table 44. Goodness of fit test.....	266
Table 45. Pseudo R-square statistics	267
Table 46. Parameter Model estimate.....	267

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: A strategic plan	51
Figure 2: A generic strategy process in organizations	55
Figure 3: Elements of a successful strategic planning process	63
Figure 4: Required skills by the university	89
Figure 5: Employers' expectations from employees	90
Figure 6: The business world school of thought	93
Figure 7: The Holistic school of thought	95
Figure 8. The university strategic planning and graduate employability skills integrated pathway.	127
Figure 9: The classical strategic planning model	142
Figure 10: Strategic planning model of Bryson	144
Figure 11: The Adaptive model	145
Figure 12: The SWOT Model	150
Figure 13: Magic Bullet Model of Employability	157
Figure 14: The Employability Model	159
Figure 15: The Triple Helix Model	159
Figure 16: UKCES employability model	160
Figure 17: Graduate Capital Model	162
Figure 18. Estimated Structural Model	171
Figure 19. Relationship between sample, accessible and target population	186
Figure 20. Operationalisation of research variables	195

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACEN :	Australian Collaborative Education Network
AHIEGS :	Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement
AI :	Artificial Intelligence
AMTEC :	Automatic Manufacturing Training and Education Collectivity
ASAIHL :	Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning
BACC :	Baccalaureat
B-HERT :	Business / Higher Education Roundtable
BIUST :	Botswana International University of Science and Technology
BMD :	Bachelor Masters Doctorate
BSC :	Balanced Scorecard
CA :	Curriculum Alignment
CAS :	Career Advice Service
CASCE :	Canadian Association for Cooperative Education
CBA :	Competence Based Approach
CBI :	Confederation of British Industry
CEMAC :	Economic and Monetary Union of Central African States
CFA :	Conformity/Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CMC :	Career Mentor Connection
CIHE :	Centre for Innovation in Higher Education
CIOMS :	International Commission for World Health Organisation
CMS :	Career Management Skills
CPD :	Continuing Professional Development
CTEC :	Cameroonian Tertiary Education Commission
CUTH :	Centre for understanding and training in higher education,
DC :	Direct Cost
DELNI :	Department for Employment and Learning for Northern Ireland
EER :	Education Effectiveness Review
ER :	Employee Retention
EO :	Employment Outcomes
ESD :	Employability Skills Development
ESD :	Education for Sustainable Development

ESS :	Employer Satisfaction Survey
FALSH :	Faculty of Arts Letters Social Sciences
FSE :	Faculty of Sciences of Education
GC :	Graduates competence
GCJ :	Graduates Competitiveness in the Job market
GE :	Graduates Employment
GES :	Graduates Employability Skills
GOS :	Graduate Outcomes Survey
GTTC :	Government Teachers Training College
HC :	Human Capital
HCT :	Human Capital Technology
HE :	Higher Education
HEA :	Higher Education Academy
HEIs :	Higher Education Institutions
HTTC :	Higher Teacher Training College
IBM :	International Business Machines Corporation
IC :	Indirect Cost
ICT :	Information and Communication Technology
ILO :	International Labour Organisation
IoT :	Internet of Things
IRS :	International Revenue Service
ISO :	International Organisation for Standardisation
JMSM :	Job Market Signaling Model
LMD :	Licence - Master - Doctorat (French interpretation of BMD)
LMR :	Labour Market Relevance
MINESUP:	Ministry of Higher Education
MINSEC :	Ministry of Secondary Education
MIT :	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MPID :	Macquarie Park Innovation District
MQU :	Macquarie University
NAB :	National Accreditation Board
NACE :	National Association for Colleges and Employers
NEF :	National Employment Fund

NEP :	National Employment Policy
NGO :	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIS :	National Institute for Statistics
NPE :	National Policy on Education
NPILF :	National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund
OECD :	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PACE :	Professional and Community Engagement
PCE :	Professional and Community Engagement
PES :	Payment for Ecosystem
PESTLE :	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental strategic tool
PG :	Postgraduate
PIG :	Policy implementation Gap
PPP :	Public Private Partnership
RAS :	Relevant Acquisition of Skills
SAJ :	Sustainable Access to the Job market
SAQA :	South African Qualification Authority
SDG :	Sustainable Development Goals
SEM :	Structural Equation Modeling
SFE :	Skills For Employability
SES :	Skills Enhancement Survey
SMES :	Small and Medium Size Enterprises
SMPI :	System model for Performance Improvement
SP :	Strategic Planning
SPSS :	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SE :	Stakeholder Engagement
STEM :	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
SWOT :	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TEAL :	Technology Enabled/ enhance Active Learning
TQM :	Total Quality Management
TS :	Tracer Study
TVET :	Technical and Vocational and Education Training
UB :	University of Buea

UG :	University Governance
UGO :	University Goal and Objectives
UNDP :	United Nations Development Program
USP :	University Strategic planning
UVM :	University vision and mission statements
UQA :	University Quality Assurance
UPC :	University program Content
UG :	Undergraduate
UK :	United Kingdom
UKCE :	United Kingdom Commission for Employment
UN :	United Nations
UNESCO :	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USD :	United States Dollar
USEM :	Understanding Skills Efficacy and Metacognition
WIL :	Work Integrated Learning



GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This primary section of the study presents the context and justification of the study, a statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, the significance of the study, justifications to the study, the delimitation and scope of the study, and the presentation of the research work.

0.1 Context and justification of the study

The world is experiencing a shift in the job market, with automation, artificial intelligence and technological advancements transforming the nature of work. As a result, employers' expectations from graduates are evolving and there is a growing need for graduates to possess employability skills that go beyond academic knowledge (Fonkeng, 2005).

However education plays a significant role in improving the socio-economic conditions of individuals and communities (Monyai, 2017, pp. 45-60). The importance of education in individual and national development has led to the scientific reconfiguration of systems. Educational strategic planning is creating a plan of action for providing quality education to learners that is expected to become useful upon graduation. According to Chukuma (2015, pp. 55-63), it involves setting goals and objectives for the educational system as well as determining how to best achieve those goals. The strategic planning process also involves making decisions about what resources are needed to provide the best possible education to prepare learners for a profitable job market.

In this light, the state is increasingly putting in resources to create universities which transform learners into skilled human capital (Amin & Ntembe, pp. 14-43). The parents, on their part, sacrifice huge sums of money to sponsor children in tertiary education in order to prepare a better future for them. Meanwhile, the learners follow the already planned systems to acquire employability skills to become better citizens, be able to create jobs or get employed to survive, help their families, and fulfil their externalities. Subramania (2017, p.712) posits that it is worth noting that in this digital age, the precondition for graduates to fit in communities and the job market is their employability skills. It has become very exigent, especially with the rapid evolution of the community spurred by technology, globalization, and internationalization.

Albon et al (2016, p. 210) believe that in educational institutions today, strategic planning is fast becoming an indispensable need. We are already in a transitional period in which old practices are no longer permanent but require revision to meet the needs of academia, which is frustrating in the educational sector. To meet the changing needs of this new society

(digital age), educational institutions must reorganize. According to McCune (1986), finding ways to maintain achievements while improving effectiveness can be difficult for educational institutions. Some strategic planners are hesitant to address societal outcomes, so they often ignore them and assume they will happen on their own. Instead of defining the vision for how we want our children to live, they direct their attention to courses, content, and resources with the mistaken belief that societally useful outcomes will follow, (Kaufman & Herman, 1991).

As such, the Ministry of Higher Education introduced the National Graduate Employability Blueprint 2012–2017 (NGEB, 2012–2017) to produce competent graduates and fulfil national and international workforce needs with 75% of graduates being employed in their relevant fields within six months of graduation. Cameroon is one of the sub-Saharan African countries whose strategic planning quest is mostly obliged by the state following its centralized system. Where the state sets the functioning of all universities based on its policies, like the growth and employment strategic plan (2010–2020), the Cameroon Country strategic plan (2018–2022), and the National Strategic Development Program (SND30, 2022–2023), which engages all universities to inculcate strategies to implement these policies in a way to ensure graduates relevance in the digitalized job market.

The total unemployment rate defined as the percentage of the labour force without work but actively seeking employment, this rate among graduates in Cameroon in 2019 stood at 3.65%, in 2020 it was approximately 3.87%, in 2021 was 3.95% , in 2022, it stood at 3.69% and in 2023 it was at 3.65% according to the World Bank (World Bank Report, 2023). This is partly caused by education-employment mismatch, political instability and conflicts, insufficient investments and infrastructures, corruption and poor governance, impact of global crises and more. These rates are too high to enable emergence in Cameroon by 2035. According to the Cameroonian Graduates Tracer Study (UNDP, 2022), approximately 95% of surveyed graduates reported difficulties in securing employment with a 42.1% remaining unemployed for two years. This statistic shows that striving for highly qualified and competitive candidates remains a challenge for most universities today. Thus, the planning system is probably not successful as the goals, objectives, missions, process, content and curriculum are not effectively employed and felt by all stakeholders

Barret et al. (2022, p. 48) affirm that, for university graduates, securing a good job after university in Cameroon and finding an existing place to begin their career is the prime focus of every fresh graduate. How to influence and win the hearts and minds of employers has been an everyday question for university graduates around the world, and Cameroon in particular.

This issue always looms large in the minds of every fresh graduate who wishes to unlock the secret to impress and win over the employer. According to Sebola (2020, pp. 1-15), the desire for success in the job market and how to click the first job become issues of survival. In such a situation, it becomes even more vital to understand and accept the fact that a degree alone is not sufficient to survive the job market. It certainly makes their candidacy eligible to apply for that particular job (Ngu & Teneng, 2020, pp. 705-717). The subjects, specializations, grades, marks obtained, etc. are also equally important. However, in the present competitive scenario, there is a strong possibility of an abundance of equally qualified and competent candidates.

It should be noted that graduates' employability skills have become a point of interest because there has always been a gap between employers' expectations and what the universities produce. Ballantyne, et al. (2004) make us understand the fact that employers are looking for attributes beyond the qualifications. Employers look for people who would 'Fit In' and become a valued part of the organization and can start contributing to get the job done without delay. While there a high chance that most employers will be on the lookout for some job-specific skills, it is also true that, at the same time, they also want the candidate to have some general skills (ibid).

This study is contextually relevant as it examines a burning issue in the Cameroonian university system that has close effects on the society. Progressively, the state has enacted decrees and laws like the SND 30 to be implemented to enhance competence among students concerning today's job market realities. For instance, the degree of professionalization and the introduction of a competency-based approach. These are all to enable the learners to acquire employability skills that will make them excel in the digital job market. This study comes in to examine how the right planning process (strategic planning) could influence or facilitate the acquisition of these competencies (Nkomo, 2018, pp.120-35).

According to the World Bank (2008), Higher Education plays a pivotal role in preparing individuals to enter the labour force as well as equip them with the skills to engage in the lifelong learning experience. The job markets increasingly need skill workers, and the youths need jobs as well, but they lack conformity in terms of skills. This has increased the unemployment rate in Cameroon to 30% while underemployment rests at 70%, as stated by the International Labour Organization (ILO) report (2020). It may interest you to know that the working population in Cameroon is about 12 million and only a little over 200,000 people work in the public service. The remaining population not absorbed by the government is a call for concern. This brings this study to centre stage as it opens up such situations. Unemployment

and underemployment affect different university graduates in diverse ways, such as sex, age, marital status, ethnic group, the field of study, amongst others. It must be kept in mind that, graduates from these faculties turn to enroll in a private institution for specialization (with fees from 500,000 to 1,000,000 CFA per year, too costly for jobless youths) others train with the ministry of employment and vocational training under the National Employment Fund from where they can make use of themselves meanwhile others engage in non-pedagogic teaching in private sectors with a very minimal wage from 500-700 FCFA per hour (World Bank, 2020).

The increasing fall in the value of graduates from some Cameroon state-owned Universities certainly pricked the researchers who decided to examine the actual situation through an inclusive research work of this nature to support the state's efforts towards the perpetual fight for quality education in Cameroon. The lack of employability skills is increasingly rendering graduates unready for the job market in Cameroon. For several years today, operational effectiveness in universities has not yielded the expected fruits, it is time to use unique strategies (strategic planning processes). Otherwise, more skill-less graduates will be produced, the dependency ratio will increase on families and poverty will heighten. Misery will set in, more youths will quit the country to unknown destinations, crime waves will increase, and these jobless graduates may go into the streets. Moreover, the turn taken by the Cameroon government since 2010 to make Cameroon emergent by 2035 necessitates a skill-filled human capital, both healthy and happy to take on both projects envisaged (Jackson, 2017, pp.375-392).

This study is also timely and readily examines the socio-political challenge of unemployment in the Cameroonian society. Numerous problems have been identified to have emerged as consequence of the high unemployment rate among graduates (Aaron O'Neil, 2021). He posits that graduate unemployment has social and economic upshot and calls for urgent intervention from a scientific perspective. Youth are the leaders of tomorrow and thus bring uncertainty and opportunity based on their large population. The researcher also adheres to the fact that the pervasiveness of graduate unemployment has facilitated the advent of criminal activities in our society.

Brown et al. (2004) quoted by the British Council (2015, pp. 2253-2270) remarked that many graduate youths in Africa, due to unemployment, are increasingly involved in the running of criminal enterprises, getting involved in armed robbery, car snatching, illegal importation of arms and fuel. Most of the young people enter the criminal world quite young (UNECA, 2002). The absence of legal opportunities for employment has escalated the rate of crime amongst

unemployed graduates, mostly urban dwellers. This study therefore sought to propose ways to reduce these challenges the youths face along the journey to become leaders of tomorrow.

An overview of Cameroon's Higher Education System, makes us to understand that, Cameroon's higher education system is primarily composed of both public and private institutions. The public universities, such as the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea, are significant contributors to the nation's educational landscape. Higher education in Cameroon has evolved significantly since independence, with a focus on increasing access to university education for a broader section of the population. Despite these advancements, challenges such as infrastructural deficits, limited financial resources, and disparities between education and labor market needs continue to impact the effectiveness of the system (Tandoh, 2021).

The University of Yaounde 1, established in 1962, is one of the largest and most prestigious public universities in Cameroon. Located in the capital city, Yaounde serves a diverse student body with programs spanning from humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and engineering. The university is part of Cameroon's public university system and plays a significant role in shaping the country's intellectual, political, and economic future. Strategic planning at the University of Yaounde 1 has increasingly focused on addressing the gap between academic programs and the demands of the labour market. The integration of graduate employability skills into the curriculum, the development of professional training programs, and the promotion of internships and practical training are central to the university's strategic efforts (Adeosun & Oludare, 2019, pp. 502-518). However, challenges related to outdated teaching methods, lack of modern infrastructure, and a growing student population remain obstacles to the implementation of these strategic initiatives.

The University of Buea, founded in 1993, is located in the English-speaking part of Cameroon and serves as a critical center of higher education for the region. The university offers a range of academic programs, including those in education, business, health, and the arts and others. As one of the public English-speaking university in Cameroon, the University of Buea is tasked with providing an education that aligns with the unique linguistic and cultural context of the Anglophone region. In response to the challenges of graduate unemployment, the University of Buea has made efforts to integrate employability skills into its academic framework. Strategic initiatives include the promotion of internships, partnerships with local industries, and career guidance services. However, the university faces similar challenges to

those at the University of Yaounde 1, such as insufficient industry linkages and limited resources for comprehensive skills development programs (Pimentel & Wang, 2020).

Graduate Employability in Cameroon remains a critical issue in Cameroon, where the national economy is primarily driven by agriculture, services, and small industries. The demand for highly skilled graduates in sectors such as technology, healthcare, and business are growing. However, many graduates still struggle to find employment that matches their qualifications (World Bank, 2019). This disconnect between education and employment has prompted both universities to reconsider their approaches to preparing students for the workforce.

In response to this, both the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea have incorporated strategic planning frameworks designed to improve employability. These strategies focus on enhancing the skills of graduates, such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving, in addition to traditional academic knowledge. These efforts reflect a broader global trend in which universities are adopting strategic plans that aim to produce graduates who are not only academically proficient but also equipped with the practical skills required by employers (Belwal & Mehta, 2021, pp. 347-360). While both universities have implemented various strategies aimed at enhancing graduate employability, there are several challenges that impede their full effectiveness. These include: Curriculum Gaps; the curriculum in many programs still does not fully reflect the skills demanded by the labour market. Employers often report that graduates lack practical experience and soft skills. Resource Limitations; both universities face infrastructural challenges, including out-dated facilities and limited access to modern educational tools and technologies, which hinders the effective delivery of strategic initiatives.

Lack of strong industry partnerships, stronger collaborations between universities and local industries are essential for providing real-world experience through internships, mentorships, and job placements. However, the links between academia and industry are often weak in Cameroon, limiting graduates' access to relevant job opportunities (Tandoh, 2021, pp. 1-17).

The study on strategic planning and graduate employability skills in the Universities of Yaounde 1 and Buea provides valuable insights into the ways in which higher education institutions in Cameroon are responding to the challenges of graduate unemployment. By examining the efforts and strategies of these two institutions, this research will contribute to

understanding how strategic planning can help universities enhance the employability of their graduates in a competitive global labour market.

➤ **Historical Background**

The historical background of strategic planning and graduate employability skills in the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea provides context for understanding the evolution of higher education policies, practices, and challenges in Cameroon. This section traces the development of these two universities, highlighting their strategic planning approaches and their efforts to enhance graduate employability through curriculum reforms, quality assurance mechanisms, and industry collaborations.

Tchinda and Njeck (2018, pp. 121-139) believes that higher education in Cameroon has evolved significantly since the country gained independence in 1960. Initially, education was structured around a French colonial system, but the system has gradually integrated Anglophone educational principles following the unification of Cameroon in 1961. The evolution of university education is marked by various educational reforms, which aim to align university outputs with national economic needs.

In the early years after independence, higher education in Cameroon was limited, with the University of Yaounde being the only major institution. The University of Yaounde I, founded in 1962, was established as a Francophone institution and emphasized scientific and humanities education. The University of Buea, founded in 1992, was created to serve the Anglophone population of Cameroon, focusing on providing a bilingual and practical education that catered to the region's unique needs.

Some key Milestones in Higher Education Reform in Cameroon include;

- 1962: The University of Yaounde I was created to meet the growing demand for higher education in Cameroon, primarily focusing on science, technology, and humanities.
- 1993: The University of Buea is established as part of Cameroon's effort to provide an Anglophone education system and promote access to higher education in the Southwest region.
- 2000s: The Bologna Process reforms were adopted in Cameroon, aligning universities with European standards. These reforms emphasized student-centered learning, employability, and quality assurance.

- 2010s: Reforms aimed at enhancing graduate employability became more prominent, with universities increasingly integrating career services, internships, and industry partnerships into their curricula (Tchinda & Njeck, 2018, pp.121-130).

Concerning the university of Yaounde I's Strategic Planning Evolution, according to University of Yaounde I (2021, www.uy1.cm) since its founding, the University of Yaounde I has faced the challenge of balancing academic excellence with the employability of its graduates. In the early years, the institution was heavily focused on research and theoretical knowledge, which served to advance knowledge in various disciplines but did not prioritize practical training for students. From the 1990s onwards, the university began shifting its focus to include strategic planning that addressed national and regional labor market needs. This shift became more pronounced after 2000, as global trends and economic challenges highlighted the importance of graduate employability.

The university introduced career counseling services and internship programs for students. Also a greater focus was placed on entrepreneurship education, aiming to equip graduates with the skills necessary to create their own jobs. The university's quality assurance mechanisms were strengthened to ensure that academic programs aligned with international standards and the expectations of employers.

With respect to strategic Planning and Graduate Employability Initiatives, in the early 2000s, the University of Yaounde I began actively incorporating employability strategies into its strategic planning framework. These included; collaborating with industries to design curricula that matched workplace requirements. Establishing alumni networks to help recent graduates' transition into the workforce. Increasing efforts to develop soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and leadership in students.

Despite these advancements, the universities still face challenges in providing practical training and ensuring graduate employability, particularly in non-technical fields (Tchinda & Njeck, 2018, pp.130-138).

Regarding strategic Planning and Graduate Employability in the University of Buea, the University of Buea was created in response to the growing need for higher education in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. From its inception in 1992, the university adopted a practical, career-oriented focus, aligning with its mission to provide an education that meets both academic and vocational needs. Earlier on, the University of Buea recognized the importance of preparing graduates for the labor market. It integrates industry collaborations

into its academic programs and developed entrepreneurial programs to equip students with practical skills (University of Buea ,2022, www.ubuea.cm).

Strategic Planning and Graduate Employability Initiatives, some key initiatives to enhance employability at the University of Buea include; internships and practical training: Students are encouraged to participate in internships throughout their studies, fostering real-world experience. Entrepreneurship programs: The university has developed a strong focus on entrepreneurship education, which provides students with the skills necessary to create their own businesses. Industry partnerships: The University of Buea has established several collaborations with local and international companies, allowing students to work directly with employers in various sectors. The university's efforts to align its strategic planning with graduate employability have led to greater success in preparing students for the workforce. The emphasis on practical, skills-based education makes graduates from the University of Buea more competitive in the job market compared to those from institutions with a more concentration on theories.

The historical development of the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea reveals two distinct paths to addressing the challenge of graduate employability in Cameroon. While Yaounde I initially focused on research and theoretical knowledge, it has progressively shifted toward a more employability-centered strategic plan. On the other hand, the University of Buea was designed from the onset to integrate practical skills and entrepreneurship into its educational framework, making it more attuned to the demands of the job market. (University of Buea, 2022, www.ubuea.cm).

These institutions have played a significant role in shaping Cameroon's higher education landscape, and their strategic planning efforts are essential for improving the employability outcomes of graduates in the face of a dynamic global economy. The University of Buea has a more employability-oriented strategic planning process, integrating internships, industry collaborations, and practical skills training. In contrast, the University of Yaounde I prioritises academic research and theoretical knowledge, which may limit its impact on graduate job readiness.

➤ **Conceptual Background**

Strategic planning in higher education refers to a structured approach that universities adopt to align their goals, resources, and efforts with the demands of a changing academic and societal landscape (Bryson, 2018). In this process, institutions assess both internal and external

factors to craft a sustainable direction for the university, ensuring its long-term success and alignment with national and international trends. Strategic planning in higher education involves critical steps such as environmental scanning, goal setting, resource allocation, and performance evaluation (Mok, 2017). In the context of Cameroon, universities like Yaounde I and Buea have adopted strategic planning to address challenges such as limited resources, globalization, and an ever-evolving labor market (Bessant & Tidd, 2015).

Strategic planning is seen as an essential tool for universities to adapt to the demands of the workforce and ensure that their graduates possess the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in their careers (Bennett, 2019). These plans are expected to shape not only the educational programs but also the overall student experience, incorporating industry collaborations, internships, and other practical learning experiences to enhance graduate employability (Holloway, 2017).

Graduate employability is commonly defined as the ability of a university graduate to secure and succeed in a career, equipped with the skills and competencies valued by employers (Yorke, 2006). According to Jackson (2015, pp.569-582), employability is a multidimensional concept that goes beyond academic knowledge, including a range of soft skills such as communication, problem-solving, adaptability, and teamwork. Employers are increasingly seeking graduates who can apply theoretical knowledge in practical, real-world situations, and who exhibit strong interpersonal and professional skills (Jenkins et al., 2017, pp. 457-473).

The development of employability skills is crucial in preparing graduates for the complexities of the labor market, particularly in Africa, where youth unemployment is high. According to the World Bank (2017), universities across Africa, including those in Cameroon, need to enhance employability by aligning curricula with industry demands, offering career services, and facilitating partnerships with the private sector. Graduate employability skills also include personal attributes such as resilience, time management, and the ability to work under pressure, all of which contribute to the overall success of graduates in the workplace (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005, pp. 215-219).

In Cameroon, universities like the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea have recognized the importance of integrating employability skills into their strategic plans to ensure that graduates are not only academically prepared but also workforce-ready. These institutions have incorporated various strategies, including curriculum reforms, industry collaborations, internships, and career services, into their planning processes (Mbah, 2020, pp.

60-70). For instance, strategic planning initiatives in these universities emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach to employability, where academic learning is complemented by practical experiences and personal development programs (Nkomo, 2018).

However, despite these efforts, gaps remain in terms of resource allocation, faculty training, and alignment between academic programs and industry needs (Mbah, 2020, pp.71-75). These challenges highlight the need for continuous evaluation and improvement of strategic plans to ensure that universities remain responsive to the evolving demands of both the academic and professional worlds.

➤ **Theoretical Background**

This study draws from several key theoretical frameworks and models that highlight the relationship between higher education institutions' strategic planning processes and their role in preparing graduates for the labour market. This section discusses the relevant theories that guide the analysis of strategic planning and graduate employability within this context.

❖ **Strategic planning theory**

The Strategic planning theory provides a framework for how institutions develop long-term objectives and align resources, systems, and processes to achieve their mission (Mintzberg et al., 2005). In higher education, it encompasses the deliberate design and implementation of academic programs and pedagogical practices to ensure that graduates gain relevant and competitive employability skills. It emphasizes the role of structured planning in organisational outcomes, it provides a framework for how institutions develop long-term objectives and align resources, systems, and processes to achieve their missions and goals. (Mintzberg et al., 2005). Bryson's model involves an eight-step strategic planning process Strategy identification, formulation, execution and evaluation and control

This theory explains the vision and mission statements of universities, it also explains university goals and objectives as well as the planning process our research indicators.

Human Capital Theory

The Human Capital Theory developed by Becker (1964), posits that education and training are investments in human capital that enhance individuals' productivity and employability. This theory was developed to facilitate the formulation of higher education policies. Economic development can be achieved through education, training and development, it links economic success to the education of the workforce. According to Becker (1964),

manpower or human resources should be trained to permit the graduates to impact the skills in the economic sector of the economy in order to permit economic growth and development of the country.

In this context, universities contribute to the development of human capital by equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for success in the labour market. According to this theory, the more skills a graduate acquires through strategic planning and educational programs, the more valuable they become to employers.

This theory is relevant as it underpins the importance of integrating employability skills into university curricula and strategic planning. Human Capital Theory suggests that universities should align their programs with the needs of the job market to enhance graduates' employability prospects. By focusing on the development of both technical (hard) and interpersonal (soft) skills, universities like Yaounde 1 and Buea can better prepare their graduates for employment. (Becker,1964).

❖ **Theory of Graduate Employability**

The theory of employability refers to the capacity of a graduate to gain, sustain, and progress in employment, not solely based on having a qualification, but also through the possession demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge, personal attributes, and adaptability (Yorke, 2006). Holmes (2013) further advanced this theory by introducing a processual model of employability, highlighting that it is not just about possession of skills, but also about identity formation, employer recognition, and contextual factors

The Theory of Graduate Employability, as described by Harvey (2001, p.104), explores the various factors that influence a graduate's ability to secure employment. This theory emphasizes that employability is not solely about the acquisition of technical skills but also about the development of broader attributes such as communication, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving abilities. Employability skills are acquired through education, work experience, and extra-curricular activities.

This theory highlights the need for universities to adopt a more holistic approach to strategic planning that incorporates both academic learning and the development of employability skills. For the universities of Yaounde 1 and Buea, this would mean integrating skills development into their academic programs and offering additional services such as internships, career counselling, and employer partnerships to help graduates develop essential employability skills (Harvey, 2001, pp. 97-109).

❖ **Social Capital Theory**

The Social Capital Theory was proposed by Bourdieu (1986, p. 248) and later expanded by Coleman (1988), focuses on the value of networks and social relationships in facilitating access to resources and opportunities. Social capital includes the networks of relationships that individuals or institutions can use to achieve their goals.

For universities, social capital is crucial in the context of employability. The strategic planning processes at Yaounde 1 and Buea can enhance social capital by fostering relationships with industry partners, alumni, and employers. These relationships provide students with opportunities for internships, jobs, and career development. Effective strategic planning can strengthen these connections, thus improving graduate employability by enhancing students' access to professional networks (Bourdieu, P.1986, pp. 241-258).

❖ **The Triple Helix Model**

The Triple Helix Model of innovation, proposed by Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (2000, pp109-114), emphasizes the collaboration between three key actors: universities, industry, and government. The model suggests that these sectors can work together to foster innovation, enhance knowledge transfer, and support the development of a skilled workforce.

This model is highly relevant for examining how strategic planning in universities can improve graduates' employability. The collaboration between universities like Yaounde 1 and Buea, the private sector, and government agencies can lead to the development of curricula and training programs that are closely aligned with the needs of the job market. This cooperation also supports the creation of internships, research projects, and job placement opportunities, all of which are crucial for enhancing employability. (Etzkowitz, H., & Leydesdorff, L., 2000, pp.114-123).

0.2 Statement of the Problem

In recent decades, the transition from higher education to the labour market has become increasingly complex due to global economic shifts, rapid technological advancements and heightened competition for limited employment opportunities (OECD, 2022). Universities worldwide are expected not only to impart disciplinary knowledge but also to develop graduates employability skills, such as; critical thinking, communication, problem solving and adaptability that enables them to thrive in dynamic work environments (York, 2006; Suleman, 2018).

In Cameroon, the unemployment and underemployment rates among university graduates remain a pressing concern, despite an increase in higher education enrolments and the government's stated commitment to aligning university curricula with labour market needs (National Institute of Statistics (NIS) 2021). The universities of Yaounde I and Buea as two of the country's leading public institutions are tasked with producing graduates who can contribute effectively to national socio-economic development. However, there is evidence that a significant proportion of their graduates struggle to secure employment that matches their qualifications (Tchombe & Abongwa, 2021, pp. 2021).

The mismatch between graduates competences and employer expectations may be linked to the extent and effectiveness of strategic planning within these universities regarding employability-oriented education. Strategic planning in higher education involves setting long-term goals, developing action plans and ensuring alignment between institutional objectives and stakeholders needs (Bryson, 2018). In the Cameroonian context, challenges such as limited industry partnerships, outdated curricula, insufficient career guidance services and inadequate integration of soft skills training into academic programs have been identified (Ngwa & Ngonba, 2019, 112-125).

Academic programs may not be tailored to meet the specific needs of industries, resulting in graduates lacking the relevant skills and knowledge (Tambi & Fonjong, 2020, pp. 77-90). More so, academic institutions may not engage with industry partners to ensure that their programs are relevant and aligned with industry needs. Also, academic programs may focus too heavily on theoretical knowledge without providing students with practical skills and experience. Students may not also have access to experiential learning opportunities, such as internships, co-op programs, or project-based learning because academic programs may not emphasize on them (Teneng, 2016, pp. 2425-2427).

While the government has introduced initiatives such as the Programme d'Appui à la Réforme de l'Enseignement Supérieure and the university-industry collaboration frameworks, the actual impact of these strategies on graduate employability remains under-researched, particularly within specific institutional contexts. There is a paucity of empirical studies assessing how strategic planning processes at the universities of Yaounde I and Buea influence the acquisition and application of employability skills among their graduates.

Reports from statistics from the Cameroon Institute of Statistics revealed a fivefold high unemployment rate among graduates compared to youths who did not attend school.

Additionally, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) highlighted that approximately 100,000 graduates enter the Cameroonian job market annually, but only 5% secure decent employment. This unemployment statistics indicate an increase whereby a rising number of graduates is produced by HEIs yearly, but hiring qualified and competitive candidates remains a challenge for many employers today. The society expects graduates to be skilled and equipped before getting into the job market.

Unfortunately, it has been observed in the reality of Cameroon that, when you move around the streets of Cameroon, you meet first-degree holders, masters, and even PhD holders roaming the streets hopelessly. All because they lack employability skills that are supposed to make them worthy of employment. The planning system is probably not successful as the goals, objectives, missions, strategic planning process, strategic content planning, and quality assurance are not effectively employed and felt by all stakeholders. Most often, the strategic plan is imposed on the body from the macro to micro level, whose view was never asked during the drafting process. (Fossimock, 2018, pp. 25-27).

There is the need to integrate key competences in a bid to promote the development of career and orientation services in the learners so as to foster efficiency and favour learning of the skills to permit graduates to gain employment in the job market.

Consequently without a systematic understanding of these relationships, policy and institutional interventions risks being misaligned with the realities of the labour market. This research therefore seeks to address this gap by critically examining the role of strategic planning in shaping graduates employability skills in these universities, thereby providing evidence-based recommendations for improving higher education outcomes in Cameroon.

0.3 Objectives of the study

In this section of the work we employ the general research objective and the specific research objectives.

0.3.1 The general research objective

The general objective of the study is to examine the relationship between strategic planning and graduate's employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon

0.3.2 Specific research objectives

- To examine the relation between the university's vision and mission statements and graduate employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon

- To describe the link between university goals and objectives and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon
- To examine the connection between the planning process and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon
- To examine the link between the planning of the content program and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon
- To describe the correlation between quality assurance and control mechanisms on graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon

0.4 Research questions

In this work, we employ the main research question and specific research questions

0.4.1 General research question

What is the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon?

0.4.2 Specific research questions

- What is the relation between university vision and mission statements on graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon?
- What is the link between the university's goal and objectives and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon?
- What is the connection between the strategic planning process and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon?
- How is the planning of the program content linked to graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon?
- How does quality assurance and control mechanisms correlate with graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon?

0.5 Significance of the study

The findings of the study will be significant to knowledge, social sciences, the discipline, various stakeholders in the higher education and scientific field in Cameroon.

This study will contribute to knowledge in the sense that, the study contributes to the understanding of strategic planning in the context of graduates' employability skills, providing

insights into how educational institutions can develop effective strategic plans. The study advances knowledge on employability skills, including the skills and knowledge required by employers, and how educational institutions can develop programs to improve graduate's employability. The study also provides new insights into the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability including the impacts of strategic planning on graduates' employment outcomes (Tchombe, 2018).

The significance of the study to social science, the study informs education and practice, providing details on how educational institutions can develop strategic plans to improve graduate's employability. The study equally contributes to the development of a highly skilled workforce promoting economic growth and development. The study also addresses social and economic challenges including the need for lifelong learning adaptability and innovation in the 21st century (World Bank, 2020).

To the discipline, the study advances the field of education, providing new impetus into the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability. The study also contributes to the development of strategic planning models, providing insights into how educational institutions can develop effective strategic plans to improve graduates' employability.

Practically speaking, the study is significant in providing knowledge on how educational institutions can develop effective strategic plans, the study informs the development of academic programs, and ensuring that the graduates acquire skills and knowledge needed by the employers. It shall also support the development of a highly skilled and employable workforce which is capable of promoting economic growth and development.

This study will invariably help the university authorities to identify and implement the respective strategic planning procedures that every institution needs to employ in order to enable graduates to acquire employability skills (Ngwana, 2010). The university will further benefit from the model developed in this study. This model is one of the most important scientific contributions to solving the problem of graduates' employability skills.

Lecturers will also benefit from this study as it will unveil several teacher problems which impede the teaching and learning process in University institutions starting from planning. Lecturers will actually benefit from this study as it further includes in the strategic planning, the need for in-service training, motivation, and collaboration among staff. Again, teachers will benefit from the call to empower them and strengthen their professionalism

through peer evaluation and involvement in vision-bearing. Lecturers will also gain inspiration from this study for further research or even in lesson preparation (Ngwana, 2010).

This piece of work will serve as a strategic planning book of reference to all university officials and decision-makers and as a mirror through which the university systems and faculties can be planned strategically with the interest of the graduates at the centre. It will unfold the hidden practices that impede the evolution of school systems planning in this digital era and the individual students in schools. Most students have been found with certificates that they cannot defend. Such students portray a negative image of the alma mater. Thus, this study will bring out possible solutions that, if well implemented, examination malpractices shall be readily curbed in schools (Ibid).

The Cameroon government will benefit immensely from this study. It will take strategic planning from the meso level in the realities of Cameroon. From its literature and results, most of the institutions will begin creating up-to-date strategic plans effectively as prescribed by the Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP) policies. Ngu and Teneng (2020, pp.705-717) believe that this study will further uncover the deteriorating gap that exists in the thought and implementation of strategic planning due to the absence of expert planners in Cameroon, and provide the state on the necessity and importance of strategic planning in Cameroon higher education. This work will also expose the missing link between studies in school and the exigencies of the job market, which have hitherto kept graduates wanting, and provide a better collaborative framework that places both parties on the same platform to serve each other.

More so, this study adds both theoretical and practical knowledge to the existing literature on how higher education adopts strategic planning in the teaching-learning process to improve graduates' employability skills in a specific socio-political, economic and geographical context. It further uses the theories to close the existing gap between strategic planning and its results on graduates from higher education institutions (Ngwa & Ngonga, 2020). It will also help to address the hurdles involved in strategic planning practices in Cameroon universities and suggest practical solutions to the policymakers.

The graduates are the final product on which the quality of an institution is justified, they will greatly benefit from this study. There will be a chance to partake in the vision of the institution, plan their courses, and gain more orientation before admission, during the year, and at the end of their study. The study will also benefit from quality teaching and skill-based courses that will be taught. When the necessary recommendations are enacted, the students will

become full participants in their institutions before they graduate, they will be embedded with skills and would have had professional contacts with employers in their domain of interest (Mbua, 2019).

0.6 Justifications of the study

Firstly, the persistent issue of graduate unemployment and underemployment in Cameroon, despite increasing number of university graduates raised critical concerns about the effectiveness of university education in preparing students for the work force. Observations and national reports consistently highlighted the mismatch between the skills acquired in higher education and those demanded by employers (World Bank, 2020). This observation prompted the need to explore how universities are responding to this challenge through planning and institutional strategies.

Secondly, the review of existing literature revealed that, while employability is widely discussed in terms of curriculum development, soft skills or internships, little empirical attention has been paid to the role of strategic planning especially on how universities define and implement long term strategies to enhance graduates readiness for the labour market. Studies in Cameroon for example (Nkwetisamma 2011, Tchombe, 2017) mostly focused on education reform outcomes or general quality concerns without exploring how institutional planning frameworks translate in to employability outcomes.

The national and international policy environment including the Cameroon Vision 2035, the African Union's Agenda 2063, and the UN Sustainable development Goals (SDGs 4 and 8) emphasize the need for education to be link with employment and national development. These frameworks inspired an inquiry in to how universities are aligning their missions, programs and partnerships with broader employability goals.

Futhermore, field experiences and professional discussions with university staff and students further highlighted practical gaps in how employability initiatives are planned, implemented and evaluated at the institutional level. These insights helped to refine the study's research focus and ensure the questions addressed both theoretical gaps and real-world needs.

The increasing rate of graduate unemployment in Cameroon underscores the need to assess how strategic planning within the universities contributes to the development of employability skills. Despite improvement to access to education, many graduates lack the competencies required by the labour market, pointing to a misalignment between academic output and employment needs. (Tambo, 2010). This study is justified by the urgent need for

universities to integrate labour market expectations into their strategic objectives to enhance graduate readiness (World Bank).

Moreover, while strategic planning is widely practiced in universities globally, its implementation in Cameroon universities often lacks focus on employability outcomes. Evaluating this linkage is crucial for improving institutional effectiveness, informing public policy and supporting national development efforts (Mbha, 2019, pp.60-75). The study also provides evidence-based framework for alignment curricula, internships, and soft skills development with employer expectations (Ngwana, 2010, pp.5-21). It responds to the call for educational reforms that is in context- specific and data-driven within sub- Saharan Africa.

Addressing the employability skill gap, the study aims to investigate the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills, providing insights into how educational institutions can develop effective strategic plans to address the employability skills gap. Secondly, to improve on graduates' employability outcomes by examining the impacts of strategic planning on graduates' employability skills. The study seeks to identify strategies that can improve graduates' employment outcomes, reducing the risk of unemployment and underemployment. Also, the study aims to explore how strategic planning can be used to enhance the relevance of academic programs, ensuring that graduates acquire the skills and knowledge required by employees.

The findings of this study will inform the education policy and practice, providing insights into how educational institutions can develop effective strategic plans to improve graduates' employability skills. By investigating the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills, this study seeks to address the needs of employers, providing insights into how educational institutions can develop graduates with the skills and knowledge required by industry. This study aims to contribute to the development of a highly skilled and employable workforce, promoting economic growth and development. By examining the impacts of strategic planning on graduates' employability skills, this study seeks to identify strategies that can improve the quality of education, ensuring that graduates acquire the skills and knowledge required to succeed in the workforce (World Bank, 2020).

The study aims to investigate how strategic planning can be used to enhance the competitiveness of graduates, providing them with skills to compete in the global job market. The study also seeks to address the challenges of the 21st century workforce, including the needs for a lifelong learning, adaptability and innovation. The findings of this study will inform

the development of employability skills programs, providing insights into how universities can develop effective programs to improve graduate employability skills.

0.7 Delimitation and Scope of the Study

This study is conducted in Cameroon with emphasis laid on some state universities such as Yaounde I and Buea. Fonkeng and Ntembe (2009) emphasised by Amin & Ntembe (2021, pp. 14-23) that, the University of Yaounde I is located in the Mfoundi Division of Cameroon. This is the second largest of Cameroon's regions in terms of land area. Major ethnic groups include; the Ewondo, Bulu, Fang, Bassa, Beti, Eton, Manguissa, the Bafia and the Bulu. Yaounde is the capital of Cameroon. The Centre's towns are also important industrial centres, especially for timber, agriculture and trading. The university of Buea on its part is located in the Southwest Region, which consists of the Bakweri, Bamole and Wumboko tribes. Principal areas in Buea include the Former Prime Minister's lodge, the reunification monument, the governor's office, the mountain peak, and the university among others. The focus of the study is on university graduates of Yaounde I and Buea.

The scope of a study defines its boundaries, focus, and extent, ensuring clarity in research objectives and methodologies (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study examines strategic planning and graduate employability skills at the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea which are two major public universities in Cameroon. It explores how institutional policies, curriculum design, and quality assurance mechanisms influence graduate outcomes. We shall be examining the geographical, thematic, population time and the justification scope.

With regards to the geographical Scope, the study focuses on two universities: firstly, the university of Yaounde I, a Francophone public university located in Cameroon's political capital, emphasizing academic research, science, and humanities. Secondly the university of Buea. The first Anglophone public university, situated in Cameroon's Southwest Region, recognized for its bilingual education, practical training, and entrepreneurship programs (University of Buea, 2022). These institutions were selected because they represent the two linguistic systems in Cameroon's higher education, providing a comparative perspective on employability strategies.

Looking at the thematic Scope, the study focuses on the relationship between strategic planning and graduate employability by examining the following key areas: The role of vision and mission statements in shaping institutional priorities. The strategic planning process,

including policy formulation, goal setting, and implementation. Institutional quality assurance mechanisms for monitoring educational outcomes and graduate employability skills. The integration of soft skills (for example; communication, teamwork, critical thinking) into curricula. The impact of internships, apprenticeships, and work-integrated learning on job readiness. The role of entrepreneurship education in reducing graduate unemployment. University collaborations with industries and their impact on job placement rates.

Concerning the Population and Sampling Scope, the study will target University Graduates from various faculties and departments from these universities. Regarding the time Scope, the study will analyze data from the past five to ten years to assess trends in strategic planning reforms and graduate employability outcomes. This period covers significant higher education reforms in Cameroon.

Examining the justification scope, this study is justified because; the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea are leading public universities, influencing national education policies. Employability challenges among graduates remain a pressing issue in Cameroon (Tchinda & Njeck, 2018). The study provides a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of Francophone and Anglophone higher education models. By defining a clear scope, this study will generate relevant insights into how strategic planning in higher education can enhance graduate employability skills in Cameroon. Findings will inform policy recommendations to bridge the gap between university education and labor market demands

0.8 Operational definition of terms

- ❖ **Strategic Planning:** According to the Society for college and University planning, strategic planning in universities refers to the process through which universities set long-term objectives, determine the necessary resources, and create actionable plans to achieve their educational and organizational goals. This is a structured process in an institution where by, the top management carries out an environmental scan, identify its goals/objectives and mobilise resources to achieve them, in a bid to improve on its performance
- ❖ **Strategic Planning in Higher Education:** Strategic planning in higher education institutions (HEIs) involves a systematic process of defining the direction and making decisions on allocating resources to achieve specific educational and institutional goals (Bryson, 2018). According to Kandasamy (2018), strategic planning in HEIs ensures that institutions not only meet academic standards but also anticipate the future needs of the labor market. For universities in Cameroon, such as the University of Yaounde I and the

University of Buea, strategic planning is crucial for adapting to the ever-evolving educational landscape and improving the quality of education provided to students.

- ❖ **Employability Skills:** Employability skills in universities in Cameroon are the essential competencies that university graduates develop to be effective and competitive in the labor market. These skills go beyond academic knowledge and include a range of personal, professional, and interpersonal qualities that are valued by employers. In the Cameroonian context, employability skills may include communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, leadership, and technical proficiency. These skills are critical for graduates to navigate the dynamic economic and social landscapes and contribute to national development.

Employability skills are the set of skills, knowledge, and attributes that enable an individual to gain and maintain employment. These skills are crucial for career success and are often categorized into core areas such as communication, problem-solving, teamwork, adaptability, and technical skills. Employability skills are essential for enhancing an individual's ability to perform effectively in the workplace and are often sought after by employers (Hillage & Pollard, 1998).

- ❖ **Graduate employability skills** refers to a combination of knowledge, technical abilities, soft skills (such as communication and teamwork), and attributes (such as adaptability and leadership) that graduates acquire during their academic programs, equipping them to meet the demands of the workforce and make meaningful contributions to the development of the country (UNESCO, 2020). Graduate employability refers to the ability of university graduates to secure and succeed in their careers post-graduation, primarily driven by a set of skills that are valued by employers (Yorke, 2006). These skills are necessary to navigate a rapidly changing and competitive global job market (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005, pp.197-219). These are competences, skills, potentials and know-how that permit a graduate to get fully absorbed in the job market
- ❖ **A university graduate** refers to an individual who has successfully completed an academic program at a university or higher education institution, meeting the requirements set by the institution for a degree, diploma, or other formal qualification. This typically involves the completion of prescribed coursework, examinations, and other assessments that demonstrate competence in a specific field of study. (Lloyd & Evans, 2020, pp.75-

89). This is someone who has graduated a higher education institution and is liable to get employed

0.9 Presentation of the work

This chapter examines the problem of the study under the following sub-headings: context and justification of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, justifications to the study and delimitation and scope of the study. The work is divided into two parts. Part one titled conceptual and theoretical framework, is divided into two chapters. Chapter one is focused on strategic planning and chapter two is on graduates' employability skills. Part two titled methodology and empirical framework is divided into three chapters. Chapter three looks at the research methodology, chapter four focuses on the presentation of findings and Chapter five looks at the discussion of findings and recommendations. The work ends with a general conclusion, references, glossary and appendices.

PART ONE
CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER ONE
STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE UNIVERSITY

Education is a basic need for the socio- economic transformation and advancement of society in the twenty-first century (UNESCO, 2020). It is a primary ingredient for human resource development in developing countries, a life wire for every meaningful and durable development. However, strategic planning is regarded in our time as a part of strategic management and as one of the principal management tools for organizational management. It is a vital element of an organization planning system.

This chapter examines literature on the concept of strategic planning, the theories that substantiate them, scholarly approaches to the concept as well as graduates' employability skills. To be precise, we shall look at the higher education, we shall also throw light on strategic planning in higher education, the university vision and mission statements, the university goals and objectives, the strategic planning process, the program content and quality assurance and control mechanisms.

1. Review of the Cameroon Higher Education

The Higher Education (HE) in Cameroon is steered by the ministry of higher education (MINESUP). Fonkeng (2005) posits that the ministry is in charge of designing and developing government policies and programs for the institution's implementation. It studies and advises the government on ways to adapt the higher education system to socio-political and economic realities; particularly on the appropriateness of higher education in regards to the needs of the national economy (Cameroon's job market). MINESUP is structured in hierarchical order with the minister at the helm.

According to statutory requirement (law No. 005 of 16 April 2001, p.13), to access higher education in Cameroon, the student must be a holder of *Baccalauréat Technique, Brevet de Technicien, Brevet Professionnel* or General Certificate of Education or advanced levels. A *Baccalauréat*, General Certificate of Education, Advanced Level in 2 subjects and Ordinary Level in at least 4 subjects and some cases successful completion of an entrance examination. The academic year runs from September to June and comprises 2 semesters of 14 to 16 weeks each. 45 to 60 lessons hours are provided per semester. Higher education semester has been divided according to the three-stage BMD structure (Bachelor, Master, Doctorate) since 2007. (Njeuma,1993).

The degree structure in Cameroon HE is three-two-three, referring to Bachelor Masters Doctorate (BMD) or *Licence, Mastère and Doctorate* (LMD) in its French interpretation, based in the Bologna harmonised structure introduced in Cameroon in 2007. According to the

Bologna process, the LMD system entails one student and one job. (Bologna stakeholders, 2016, pp.1447-1462). The process hoped to foster students' employability and mobility through a common qualification structure and most importantly improve the attractiveness and competitiveness of higher education graduates of member countries, (UNESCO, 2018, p.84). It was adopted in Cameroon's higher education system to improve the efficiency of higher education. It practically imposed an articulation between training, societal needs, and sub-regional, regional, and international openness in a view of developing an emergent economy.

The LMD was introduced to the system with practically no preparation or groundwork done especially on training of experts, infrastructure, and the proper understanding of its processes. This implies the managing system was never modified to receive a new degree system, consequently, there were no mechanisms put in place to assess its success or failure. Tambo (2013), believes that the concept of one student one job is expected to arrive with innovation in the curriculum to fit the societal needs, pedagogy for employability, managing system to move from political and power centralization to competency-based leadership, power decentralisation and trust. These were never done in Cameroon's educational system before LMD's implementation, all remain theoretical and formalities satisfaction. This is why the same LMD used in Cameroon universities may never create the experience of the impact among the European countries under the Bologna system.

Amin and Ntembe (2021, pp.14-23), hold that in Cameroon, there exist eleven (11) state universities (Yaounde I, Yaounde II, Dschang, Buea, Ngaoundere, Douala, Maroua, Bamenda, Ebolowa, Bertoua, Garoua and the visual university of Sagmalima) and several private and Christian university institutions. These universities graduate approximately 250,000 Cameroonians of working age every year (MINESUP INFOS 2010, No 13, 18). Curiously, the latter end up being a nuisance to society as they are seen roaming the streets, public places, and markets, perpetrating high crimes, cyber criminality, and brain drain among others with these certificates in their pockets. Consequently, this has become more frustrating to the individuals and the families. This regrettable circumstance betrays the Gakuladas (2012) declaration that the main reason people enter higher institutions is to graduate and gain employment, get a promotion or get new employment (Angyie et al, 2021, pp. 96-110).

Assongwe, et al. (2016), affirm that Cameroon has two major distinctive education sub-systems: a French sub-system modeled after the French system and an English sub-system modeled after the British system. These models were put in place by the colonial masters. Great Britain and France. The education in Cameroon is therefore not bilingual in the true sense of

bilingualism as individuals only master their colonial system with little cross-interaction with the other system even when both systems are on the same campus. The Anglo-Saxon system (roughly 20%) is practiced on the British colonial territory consisting of the South West and North West provinces of Cameroon and a few schools in Douala and Yaounde to cater to the Anglophone population in the city area. The francophone system (80%) is practiced by the remaining eight (8) provinces of Cameroon. (Amin & Ntembe, 2021, pp. 14-23).

1.1 The role of the higher education

Higher Education in the Cameroon context is assigned a basic mission of Organizing, producing, and disseminating scientific, professional, cultural, and ethical knowledge for development purposes. In Cameroon as in many other developing countries, within policy circles, graduate employability remains a problem. In today's competitive labour markets, employability for university graduates has become of great importance (Njeuma et al, 1999, pp. 12-37). Tertiary education institutions have the responsibilities of teaching, nation-building, and training of high-level skilled graduates and staff, (Fonkeng & Ntembe, 2009; Njeuma et al, 1999; Bloom et al, 2006; World Bank, 2002). Despite the importance of higher education in socio-economic development, Cameroon is affected by problems that plague most higher education systems in Africa (UNESCO, 2003; Ngwana, 2001; Njeuma et al, 1999).

Ngwana (2001) believes that, traditionally the HE in Cameroon has different tasks and multiple roles. Some of these are to produce human capital for national development, widen access, provide citizen education, drive national social inclusion policies, and the lower educational cycles and many other sectors through research-embodied knowledge, training and capacity-building. As a result of Globalization and rapid development in Cameroon and changes in national policies, Cameroon's vision of 2035 has challenged HE to prove its worth and provide quality education and research for innovation and competitiveness of nations and also respond to its immediate regional development needs (Doh, 2012, pp.56-72).

In addition, HE increases the employability profiles of graduates and creates opportunities for their insertion in the world of work (MINSUP INFOS, 2010). For such correlation to smoothly occur, HE needs to set higher standards and maintain them (Njeuma et al, 1999). Higher Education objectives (HEO) must be clear, comprehensive, realistic, and effectively implemented, for learners/graduates to possess the necessary and required quality skills, knowledge and attitude, which are needed, sustainable and beneficial to the individual and the nation's development at large.

➤ **The problem of graduates' employability in higher education**

Employability and individual skill development have been of growing importance in Cameroon as in other countries. The question of youth employability is a global concern as it affects both developed and developing countries of the world. The ILO states that from 1997 to 2007, the number of unemployed youths increased on average by 60.000 per year. From 2007 to 2011, the unemployment rate increased by 4 million at the global level and in 2008, the global youths' unemployment rate stood at 0.9% (International Labour Organisation, 2012).

Doh (2012, p.66) considers that the problem of unemployment, however, manifests itself more in the underdeveloped countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Its manifestations in Cameroon are seen as young graduates loiter around the city. Frustration and disappointment are the order of the day as it drives most of them into drug abuse, scamming, smoking, drunkenness, gay, prostitution, theft, misery and pain. This may be a result of the curriculum quality which is short of certain aspects and skills to usher them into the job market. In Cameroon, the undulating unemployment rate stood at 3.54% in 2015, 3.47% in 2016, 3.36% in 2017, and 3.36% in 2018, 3.62% in 2019, 3.87% in 2020, 3.97% in 2021, 3.65% in 2022, 3.61% in 2023 (National Institute for Statistics -NIS).

Youth's unemployment issue is not something of recent, it has gained unprecedented significance, calling for an in-depth investigation of its several causes to devise a sustainable solution (Samfoga, 2015, pp.89-104). However, there has been agreement that inadequate and/or training void of practical skills amongst others make up the underpinning causes of the predominant unemployment problems among university graduates in Cameroon. According to Teneng (2016, pp.88-102), this high unemployment rate in Cameroon may be due to the quality of the curriculum used, infrastructural facilities and the teaching methods utilised by lecturers in delivery lessons in higher institutions. From observations, these schools are mostly theoretical as the subjects taught are not so relevant to the skills needed by employers. Consequently, there is little practical learning that can enable students to do or create jobs to help themselves. Thus, graduates are bound to take odd jobs such as hawking on streets, private unskilled teaching at very low pay, truck pushing, and bike riding just to name a few, and as a result, underemployment set in (ibid).

Cameroon is equally facing the problem of underemployment which is perpetrated by both the private employers and the state. It is worth noting that the private sector in Cameroon remains by far the greatest supplier of jobs with about 90.5% of workers from this sector (Mve,

2020, pp.112-130). What might be most striking to know is that workers from this sector vividly demonstrate the characteristics of underemployment on a wider scale. This is demonstrated by the fact that their work positions, wages (motivation), working conditions and many others mismatch with their training and academic profile. We therefore need to review the curriculum quality, tailoring it towards the employer's needs and aspirations to prepare the job market to absorb the students upon graduation (Njabakal & Teneng, 2020, pp.54-70).

Teneng further believes that, the educational system in Cameroon may not be structured to answer the question of employability. The curriculum may not reflect the knowledge awaited by employers on their part, the teaching methods are void of practice and expertise. Furthermore, the policies may not be job-oriented, as the infrastructures may not be equipped to meet such challenges. There may be a lack of sufficient and competent bodies for the development of curriculum for Cameroon higher education; this makes it difficult for learning to meet the needs of the society. Researchers worked with teachers exploring the enacted curriculum of understanding at Harvard School of Education. During that time, he had the opportunity to reflect on the qualities that make an activity, a unit, or a curriculum something that effectively engages students in developing a deeper understanding (Tchinda & Njeck, 2018, pp. 121-139).

Faced with a morose economic situation, the Cameroon Economic Update document since 2012 revealed that an underpinning factor to the mass unemployment of youths is against the backdrop of the content of education given to them. Students of the Faculty of Arts Letters Social Sciences (FALSH) at the University of Yaounde I are taught static facts and baseless stories which are not needed in the job market giving an impression that when you graduate from these faculties, you either wait for the public exam with slim chances of success, frustrate around, manage teaching in the private sector or migrate to different countries for greener pastures. (Tanyi et al., 2020, pp.67-92)

Researchers like, Ngwana (2003) see Higher Education as a spring-board to economic growth and development in any country, it captures and unfolds this session in the following statements.

In sub-Saharan African states, development was focused at different periods on strong national government with centralized planning, rural development and population control, income re-distribution and equality of access: economic Structural adjustment and multiparty politics, human resources and today Capacity building and stressed sustainable development dominate the rhetoric.

This changing emphasis called for the direct involvement of the Universities in development (Ngwana, 2003, p 5).

With this, Ngwana is implying that universities (Higher Education) must be fully involved in the developmental of a society. The investments in these universities by both the state and private individuals make up what Becker calls “the Human Capital Development”. By this, he believes that investing in the education and health of an individual is building a strong base for the development of a country. They both agree on the fact that higher education is the springboard behind the economic development of an economy. This brings us to our study whose interest is on how higher education, specifically in Cameroon can make graduates useful by investing in the skill-based training of the students. (Ngwana, 2019, pp. 32-47).

According to information from the World Bank 2008, Higher Education plays a pivotal role in preparing individuals to enter the labour force as well as equip them with the skills to engage in lifelong learning experiences. This indicates that a well-planned curriculum helps usher graduates into the job market. In this line, the World Bank makes it clear that “planning of the educational system focusing on graduate’s employment seeks to adhere to basic cognitive and numeracy skills” (World Bank, 2008, p.20) these skills are much waited in the job market to enable graduates gain employment. These graduates will apply their skills, know-how and abilities in the jobs, improving the outputs, economic growth and their standards of living. To achieve these, school curriculum, pedagogy, state policy and resources are oriented towards aspirations and the needs of the job market.

Mbonteh (2021, pp.45-68) noted that in Cameroon, whole families join hands together to sponsor their children with the hope that upon graduation, they will acquire a well-paid job, through which they will in turn help both old and young people better up their living standards. Unfortunately, upon graduation from these institutions, these youths keep roaming the streets jobless and hopeless due to unemployment. Most of these unemployed youths or job seekers have attended school for varied lengths of time (Indeed most of them have obtained university degrees) but they cannot find nor create jobs that match their skills and potential abilities (Tafat, 1998). The amount of training a person gets determines his or her efficiency and effectiveness at work. On the contrary, the more Cameroonian youths get educated, the more costly the education and the more they depend on their parents for their livelihood due to unemployment. (Behle, 2020, pp.105-130).

Chaudary (2015, pp. 6-14) holds that the job markets increasingly need skill workers, and the youths need jobs as well, but they lack conformity in terms of skills. It may interest

you to know that the working population in Cameroon is about 12 million and only a little over 200,000 people work in the public service. The remaining population not absorbed by the government is a call for concern. Unemployment and underemployment affect different university graduates in diverse ways such as; sex, age, marital status, ethnic group, and field of study amongst others. The University of Yaounde I comparatively is the most populated in the whole republic of Cameroon. Hence, they graduate thousands into the job market yearly and of course, they do not fuse with the available skilled and technologically oriented jobs, thus unemployment (Ngu & Teneng, 2020, pp.700-720).

It should be noted that graduates from these faculties turn to enroll in private institutions for specialization (with fees from 350,000 to 1,000,000 CFA per year, too costly for jobless youths) others with the Ministry of Employment and Vocational training (National Employment Fund) from where they can make use of themselves meanwhile others escape abroad to “hustle”, some engage in non-pedagogic teaching in private sectors with a very minimal wage from 500-800 FCFA per hour, and the weaker ones and/ most intelligent victims become drug addicts, thieves, loiters, bike riders, scammers and producers of fake documents usually called “docky men” these young guys are mostly seen in Bonamoussadi and around the ministries in Yaounde. There is, therefore, the need to upgrade the higher education system in Cameroon to boost graduates' employability. (Ngwa, 2020, pp.45-62).

1.2 Strategic Planning in universities in Cameroon

Strategic planning in universities in Cameroon is increasingly recognised as an essential process for ensuring that higher education institutions effectively navigate the challenges posed by the dynamic social, economic, and political landscape. The process involves setting long-term objectives, defining priorities, and allocating resources to meet national and global educational demands.

➤ The Importance of Strategic Planning in Cameroonian Universities

A study by Tabi (2021, pp.54-69) highlighted that strategic planning in Cameroonian universities has become critical for addressing the evolving needs of higher education in the context of globalization and national development. The author emphasized that strategic planning enables universities to improve their academic programs, integrate research into curriculum development, and align institutional goals with national educational policies. Strategic plans also help universities manage their resources efficiently and enhance their role in national socio-economic development.

According to Nchang and Ndifor (2019, pp.33-44), universities in Cameroon have adopted strategic planning frameworks that include both short-term and long-term goals. These frameworks help institutions align their missions with the socio-economic needs of the country, providing students with the necessary skills to contribute effectively to the labour market. The integration of both academic and administrative goals in strategic plans has been shown to improve operational effectiveness and institutional growth.

➤ **Challenges in Implementing Strategic Planning**

Despite the importance of strategic planning, several challenges have been identified in the implementation process. Nkongho and Ngwa (2020, pp.78-91) found that one of the main challenges faced by universities in Cameroon is the lack of adequate financial resources to implement strategic plans effectively. The study revealed that many universities struggle to secure funding for long-term projects, which undermines the sustainability of their strategic initiatives. Additionally, there are challenges related to administrative capacity and the involvement of key stakeholders in the planning process.

Another significant challenge is the mismatch between the strategic plans developed by universities and the needs of the labour market. As noted by Fonyuy and Tabi (2022, pp.45-57), some Cameroonian universities face difficulties in aligning their curricula with the competencies required by employers, which results in graduates being ill-prepared for the workforce. To address this, universities are increasingly engaging with industry stakeholders to ensure that their strategic plans incorporate market-driven skills and competencies.

➤ **The Role of Government and Policy Frameworks**

The role of government policies in shaping the strategic planning of universities in Cameroon has also been explored. According to Mbah (2019), the Ministry of Higher Education plays a critical role in influencing strategic planning in universities through policy frameworks and regulations. Government policies, such as the Cameroon Higher Education Reform Agenda, provide guidelines for universities to follow in their strategic planning processes. However, the study revealed that the centralization of decision-making within government institutions sometimes limits the autonomy of universities in crafting tailored strategic plans.

➤ **Strategic Planning and Institutional Performance**

Empirical evidence also suggests that strategic planning has a positive impact on the overall performance of universities. A study by Tchombe (2019, pp.89-107) demonstrated that

universities that engaged in thorough strategic planning experienced improvements in key performance indicators such as student enrolment, graduation rates, and research output. The study concluded that strategic planning is directly linked to enhancing the quality of education and the global reputation of universities in Cameroon.

1.3 The university's vision and mission statements (basic aspirations)

The development and implementation of vision and mission statements are integral parts of strategic planning in universities worldwide. In Cameroon, university vision and mission statements play a critical role in shaping the direction of educational institutions, guiding their development, and ensuring they meet the evolving demands of both local and global educational landscapes. This empirical review explores how vision and mission statements influence strategic planning in Cameroonian universities and examines the challenges and successes observed in their alignment with institutional goals.

➤ The Role of Vision and Mission in Strategic Planning

The vision and mission statements of universities form the foundation upon which strategic planning is based. They guide decisions related to academic programs, research priorities, student development, and community engagement. A well-crafted vision statement serves as a blueprint for where the institution aspires to be in the future, while the mission statement outlines the university's core purpose and key objectives.

Tabi (2021) underscores the importance of aligning a university's mission and vision with its strategic planning process, particularly in the context of Cameroon, where universities are tasked with meeting national and international educational standards. The study found that universities with clearly defined missions and visions are better positioned to create comprehensive strategic plans that address both academic and administrative challenges. These institutions are more likely to invest in research, infrastructure, and partnerships that enhance their reputation and contribute to the socio-economic development of Cameroon.

Similarly, Fonyuy and Tabi (2022) argue that a university's mission and vision serve as guiding principles for policy formulation and implementation. They emphasised that in Cameroonian universities, these statements are key to achieving institutional goals, particularly in improving educational quality and developing relevant skills that align with labor market needs. Universities with explicit visions and missions that reflect national and regional priorities tend to integrate those values into their strategic planning, helping to focus efforts on areas such as technological innovation, sustainable development, and employability.

➤ **Vision and Mission Alignment with National and Global Goals**

Cameroonian universities have increasingly focused on aligning their vision and mission statements with national development goals and global educational trends. As noted by Mba (2019), universities in Cameroon have adapted their strategic plans to reflect the country's Vision 2035, which emphasizes the development of a knowledge-based economy and sustainable growth. The alignment of university missions with these broader goals helps to ensure that higher education institutions contribute effectively to national development.

Nchang and Ndifor (2019) explored how the missions of universities in Cameroon reflect the country's push for industrialization and technological advancement. The study found that universities with missions emphasizing research and innovation are more likely to prioritize strategic areas such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. This alignment between university missions and national goals helps to guide the strategic planning process, enabling universities to focus on producing graduates who can contribute to economic growth and innovation.

Moreover, Nkongho and Ngwa (2020) discuss the role of global trends in shaping university mission and vision statements. They noted that while universities in Cameroon are focusing on local needs, there is also an increasing emphasis on global competitiveness. The inclusion of international partnerships and research collaboration in many university mission statements indicates that Cameroonian universities are striving to compete in the global higher education space.

➤ **Challenges in the Implementation of Vision and Mission Statements**

Despite the clear benefits of having defined vision and mission statements, their implementation in Cameroonian universities faces several challenges. One significant obstacle is the mismatch between university missions and the available resources for achieving strategic goals. Mba (2019) argues that many universities in Cameroon lack sufficient financial and human resources to fully implement their strategic plans, which often leads to discrepancies between the vision set out in official documents and the realities of institutional capabilities.

Additionally, Tchombe and Abongwa (2021) point out that the development of mission and vision statements in Cameroonian universities often follows a top-down approach, with minimal input from key stakeholders such as students, faculty, and the wider community. This lack of inclusivity can result in mission and vision statements that do not reflect the diverse

needs of the university's constituencies, leading to challenges in garnering support for their implementation.

The study by Nkongho and Ngwa (2020) further highlights that universities in Cameroon struggle with monitoring and evaluating the progress of their strategic plans. Even when mission and vision statements are developed with clear objectives, the lack of effective mechanisms for tracking progress and measuring outcomes hampers the realization of institutional goals.

➤ **Impact of Vision and Mission on University Performance**

Research indicates that universities with clear and effectively implemented vision and mission statements tend to perform better in terms of academic outcomes, research output, and societal impact. Tabi (2021) found that universities with well-aligned mission and vision statements demonstrate higher levels of student engagement, improved graduation rates, and increased participation in international research collaborations. This positive relationship between strategic planning and institutional performance is particularly noticeable in universities that have established robust systems for implementing and assessing their strategic plans.

Tchombe and Abongwa (2021) concluded that universities in Cameroon that integrate their vision and mission statements with their strategic plans tend to attract more funding and support from both the government and private sector. This, in turn, enables them to invest in infrastructure, improve academic programs, and create more opportunities for students and faculty. The research highlighted that these universities are better able to respond to both local and global challenges by adapting their strategies to meet changing needs.

1.3.1 The University Vision Statement

Generally speaking, the concept of vision is the picture of what an institution wants to be and what it wants to achieve as success (Hitt et al., 2007, p.19). The strategic planning theory clearly explains this. In order to have a good vision, many organizations today look for the answer to the question "what do we want to be". Determining the vision statement is generally regarded as the first step to improving the strategic planning and mission statements (David, 2011, p.45). A business vision takes over the company with all its functions and defines how it will look in the future. This vision is considered together with the abstract and intangible aspects of the business (Wittmann & Reuter, 2008, p.12).

Adelayo (2018) believes that the institutional vision statement is one of the most important components of a strategic plan. The vision statement is an institution's clear description of what it intends to become within a certain timeframe. The vision statement defines the institution's strategic position in the future and the specific elements of that position in relationship to the mission statement. In some cases, the vision is that of one leader at the campus. Often this leader is the president, but the vision can sometimes come from an academic vice president or dean of studies. Usually, the vision is reviewed and revised by members of the campus community, especially the strategic planning committee.

Vision statements benefit the planning process by providing everyone in the institution with the same vision of the future. If the purpose of the planning process is to align mission, vision, goals and resources, it is critical to ensure those who will be called upon to implement the strategic plan are all "pulling in the same direction". This is especially true if the vision statement is a reflection of one person's vision for the institution. In this case, it is in the best interests of the institution to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to "own" the vision, either through review and revision of the statement or some form of early input into the statement draft (Adelayo, 2018).

A university aspires to be a diverse, distinctive and comprehensive institution for education, research, consultancy, training, human development and ethical and intellectual ideals in a context in which individual material and financial aspirations interact with the general human cultural and social requirements (especially for the university). Further, this also ensures sustainable education in terms of curricula, stages and research environments, to develop teachers and students to reach the highest international standards which has been approved for advanced universities. Here, one of the most important aspirations of the university is to achieve the following (ibid).

1.3.1.1 The vision of the university of Yaounde I

University of Yaounde I is a higher education establishment located in Yaounde, Cameroon. The university was established after the split of the University of Yaounde into two entities in 1993 and has ever since grown to enroll over 10000 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students (Wikipedia, 18th May,2023).

University of Yaounde I comprises 6 faculties which include the Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, Sciences, Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Teacher's Training College, National Advanced School of Engineering, and Higher Teacher's Training

Technical School. University of Yaounde I offers a range of undergraduate and graduate in Computer Science, Economics, Business Management, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Languages, Literature, Education, Medicine, Dentistry, Physics, Chemistry, and Information Technology.

Our Vision

The vision comprises the following terms and fundamental concepts:

- Reinforcement of professionalisation by promoting the relevance of curricula in order to meet labour market requirements; concern for the quality of the products and the competitiveness of the graduates on the labour market.
- Consolidation of what exists through the rehabilitation of infrastructure and the reinforcement of the academic courses of study and research structure.
- Modernisation of all components of the institution and the development of cooperation for greater visibility It covers a total surface area of 105.37 hectares, a bilingual institution (English and French). The Ngoa-Ekele campus has four faculties thus;
 - The Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (FALSH)
 - The Faculty of Sciences (FS)
 - The Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (FMSBM)
 - The Faculty of Education (FSE)

Most of these faculties have been offering professional master's programs for at least three years. But in this study, we considered graduates from the Department of Tourism and Translation at the master's level, cinematography, curriculum and evaluation. These specialties are because the programs have existed since 2014 with professional underpinning and a high number of graduates in the job market from these departments (Wikipedia, 18th May, 2023).

University of Yaounde I is ranked 1st in the country and amongst the top 1200 universities globally by the CWUR Center for World University Rankings. The university is also accredited by the Ministry of Higher Education of Cameroon and ranked 4th nationally by UniRank. University of Yaounde I is also ranked 949th in the Best Global Universities list by US News and World Report. The university is also ranked 28th in Africa and 466th worldwide to study Clinical Medicine by US News and World Report. (Wikipedia, 18th May 2023).

1.3.1.2 The vision of the University of Buea

University of Buea (UB) is found in Molyko, Buea, in the South West region of Cameroon. It was founded as a university centre in 1985 and became a full-fledged university in 1992, following a government decree that re-organized state universities in the country. It is regarded as the best university in Cameroon and is one of two English speaking universities in Cameroon, alongside the University of Bamenda, which follow the British system of education. It serves citizens from both Anglophone and francophone regions of Cameroon and from neighboring countries such as Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea. The motto of the university is Knowledge and Wisdom, its under the ministry of higher education and the Vice chancellor is Prof. Ngomo Horace Manga it is affiliated to the Manchester university (Wikipedia, 8th May 2024).

Vision statement

The university of Buea aspires to become a a leading university in the quality and relevance of its teaching research and; services by 2015. Its vision is that of a world where men and women can pursue academic research and professional excellence in a peaceful environment that upholds our cultural diversity and heritage

The University of Buea is situated in the town of Buea, which is located in the Southwest Region of Cameroon. Buea is nestled at the foot of Mount Cameroon, the highest peak in West Africa. The town's scenic beauty and pleasant climate make it an attractive location for learning and research. The university has a diverse student population, attracting students from various regions of Cameroon and beyond. It offers at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, catering to a wide range of academic interests. The student body consists of individuals from different cultural backgrounds, fostering a rich and vibrant learning environment.

Visions of the university

In view of its vision and aspiration of becoming a leading university in the quality and relevance of its teaching, research and services by 2015, the University of Buea is emphasizing sports, entrepreneurship and civics and ethics in its training programs; and providing a healthy competitive atmosphere devoid of sex, racial and religious discrimination

In keeping with the New University Governance Policy of Cameroon, the outreach activities of the University are increasingly involving the private sector in funding and training so as to ensure that the graduates are relevant to the labour market. The University of Buea

provides mentorship and plays a supervisory role to several tertiary educational institutions all over Cameroon. The University of Buea has made significant contributions to society through various avenues:

Academic Excellence; the University is committed to providing quality education and has gained recognition for its academic. It offers a wide range of disciplines including sciences, social sciences, humanities, engineering, health sciences, and management. The rigorous curriculum equips students with knowledge and skills that are relevant to the needs of society.

Research and Innovation; the university places great emphasis on research as a means to address societal challenges and contribute to national development. Faculty members and students engage in research activities across various fields, including agriculture, health, technology, and social sciences. Their findings have led to advancements in knowledge and practical solutions to real-world problems.

Community Engagement; the University of Buea actively engages with the local community through outreach and partnerships. It collaborates with government agencies, non-profit organizations, and industry stakeholders to address pressing social issues. The university's community service initiatives include healthcare campaigns, environmental conservation projects, and entrepreneurship training (Wikipedia, 2023).

1.3.2 The University Mission statement

The mission statement is the expression to clarify what the main purpose of the organization is and particularly why it exists; hence, it offers satisfaction in the eyes of its customers and ensures service (Thompson & Martin, 2005, p.42). as seen in the strategic planning framework, the famous management guru Peter Drucker defines the mission as the answer for the questions “What is our business”, and "What is our duty" because he thinks the answer to the questions are the same as the definition of “mission”. The mission also defines what the organization wants to be in the long run and to whom it wants to serve. The mission of the company must be clear and comprehensible and must be distinguished from other companies. In other words, it must be unique (Dobson et al., 2004, p.10). The concept of objective usually reflects the mission statement and is qualitative. The mission statement, as can be remembered, is composed of general statements that put forward a clear and open state of the business. In this respect, the concept of “aim” is the general expression of the desired final results and is rather qualitative. “The goal” statement expresses the objective on a more numerical basis. Thus, it reveals a quantitative expression (Johnson et al., 2005, p.164).

The foundation of any strategic plan is the institutional mission statement. This statement delineates, in concise language, why the institution exists and what its operations are intended to achieve. For publicly controlled institutions, this statement of purpose may be dictated by the state, but for all institutions, the statement serves as the explanation for the existence of the organization. Historically, mission statements were long, exhaustively detailed descriptions of the institution's founding, curricular history, unique culture and current services.

The mission statement also often included an explanation of what the institution stood for and what it intended its students to become. An interested student of strategic planning can open any archived college catalogue to find, within the first few pages, a mission statement at least a full page long containing all the historical information about the institution anyone would care to know. These types of mission statements have been termed "comprehensive mission statements" because they tend to include everything anyone thought might be important to know about the institution (Babalola & Abdullahi, 2016, pp. 27-36).

1.3.2.1 Missions of the university of Yaounde I

According to the provisions of article 2 of the decree No 93/036 of 29 January 1993, the missions assigned to the UY I authorities are as follows:

- Develop and transmit knowledge.
- Develop research and training of men.
- Bring higher forms of culture and research to the highest level and correct pace of progress.
- Facilitate access to higher education to all those who have vocation and ability.
Contribute to the Support of development, social and cultural promotion
- Foster the use of bilingualism.

1.3.2.2 The Missions of the University of Buea

The mission of the University of Buea is to provide opportunities for quality education through teaching and research in an environment that is conducive to such pursuits and in ways that respond to market forces. The University is dedicated to the continuous quest for excellence, the promotion of moral and human values, and service to the community. Its

teaching and research programs emphasize relevance, encourage tolerance and promote creative, critical and independent thinking (Wikipedia,2023).

The University of Buea is dedicated to the provision of programs of study and research of the highest standards. It also produces high-quality graduates with skills to satisfy the ever-increasing demand of the Cameroonian, African and international job markets. The academic staff hold advanced qualifications and several possess international reputations. The student population is over 12,000, including over fifty who are physically and visually disabled. Adequate welfare provision for this latter category of students remains both a challenge and a priority for the university administration.

1.4 The University's Strategic Goals and Objectives

The establishment and pursuit of university goals and objectives are central to the strategic planning process in higher education institutions. In Cameroon, universities face a range of challenges and opportunities that require clear and well-articulated goals and objectives to guide their development, improve educational outcomes, and contribute to national development. The goal setting theory gives us a better understanding of universities goals and objectives. This empirical review examines the role of university goals and objectives in the strategic planning process in Cameroonian universities and identifies the challenges and successes in their implementation. A university's vision and goals define its strategic direction and commitment to academic excellence, research development, and graduate employability. In Cameroon, public universities such as the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea are tasked with training highly skilled professionals to meet national and international labor market needs (Tchoua, 2016, pp.87-101).

1.4.1 Goals of Universities in Cameroon

The goals of Cameroonian universities focus on education, research, and service to the society. Specifically, they seek to:

❖ Ensure Quality Education

- Implement student-centered learning strategies and modern pedagogical approaches (Harvey, 2001).
- Develop STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) programs to address global labor market needs (Rowley & Sherman, 2001, pp.43-56).

❖ **Improve Employability of Graduates**

- Strengthen industry-academia partnerships to enhance job readiness (Andrews & Higson, 2008, pp.411-422).
- Introduce work-integrated learning (e.g., internships, cooperative education, apprenticeships) (Yorke, 2006).

❖ **Foster Research and Innovation**

- Support applied research that solves national development challenges (Ngwa, 2020, pp.22-39).
- Encourage faculty and student-led startups through university incubation centers (Fonchingong, 2021, pp.22-46).

❖ **Strengthen Governance and Institutional Autonomy**

- Decentralize decision-making processes to improve efficiency.
- Adopt a results-based management approach in university administration (Kamdem & Ndongmo, 2022, pp.45-62).

❖ **Enhance Digital and Lifelong Learning**

- Expand e-learning platforms to accommodate distance education (Mbangwana, 2017, pp.101-118).
- Integrate technical and vocational training to meet local labor market demands (Ewumbue-Monono, 2021, pp.45-61). These among many others.

1.4.2 The Role of University Goals and Objectives in Strategic Planning

University goals and objectives provide a roadmap for achieving the institution's mission and vision. These elements guide decision-making in areas such as academic program development, research priorities, and community engagement. Goals and objectives are also key to ensuring that universities remain focused on long-term sustainability while responding to short-term educational and societal needs.

According to Mba (2019), clear and specific goals are essential for aligning a university's resources with its mission. In Cameroonian universities, strategic planning efforts that are rooted in well-defined objectives tend to be more successful in addressing the needs of students, faculty, and the broader community. Universities that prioritize academic excellence,

student engagement, and societal impact, for example, are more likely to attract government support and private sector investment. Mba further suggests that well-defined university goals and objectives also promote accountability and provide a framework for evaluating institutional performance.

Similarly, Tabi (2021, pp. 54-69) emphasizes that university goals and objectives are crucial in aligning the efforts of the administration, faculty, and students. When goals are effectively communicated and shared by all stakeholders, the likelihood of successful strategy implementation increases. Universities with clear objectives are also better equipped to adapt to changes in the educational landscape, whether those changes are local, national, or global. For instance, strategic planning focused on improving employability and research capacity helps universities produce graduates with the skills necessary for both local and international labour markets.

➤ **Alignment of University Goals and National Development Objectives**

In Cameroon, universities increasingly align their goals and objectives with national development priorities, such as those outlined in the country's Vision 2035. This vision focuses on creating a knowledge-based economy, improving technological infrastructure, and promoting sustainable growth (Mba, 2019). Universities that align their strategic goals with these national objectives are better able to contribute to the country's economic development by producing graduates equipped with the skills needed to thrive in a rapidly changing global economy.

Fonyuy and Tabi (2022, pp.45-57) examined how the goals of universities in Cameroon are often linked to national initiatives like the promotion of entrepreneurship and innovation. These universities have prioritized the development of specific programs and research efforts in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields, which are central to Cameroon's industrialization and economic diversification strategies. Strategic goals related to increasing access to higher education, improving quality, and expanding research capacity are critical to achieving national objectives and positioning Cameroonian universities as key contributors to national development.

Nchang and Ndifor (2019, pp.33-44) further explored how university goals are shaped by Cameroon's industrialization plans. They found that universities with goals focused on research excellence and technical training tend to align more effectively with the country's push toward industrialization. The study also highlighted that such universities are more likely

to prioritize practical skills, internships, and research that addresses the needs of local industries. By aligning their goals with national development, universities in Cameroon can increase their impact on society and the economy.

➤ **Globalization and International Collaboration in University Goals**

While aligning their goals with national objectives, Cameroonian universities also recognise the importance of engaging with global educational trends. Nkongho and Ngwa (2020, pp. 78-91) noted that many universities in Cameroon have set objectives to increase international collaboration and partnerships with global institutions. These goals are often focused on enhancing the university's research capabilities, improving teaching and learning methods, and raising the institution's profile in international rankings.

Universities that establish global goals within their strategic plans can attract international students, faculty, and research grants, thereby enhancing their global competitiveness. Tabi (2021) found that universities that pursue internationalization goals are better positioned to access resources, exchange knowledge, and develop partnerships that can provide both academic and financial benefits. By fostering collaboration with international institutions, Cameroonian universities can position themselves as leaders in addressing global challenges such as climate change, healthcare, and technology.

Moreover, Nkongho and Ngwa (2020) highlighted that universities with clear international objectives are more likely to participate in collaborative research projects, exchange programs, and global academic networks. This broadens the scope of opportunities available to students and faculty, increasing the university's visibility on the world stage.

1.4.3 University of Yaounde I: Goals and Objectives

The University of Yaounde I has established several strategic goals and objectives aimed at enhancing graduate employability through effective academic programs and partnerships with industry stakeholders. These goals and objectives are aligned with the institution's mission to improve academic quality, ensure the development of relevant skills, and increase the employability of its graduates.

- **Goal 1: Enhance Academic Programs and Curriculum Design**

The university aims to modernize its academic programs to align with current industry needs. This goal includes revising curricula to include more hands-on, practical experiences that

contribute to the development of critical employability skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, and communication (University of Yaounde I, 2020).

Objective 1.1: Revise and update academic curricula to incorporate emerging technologies and industry-relevant content.

Objective 1.2: Increase the number of internships and work-based learning opportunities for students in collaboration with industry partners.

- **Goal 2: Strengthen Industry Partnerships and Collaboration**

The university seeks to establish stronger collaborations with local and international industries to ensure that students gain real-world experience and that curricula reflect the demands of the job market.

Objective 2.1: Develop internship and mentorship programs in partnership with local businesses and global corporations.

Objective 2.2: Establish regular career fairs and industry days to connect students with potential employers.

- **Goal 3: Provide Career Services and Support for Students**

A critical objective of the university's strategic planning is to enhance career development services to better prepare students for the transition to the workforce.

Objective 3.1: Expand career counselling, resume-building workshops, and interview preparation services.

Objective 3.2: Offer job placement assistance to graduates, leveraging the university's growing network of industry connections.

These goals and objectives show the University of Yaounde I's commitment to improving graduate employability through strategic initiatives that link academic training with practical experience.

1.4.4 University of Buea: Goals and Objectives

The University of Buea is equally committed to enhancing graduate employability through its strategic planning. The institution has developed specific goals and objectives to improve the employability of its graduates by focusing on curriculum innovation, industry engagement, and student support services.

- **Goal 1: Foster Innovative and Practice-Oriented Learning**

The University of Buea aims to create an education system that is closely tied to practical work experiences, ensuring that graduates acquire skills that are directly applicable in the workforce.

Objective 1.1: Implement more work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities in all academic programs.

Objective 1.2: Update the curricula to reflect the latest trends in technology and the labor market, with a focus on entrepreneurship, leadership, and technical skills.

- **Goal 2: Strengthen Linkages with Employers and Industry Partners**

Recognizing the importance of industry connections in improving graduate employability, the university aims to deepen its relationships with businesses and employers both locally and globally.

Objective 2.1: Increase the number of strategic partnerships with local businesses and multinational companies to offer internships and job placements.

Objective 2.2: Facilitate regular meetings between students, faculty, and industry professionals to discuss emerging trends and skills requirements in the job market.

- **Goal 3: Enhance Student Support Services and Career Development**

The university seeks to provide comprehensive career development services that support students' professional growth from the beginning of their studies through to graduation and beyond.

Objective 3.1: Establish dedicated career counselling and support services, focusing on job search techniques, soft skills development, and networking opportunities.

Objective 3.2: Create post-graduation employment tracking systems to measure the success of graduates and continuously refine the university's employability strategies.

These goals and objectives demonstrate the University of Buea's commitment to ensuring its graduates are prepared for the labor market by integrating strategic planning with employability skill development

1.4.5 Challenges in Setting and Achieving University Goals and Objectives

Despite the benefits of well-defined goals and objectives, the implementation of these plans in Cameroonian universities faces several challenges. One of the primary challenges is

the lack of sufficient resources, which limits the ability of universities to fully implement their strategic goals. According to Mba (2019), many universities in Cameroon struggle with inadequate funding and infrastructure, which makes it difficult to achieve the goals set out in their strategic plans. This issue is compounded by the increasing demand for higher education, as more students seek admission to universities, yet many institutions lack the capacity to expand or improve their offerings.

Fonyuy and Tabi (2022) also discussed the lack of effective monitoring and evaluation systems in Cameroonian universities, which further complicates the achievement of strategic objectives. Without robust mechanisms for tracking progress and assessing the impact of strategic plans, universities may struggle to adapt their goals to changing circumstances, such as shifts in government policy or the labor market.

Additionally, Tchombe and Abongwa (2021, pp. 98-110) pointed out that many universities in Cameroon face challenges in aligning their internal stakeholders administrators, faculty, students, and staff around common objectives. In some cases, there is resistance to strategic plans because they are not seen as inclusive or reflective of the diverse needs of the university community. This disconnect can hinder the implementation of university goals and objectives.

1.4.6 Impact of University Goals and Objectives on Institutional Performance

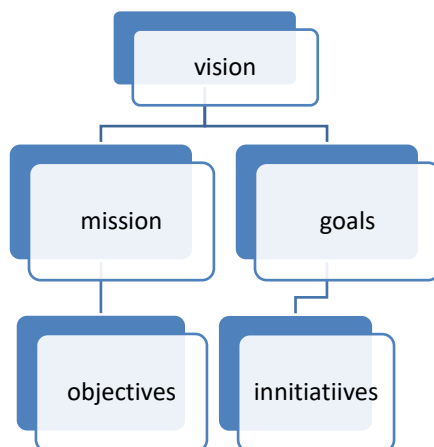
Research indicates that universities with clear, well-communicated, and achievable goals tend to perform better in terms of student outcomes, research productivity, and societal impact. Mba (2019) found that universities in Cameroon with well-articulated goals focused on improving educational quality, research output, and employability were more successful in securing funding, attracting students, and building strong partnerships with industry.

Tabi (2021) highlighted that strategic goals aligned with national development priorities, such as improving employability through skill-based training, have a positive effect on the labor market outcomes for graduates. Universities that prioritize outcomes like employability and research excellence are also more likely to develop a reputation for producing graduates who meet the needs of local industries and global market.

The university's goal and objectives sets a timetable that can be implemented with relatively high efficiency and effectiveness. One of the main goals of the strategic plans at the university is to ensure the academic success of students, which is supposed to be achieved through serious objective tests and the adoption of the latest methods, means and systems

available. Further, it aims to diversify the financial resources of the university in order to devote the independent management of the institution, and improve the infrastructure and educational processes, and encourage community participation by deepening the university's interaction, and its functions in the surrounding community. Below is a figure of a strategic plan, with regards to its vision, mission, goal and objectives.

Figure 1: A strategic plan



Source: (Mohammadian, 2017, p. 135)

1.5 The Strategic Planning Process

Going by the strategic planning theory of Bryson, strategic planning in universities is a critical process that guides institutions toward achieving their educational, research, and societal goals. In Cameroon, two prominent universities according to this research, the university of Yaounde I and university of Buea have undertaken strategic planning initiatives that seek to address national development priorities and improve educational outcomes. This area of the work examines the strategic planning processes carried out at these two universities, highlighting their objectives, challenges, and successes, with a focus on how they have contributed to enhancing institutional effectiveness in the Cameroonian context.

1.5.1 Strategic planning in universities in Cameroon

- **Strategic Planning in the University of Yaounde I**

The University of Yaounde I is one of Cameroon's largest and oldest higher education institutions. It has a history of adapting its strategic plans to meet the changing demands of both national development goals and global educational trends. Mba (2019) discusses how the University of Yaounde I implemented strategic planning as part of its efforts to align its

academic offerings with the country's Vision 2035, which emphasizes creating a knowledge-based economy. The university's strategic plan focuses on enhancing research capacity, improving the quality of teaching, and expanding access to higher education.

According to Tchombe and Abongwa (2021, p. 100), the strategic planning process at the University of Yaounde I is guided by clear institutional goals, including the development of advanced research capabilities, improvement of infrastructure, and fostering international collaborations. They noted that the university has focused on increasing its visibility in the global academic community by participating in international partnerships and joint research projects. Additionally, a key objective of the strategic plan at the University of Yaounde I is the enhancement of student employability through the integration of practical skills and internships into academic programs. This aligns with national goals to produce graduates who can contribute to economic growth.

Additionally, Mba also identified some challenges in the strategic planning process at the University of Yaounde I. These include resource limitations, particularly in terms of funding and infrastructure, which hinder the full implementation of strategic objectives. Despite these challenges, the university has made significant strides in enhancing its institutional reputation and contributing to national development, particularly through research and community engagement.

- **Strategic Planning in the University of Buea**

The University of Buea, a relatively younger institution compared to the University of Yaounde I, has also developed a strategic plan aimed at meeting both local and global educational needs. Nchang and Ndifor explore how the University of Buea's strategic planning process is closely aligned with Cameroon's broader educational reforms, focusing on the modernization of the educational system. The university's strategic objectives include enhancing teaching quality, promoting research innovation, and expanding international collaborations.

Nkongho and Ngwa found out that the University of Buea's strategic planning emphasizes the integration of technology in academic programs and the promotion of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education. This focus aligns with the national push for a knowledge-based economy and industrialization, as outlined in Cameroon's Vision 2035. The university has also focused on improving student engagement through the development of student-centered learning environments and extracurricular activities.

One of the critical challenges identified in the strategic planning process at the University of Buea is a lack of sufficient financial resources. According to Tabi, the university faces significant funding constraints that hinder its ability to invest in infrastructure and technology, which are crucial for achieving its strategic goals. The university has also faced difficulties in effectively involving all stakeholders in the strategic planning process, particularly faculty and students, which has led to resistance to certain initiatives.

Despite these challenges, the University of Buea has made notable progress in improving its academic programs and research capacity. Fonyuy and Tabi further highlight that the university's focus on internationalization has helped attract global partnerships and improve its research output. Additionally, its focus on producing graduates with market-relevant skills has contributed to improving employability outcomes for its graduates.

- **Comparison of the Strategic Planning Processes at the University of Yaounde I and University of Buea**

While both universities aim to contribute to national development and global educational trends, the strategic planning processes at the University of Yaounde I and University of Buea exhibit both similarities and differences. Both institutions emphasize the need for research excellence, improved teaching quality, and enhanced student employability. However, the University of Yaounde I, with its longer history and larger size, has a more established and comprehensive strategic planning process compared to the University of Buea, which is still evolving its strategic priorities.

Both universities face similar challenges, particularly in terms of financial constraints and the need for infrastructure improvement. However, the University of Yaounde I's established international collaborations provide it with more resources and opportunities for research partnerships. On the other hand, the University of Buea's focus on technology integration and student-centered learning positions it as an innovative institution in terms of pedagogy and research.

The alignment of both universities' strategic plans with Cameroon's Vision 2035 demonstrates their commitment to contributing to national development goals. However, both institutions need to overcome challenges related to resource allocation and stakeholder involvement to fully realize the potential of their strategic plans.

- **Challenges in Strategic Planning at Both Universities**

Several challenges are common to the strategic planning processes at both the University of Yaounde I and University of Buea. Mba also advanced that limited financial resources are a major challenge in both institutions. While these universities have developed strategic plans that focus on key priorities such as research, teaching, and internationalization, the lack of sufficient funding and infrastructure has hindered the full implementation of these plans.

Moreover, Nchang and Ndifor equally added that discuss the issue of stakeholder involvement in strategic planning. In both universities, strategic planning tends to be top-down, with limited participation from faculty, students, and the wider community. This lack of inclusivity can lead to resistance to the strategic plans and hinder their successful implementation. Additionally, there are challenges related to the monitoring and evaluation of strategic plans, which impacts the ability to track progress and make necessary adjustments.

- **Impact of Strategic Planning on Institutional Performance**

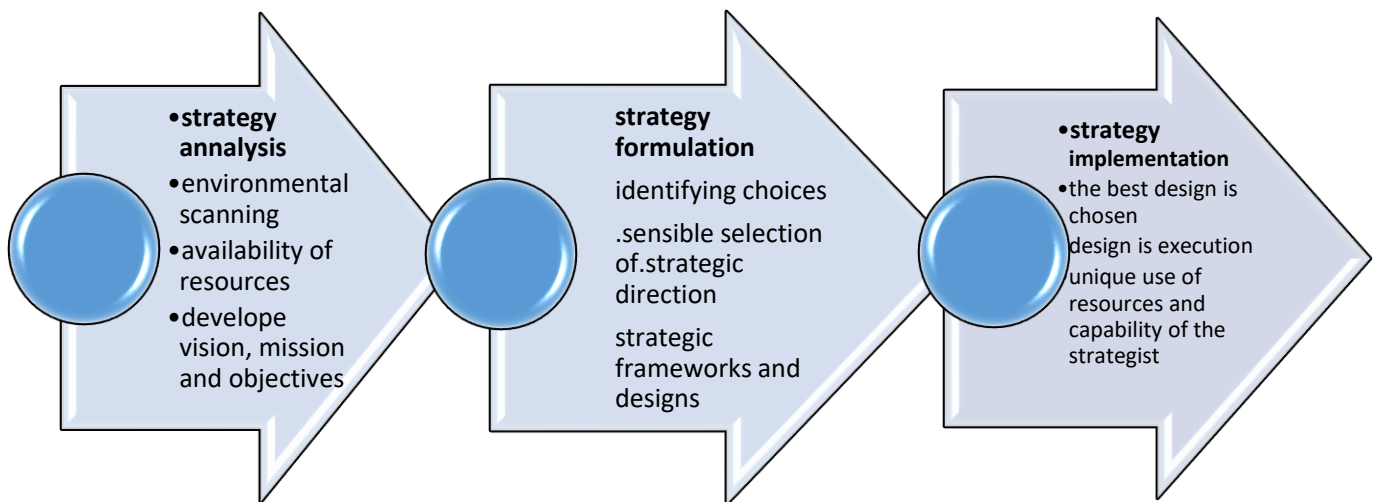
Despite these challenges, both the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea have seen improvements in institutional performance as a result of their strategic planning efforts. According to Tchombe and Abongwa (2021,p.99), the University of Yaounde I has experienced an increase in research output and international visibility due to its strategic planning focus on global partnerships and research excellence. Similarly, Nkongho and Ngwa (2020) highlight that the University of Buea has made significant strides in improving teaching quality and student engagement through its strategic planning initiatives.

Both universities have also made progress in enhancing student employability by integrating practical skills into their academic programs. Fonyuy and Tabi (2022, p.47) note that this focus on employability has helped both institutions produce graduates who are better equipped to meet the demands of the local and international job markets.

1.5.2 The planning process proper

Mohammadinian (2017) believes that the strategic planning process is made up of strategy analysis, formulation and implementation. In a simplistic view, the strategy process or the procedure to, (re)formulate and implement over time can be illustrated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: A generic strategy process in organizations



Source: (Mohammadian, 2017, p. 137)

1.5.2.1 Stage one: Strategic analysis or Environmental appraisal

According to Omran (2005, pp. 67-74), the strategy process is a cyclic endeavor beginning with the appraisal or analysis of both the internal and the external environments of the organization. The most common type of diagnosis of the internal environment involves the identification and evaluation of goals, the organization's mission and strategic objectives in the light of major strengths and weaknesses. If strategies are already implemented the analysis commonly includes an evaluation of results against the strategic objectives (Jofre, 2009, p. 37).

On the other hand, the appraisal of the external environment often focuses on a basic context analysis to identify and evaluate current and/or expected opportunities and threats to the business carried out by the organization. Some widely popular contexts are the SWOT analysis (to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats in a business), the PEST analysis (Political, Economic, Social, Technological and demographic trends), and the competitor analysis" focusing on the evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of current and/or potential competitors in the business. Although a common practice around the world in firms of all sizes and types, context analysis is commonly used to produce a strategic plan and not to formulate the strategy itself. This is the base of a common misconception in management and the use of the words plan and strategy.

Mohammadian posits that, a strategic plan is a well-defined (yet static) course of action that mainly sets the future direction of the business for a given period (often short). A strategy is a more comprehensive and dynamic guidance, that overtime becomes a driver of both

function and structure in the organization. Over the years, plans do terminate, while strategies continue to evolve and might include many strategic plans in the extent of their span.

Sasho (2015, pp. 50-55) affirms that, there are many ways to define and perform an appraisal of the external environment of firms. From the perspective of our strategy process model, the analysis of the external environment will rather describe environmental scanning. Unlike the context analysis, this broader analytical concept considers the macro-environment around a business (e.g. analysing economic, social and technological variables). The main objective of the scanning is to transform information into knowledge, increasing the organizations' capability to respond and adapt to external changes. Therefore, environmental scanning can be seen as a primary organisational mechanism to learn (hence, a mode for organisational learning). In traditional companies, environmental scanning is complementary to context analysis, particularly on competitors and market intelligence. In general, a scanning activity implies both, viewing and searching for information. Organisations often distinguish two modes of viewing (Choo, 1991, pp.26-31).

1.5.2.2 Stage two: Strategy formulation

The second stage of the strategy process following the appraisal of both, the internal and the external environment is formulation. This stage is often connected to the decision and action mechanisms in the firm, particularly to the decision-making process. After the situation appraisal, the firm should be able to increase its situation awareness and formulate options and recommendations for action. Therefore, how to guide or base the action of choosing in the light of several options become an important issue at this stage. Such choice often relies on the perception, knowledge and experience of top managers, and therefore is rather a subjective action. In large and complex organizations, strategy formulation has different levels of focus and scope concerning function and structure. In general, we can identify three levels of strategy formulation that are highly integrated and interdependent: the Corporate level, the Business level, and the Functional level.

a- Formulation at the corporate level

At the highest level of function and structure, corporate strategies regard broad decisions about the scope, direction and position of the organization in the long-term. In general, this level of strategy formulation defines the organizational growth objectives and the actions to achieve them. In addition, it also regards the portfolio of different lines of business and its degree of diversification and integration within the portfolio. In other words, corporate

strategies are formulated to define what we do sell and where we do sell it. From the classic point of view of markets and competition, this becomes the strategy defining what is (are) our product(s), how diversified and integrated is production, and the place in the market in which the organization will compete. Common examples of this type of strategies are:

I. Vertical integration: a basic concentration strategy to increase the organizations' competitiveness by internalizing functions otherwise carried out by suppliers or other organisations up or down in the value chain.

II. Horizontal integration or horizontal growth: is the acquisition of businesses or organisations at the same level in the value chain to increase competitiveness (Jofre, 2009, pp.35-42).

b. Formulation at the business level

Sasho further perceives that the formulation of strategies at the business level instead, broadly focuses on competition. At this level, the main objective is to develop and sustain competitiveness in all the lines of business the organization has decided to participate in. A popular theoretical and conceptual framework in businesses that regards this strategic level is a competitive advantage. One can say that a firm that generates profit over the average of its industry has a competitive advantage over rival firms. From a strategic point of view, the objective is to sustain such an advantage over time as long as possible. This strategic viewpoint has been very influential among firms since its introduction in the early 80s by the Harvard Business School 's Professor Michael Porter.

In theory, a firm can excel in competitiveness using strategic positioning in a market or industry. Such positioning can be based on an advantage achieved by either cost or differentiation. Cost advantage is achieved when a firm is able to offer the same benefits as other firms but for a lower cost, whereas a differentiation advantage is achieved when the benefits of the product of the firm exceed those offered by rival products. In any case, the firm is creating and delivering more value to customers than competitors while generating more profits (Porter, 1998).

c -Formulation at the functional level

Gawie and Mokhatle (2016, pp. 68-73), admonish that, the formulation of strategies at the functional level (commonly but erroneously restricted to the term operational strategies) focuses on short-term activities (commonly plans) to support the implementation of corporate and business strategies. Although each functional unit commonly has a certain degree of independency over strategic choices, each functional strategy must be aligned with the general

long-term strategy of the firm. At this level, three aspects such as the short-term character of objectives, the specificity of scope, and the direct involvement of mid-level or operational managers characterize the formulation of strategies. The formulation of strategies at the functional level focuses on performance and performers in a functional unit or a group of them. Thus, these strategies would often guide the development of new or existent key actions and actors in one or more departments within the firm. They will commonly regard functional aspects of strategic relevance such as productivity, pricing, logistics, cost-effectiveness, efficiency, product design, product branding and image, product-life cycle, etc. In other words, they regard the activities at the value chain. The formulation of strategies at this level, therefore, also considers the coordination and alignment of the decision-making process and communication and control systems of all functions or operations within the firm. At this level, strategies define the balance between available and needed resources and capabilities, determining for example the strategic choice of outsourcing of activities. Financial strategies will on the other hand focus on decisions and actions regarding (Jofre, 2009, p. 39).

d- Choosing among potential strategies

Strategies are often formulated as a set of alternatives. Hence, a formulation process rarely concludes with just one strategy but with a choosing process. Of course, decision-making is a subjective and complex activity and managers often have to rely on their personal experience or instinct. However, literature offers many insights on the issue of strategy choosing since not one but many books have been written on the subject. In this course, we will observe a basic set of criteria derived from the logic statement (or perspective) that strategy should help to solve problems without raising new ones, therefore when choosing among alternatives we could at least consider that:

- The strategy was conceived considering both expectations and facts about internal and external environments, hence it is aligned with resources, capabilities, barriers and opportunities
- The strategy completely solves the issue in question and it is a permanent solution
- By solving the issue (or even by failing to do so), the strategy does not produce a new problem,
- By itself, the strategy is simple and easy to implement and evaluate,
- A successful full implementation of the strategy does not require additional strategies

- In any case, the implementation of the strategy does not conflict with ongoing strategies
- In the end, the effect of the strategy will not conflict with the basic mission and goals of the organization.

1.5.2.3 Stage three: Strategy Implementation

He continued by saying that once we have discerned which strategy fits best our goals at the end of the formulation stage, it is time to put the chosen strategy into practice. The execution of a strategy in an organization is the process of implementation: Even a masterfully formulated strategy becomes useless if not well implemented. Implementation is a determinant of success or failure that is deeply connected to the formulation process, and the functioning and structure of the organization. However, in spite of its relevance, implementation is by far the least studied and documented stage in the strategy process (Hitt et al., 2006). In general, studies in the field place formulation and implementation at the same level in the strategy process, as if being one continuous stage, while evidence (and logic) suggests that although highly intertwined, they are two very different phases.

Literature also suggests that implementation could be a major determinant of organizational performance. We can illustrate this by saying that in the eventuality of two firms implementing the same strategy, the resultant performance is likely to be different. This might be explained once again in terms of resources and capabilities, and the uniqueness resulting from their distinctive use and development over time. You can visualize this fact in the form of a domestic activity cooking. Let us say that two cooks will never obtain the same result while following the same recipe. Although ingredients (resources) might be the same, the resultant dish (objective) will anyway differ in terms of (performance) appearance and flavour, and eventually in terms of quality. Disparities in this case arise from (or are determined by) the different capabilities of the cooks to perform concerning the same recipe (strategy) and ingredients (resources). Such capabilities are related to personal characteristics or the individuality of each cook and not to the recipe itself. Strategy is just the same. A strategy (recipe) produces different performance (flavour) according to the characteristic functioning and structure of the organization (cook's individuality) that is determined by its unique use of resources and capabilities (ingredients and talent). The success of the strategic planning process is of several importance to the school. (Mohammadian)

1.5.3 Stakeholders' Involvement in the University Planning Process

With regards to the Stakeholders theory of Edward Freeman the planning process in universities requires the active participation of various stakeholders, including government agencies, faculty members, students, industries, and international partners (Rowley & Sherman, 2001). Their involvement ensures that university policies align with national development priorities, labor market trends, and global higher education standards (Harvey, 2001).

1.5.3.1 Key Stakeholders in the University Planning Process

The effectiveness of strategic planning depends on stakeholder involvement, including government bodies, industry partners, faculty, students, and international organizations. For universities such as Yaounde I and Buea

❖ **Government (Ministry of Higher Education - MINESUP)**

- Policy Formulation, sets higher education policies, curricula standards, and accreditation guidelines (Republic of Cameroon, 2009).
- Funding Allocation, provides financial resources for university infrastructure and research
- Monitoring and Evaluation, ensures compliance with educational policies and global standards (Amaral & Magalhaes, 2002, pp. 1-21).

❖ **University Administration (Vice-Chancellors, Deans, and Faculty Heads)**

-Strategic Leadership, define university mission statements, research priorities, and educational strategies (Fonchingong, 2021, pp.22-36).

-Curriculum Development, ensure academic programs align with employability skills (Teichler, 2015, p).

-Resource Management, allocate financial and human resources for optimal institutional performance (Tchombe, 2018, pp. 121-131).

❖ **Academic Staff and Researchers**

- Teaching and Learning, develop innovative teaching methods and integrate problem-solving skills into curricula (Harvey, 2001).

- Research and Innovation, conduct studies that address economic and social challenges (Ngwa, 2020).
- Industry Engagement, collaborate with businesses to create demand-driven education programs (Kamdem & Ndongmo, 2022, pp. 45-62).

❖ **Students**

- Feedback Mechanisms, contribute to academic reform through student associations and unions.
- Internships and Career Readiness, participate in work-based learning to bridge the gap between education and employment (Yorke, 2006).

❖ **Industry and Private Sector**

- Advisory Role, provide universities with insights into emerging job market trends (Andrews & Higson, 2008, pp. 411-422).
- Internships and Job Placement, facilitate on-the-job training programs for students (Fonchingong, 2021, p. 30).
- Ngwa equally highlighted that curriculum design and collaboration, ensure that university programs incorporate industry-relevant skills.

❖ **International Organizations and Donors**

- Capacity Building, provide funding and technical support for university development projects.
- Mbangwana also emphasized that global Exchange Programs, facilitate staff and student mobility for skill enhancement.

1.5.3.2 Importance of Stakeholder Involvement in Strategic Planning

- Ensures Curriculum Relevance, aligns university training with industry needs and employment trends (Yorke, 2006).
- Promotes Sustainable University Development, encourages public-private partnerships (PPPs) for university funding and research (Ndille & Tamanji, 2020).
- Enhances Research and Innovation, facilitates access to grants and scholarships for faculty and students (Fonchingong, 2021).

- Strengthens Quality Assurance Mechanisms, ensures that educational programs meet national and international accreditation standards (Kamdem & Ndongmo, 2022).
- Boosts Graduate Employability, increases work opportunities through entrepreneurship training and internship programs (Harvey, 2001).

1.5.4 Elements of a Successful Strategic Planning Process

Ikoru and Nwoso (2017, pp. 58-65) identified five ingredients that are essential for an effective strategic planning process the right people, good data, preparation, a structured process, and adequate resources of time and dollars. Each of these five elements is revisited later.

Kathleen (2003, pp.1-23) posits that, the following factors contribute to a successful strategic process. They include; people, and data preparation among others.

People; Kathleen (2003, pp. 1-23) affirms that the right people means that all the key stakeholders are represented in some way. Usually, this is done through a representation system where each participant in the planning event is there representing a particular stakeholder group--students, business, faculty, classified staff, academic staff, affiliated agencies and the like. The responsibility of all participants is to take the preliminary planning results back to the group they represent to receive feedback. This feedback, both positive and negative, is then brought back to the group and used for revising the draft plans.

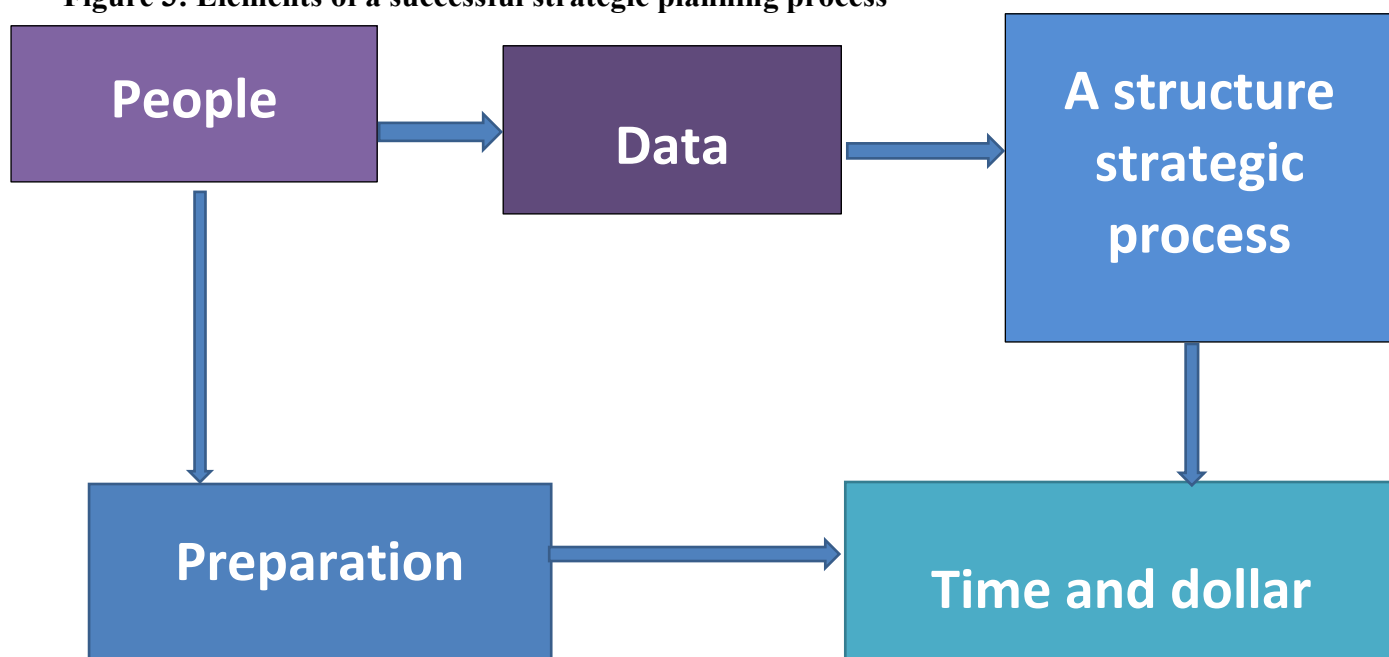
Data; one of the connections between strategic planning and continuous quality improvement is the reliance on data as the basis for decision-making. Data on stakeholder/customer needs and their evaluation of existing services are required for the planning process. The more hard data that are available to describe the current situation, the better the chances of a good plan. Strategic planning in the absence of reliable data can be dangerous. Yet, it is not unusual to find organizations planning for the future with little or no reliable information about the true state of affairs. Some organizations find, upon beginning a strategic planning process, that they must create a temporary plan while collecting crucial data on which to base subsequent strategic planning.

Preparation; those who are planning the future of their department, school, college or institution should be adequately prepared for the task. It is unwise to plan without some notion of the many alternative directions and what others have found to be successful. It is common for an educational institution to invite futurists to speak to the planning team prior to the

planning event. This helps lift people's thinking past the issues of today and later helps them create the vision of a desired future. Outstanding videotapes are available on change and paradigm shifts. Seeing and discussing these helps individuals prepare to make the small and large changes that are inevitable with or without a strategic plan. Some planning groups have brief book reviews in which each member reports on a current book that illuminates the organization's choices. Some groups visit other institutions to get ideas on what is working successfully elsewhere. Preparation that expands the group's perception of what is possible and desirable creates the most innovative and bold plans.

Resources of Time and Dollars; the costs of a sound planning process and the time required for optimal planning were both discussed earlier. Both inadequate time and too much time are detrimental to the process. (ibid).

Figure 3: Elements of a successful strategic planning process



Source: (adapted from Kathleen, 2003, p. 19)

1.5.6. Benefits of Strategic Planning to educational institutions

Adenkule et al (2021, pp. 1-20) regard effective strategic planning can accrue many benefits to the organization. First, it enables the organization to be proactive and to actively shape its own destiny. Because the process requires attention to trends and external developments, an educational institution or department is less likely to be taken by surprise by a new problem or development. Stakeholders who are affected by the organisation are involved

in the planning process. Thus, the institution or department receives valuable feedback both on successful efforts and on areas where improvements should be made.

Kathleen (2003) believes that representatives from faculty, academic staff, and classified staff should be involved as each group brings a unique perspective to the process. This involvement throughout the process helps ensure that those who have major responsibilities to carry out the plan understand the plan and the reasons behind it. Being involved in the planning process can contribute greatly to employees' commitment to mutual goals and a sense of organizational unity.

Similarly, the active involvement of stakeholders in the planning process creates external advocacy for the organization. Employers, for example, are much more likely to support an educational initiative such as a new degree program or a revamped curriculum if they have a first-hand role in a well-designed planning process. Note that the term is "active involvement." External stakeholders have traditionally served in advisory capacities to the educational enterprise. Involvement in strategic planning is much more substantive than the advisory role. Their involvement essentially lays the groundwork for continuing support and participation by those stakeholders (Babalola).

A major benefit of strategic planning in higher educational institutions is that it can bring stability to the organization despite increasingly frequent leadership changes. Simmons and Pohl (1994, pp. 82-90) found that from 1980 to 1994 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the average dean's tenure was five years. They further noted that the average length of leadership tenure was declining sharply with each year. Their observation was that strategic planning creates a broad decision-making group by actively involving middle and operational levels of management. By pushing decision-making down, a system for strategic planning can help the organization maintain a core purpose during times of changing leadership (Adenkule, 2021).

1.6 Strategic planning of the content program

In this section of the work we shall be looking at the program content, the curriculum and the pedagogy of the university. We shall start off with the program content.

1.6.1. Content Program

Program content within the context of strategic planning in universities is crucial as it defines the educational offerings, curriculum structures, and academic programs that align with the institution's mission, vision, and national development objectives. In the case of the

University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea, both universities have sought to integrate strategic planning processes that focus on improving program content to enhance academic quality, address labour market needs, and contribute to the national development goals of Cameroon. This empirical review explores the program content within the strategic planning processes at these two universities, examining their development, challenges, and outcomes.

The construction of program content is the establishment of important elements such as the selection of content that should be included in the course outlines (Rhea, 2024, pp. 136-150). The problem of building and determining their contents is related to a set of variables and the increasingly intertwined in higher grades, because the event is about the lack of visions, value and future resources, which will reflect negatively on the formulation of precise targets, and sees that the number of academic is approved by the higher education institutions. The quality assurance processes that seek institutions to confirm it, should also take into account whether the program meets the criteria of the academy, the specific criteria set by the specialized advisory committees include a minimum of knowledge and skills acquired supposed to graduates of the program and achieve the mission and objectives of the organization. (Saudi National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment, (2008). The building of many procedures is carried out by departments, colleges and scientific management in the enterprise, and can be summarized as the most important requirements for the construction of new ones (Accreditation Body and Ensure the Quality of Higher Education Institutions, 2011) as follows:

- The context of the program includes general information about the university, and a comprehensive study of the program shows the message and the overall objective and sub-goals.
- Study Plan for the program and learning outcomes.
- Curriculum and teaching methods and means of evaluation.
- Human resources and qualifications available.
- Financial resources and facilities (halls, the library, and related laboratories).

The competent departments at the university in cases of adoption of the program or update send it to the Ministry of Higher Education according to the model specified addresses several elements that represent academic standards tasks such as curriculum and learning outcomes that the program seeks to achieve, and the system of student assessment, methods and sources of learning, evaluation and revision.

❖ Program Content and Strategic Planning at the University of Yaounde I

The University of Yaounde I, as one of Cameroon's oldest and largest public university, has undergone substantial strategic planning processes to improve the quality and relevance of its academic programs. Mba (2019) highlights that the university's strategic planning emphasizes the alignment of academic programs with national development goals, particularly the Vision 2035 initiative, which focuses on economic diversification, sustainable growth, and the development of a knowledge-based economy.

According to Tabi (2021), the University of Yaounde I has placed significant importance on updating and diversifying its program content to meet the changing demands of both the labour market and international academic standards. The university has integrated new programs, particularly in emerging fields like information technology, engineering, and environmental studies, in response to global trends and national priorities. The incorporation of practical and hands-on learning into these programs has been a key aspect of their strategic planning to ensure graduates are equipped with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills that enhance their employability.

However, Tchombe and Abongwa (2021) note that while the university has made strides in updating its program content, challenges persist in ensuring that all academic programs are equally updated and responsive to evolving educational demands. Some departments still struggle to incorporate new technologies and pedagogical approaches due to limited resources. The lack of sufficient infrastructure and funding to support these changes has hindered the full implementation of new and updated programs. Despite these obstacles, the university continues to develop its academic offerings to align with national and international trends.

❖ Program Content and Strategic Planning at the University of Buea

The University of Buea, a relatively newer institution compared to the University of Yaounde I, has also undertaken significant efforts to refine its program content within the framework of strategic planning. Nkongho and Ngwa (2020) observe that the University of Buea's strategic planning places a strong emphasis on the relevance and quality of academic programs. One of the primary goals of the university's strategic planning process is to align its academic offerings with the needs of both the local labour market and the broader global academic community.

The university's focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education, particularly in disciplines like computer science, engineering, and biotechnology, has been a central part of its program development (Nchang & Ndifor, 2019). This aligns with the national goal of industrialization and the development of a knowledge-based economy, as outlined in Cameroon's Vision 2035. In addition, the University of Buea has worked on improving its programs in the social sciences, arts, and humanities to cater to a broader range of students and societal needs.

Fonyuy and Tabi (2022) highlight that the university's program content also integrates elements of internationalization, such as partnerships with global institutions and programs that focus on global challenges like climate change and public health. The introduction of joint degree programs, research collaborations, and student exchange programs has helped the university enhance the global relevance of its academic offerings and broaden opportunities for students and faculty alike.

However, like the University of Yaounde I, the University of Buea faces challenges in aligning its program content with rapidly evolving labor market demands. Tabi (2021) suggests that while the university is making progress in program diversification, there is a need for continuous curriculum review to ensure that academic programs remain relevant to both national development needs and global trends. Moreover, limited funding and infrastructure issues have slowed the pace at which the university can implement and update its programs.

❖ **Alignment of Program Content with National and Global Goals**

Both universities of Yaounde I and Buea have made concerted efforts to align their program content with Cameroon's national development goals, particularly those outlined in Vision 2035. The incorporation of fields such as engineering, information technology, and environmental sciences into academic programs reflects the national push toward industrialization and the creation of a knowledge-based economy (Mba, 2019).

Additionally, both institutions are increasingly focused on integrating global trends into their academic programs. Nkongho and Ngwa (2020) note that both the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea are incorporating international perspectives and global challenges into their curricula. For example, programs related to sustainable development, climate change, and international health have gained prominence as universities seek to address global issues and contribute to the global knowledge economy.

However, despite these efforts to align programs with both national and global needs, the pace of curriculum reform has been slow due to resource limitations. Tchombe and Abongwa (2021) emphasize that while both universities have developed programs to meet these goals, ongoing financial constraints and outdated infrastructure impede the universities' ability to rapidly update their program content to keep pace with global educational standards.

❖ **Challenges in Program Content Development and Implementation**

One of the main challenges faced by both universities in Cameroon is the lack of sufficient funding and resources to implement and continuously update academic programs. Tabi (2021) points out that both the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea struggle to secure adequate financial resources to develop new programs, purchase modern equipment, and offer faculty training in emerging pedagogical methods. This challenge is particularly evident in the STEM fields, where up-to-date equipment and resources are necessary for providing high-quality education.

Another issue is the lack of effective stakeholder involvement in the process of program content development. As noted by Mba (2019), in many cases, faculty and students are not sufficiently involved in the design and review of academic programs, leading to a gap between institutional offerings and actual market needs. This disconnect can undermine the relevance of programs and result in a mismatch between the skills developed by students and the expectations of the job market.

Furthermore, Nchang and Ndifor (2019) identify that both universities face challenges related to curriculum coherence and alignment across various departments. While strategic plans outline the importance of program diversification and updating, the actual implementation of these changes is often hindered by institutional bureaucracy, lack of coordination, and resistance to change within the academic community.

❖ **Impact of Program Content on Institutional Performance**

Research suggests that the alignment of program content with strategic planning leads to improved institutional performance in terms of academic quality, research output, and student employability. Fonyuy and Tabi (2022) found that both the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea have seen improvements in student enrolment and academic performance due to the introduction of updated programs that cater for emerging fields such as ICT, biotechnology, and environmental studies.

Furthermore, Tabi (2021) highlights that the focus on employability within the program content at both universities has positively impacted graduate job placement rates, particularly in fields related to engineering, IT, and business. The universities have received increased support from the government and private sector as a result of their efforts to align their programs with national economic development goals.

1.6.2. The curriculum

A curriculum is an educational program which carries the intentions that education embodies such as beliefs, values, attitudes, skills and knowledge that are taught in schools. As viewed by Mulenga (2018, pp. 1-23), Curriculum is the central business of educational institutions which is a set of subjects or content of education such as the syllabus, course outline, subject matter and sets of performance objectives. A good curriculum embodies a range of skills and competencies such as emotional intelligence, moral training, interpersonal relationships, good communication skills, civic participation, living in harmony, respect for elders and good health, which are relevant throughout the life span of the individual. Thus, the Science Education curriculum is not an exception.

Curriculum implementation is the process of putting a set of curricula into effective use in schools and colleges in a bid to realize its goals. The challenges of education curriculum implementation in Cameroon include; insufficient resources, lack of laboratory facilities and attendance, unqualified teachers, complexity of science curriculum, teachers' workloads, poor knowledge of research, poor students' motivation, poor condition of service for teachers, lack of in-service training, over-reliance on traditional method of teaching, poor students' background study, scientific misconception and cognitive ability of students. Inadequate utilization of ICT and ignorance of Educational research among lecturers also affect the implementation of Education Curricula in Cameroon tertiary institutions.

❖ The university curriculum

Curriculum in the university context refers to the structured set of courses, learning experiences, and academic requirements designed to achieve specific educational outcomes (Altbach, 2013). It encompasses the content, teaching methods, assessment strategies, and co-curricular activities that contribute to student learning and skill development (Knight & Yorke, 2016). A well-designed university curriculum integrates theoretical knowledge with practical skills to prepare graduates for the workforce (Harvey, 2001). In higher education, the curriculum is dynamic and continuously revised to align with industry demands, technological

advancements, and global educational standards (Teichler, 2015). Universities implement strategic curriculum planning to ensure that graduates acquire relevant competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy (Bryson, 2018). According to Yorke (2006), an effective curriculum should enhance employability by embedding career-oriented learning, internships, and industry collaborations.

University Curriculum of Public Universities in Cameroon

Public universities in Cameroon, including the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea, follow a standardized curriculum structure established by the Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP) (Ngwa, 2020). The university curriculum is structured according to the LMD system (Licence, Master, Doctorate), which aligns with international standards and promotes student mobility across African and European institutions (Kamdem & Ndongmo, 2022,p.52). Key characteristics of the university curriculum in public universities in Cameroon include:

- **Discipline-Specific Knowledge**
 - Each faculty offers specialized courses tailored to different academic disciplines, such as engineering, health sciences, social sciences, and humanities (Ewumbue-Monono, 2021).
 - Core and elective courses allow students to develop both foundational and advanced knowledge in their fields.
- **Practical and Experiential Learning**
 - Internship programs, fieldwork, and industrial attachments are integrated into some programs, although the extent of their implementation varies by faculty and university (Teichler, 2015).
 - Research projects and community-based learning aim to enhance students' problem-solving abilities (Fonchingong, 2021).
- **General Education and Transversal Skills**
 - Courses in entrepreneurship, ICT, communication, and civic engagement are increasingly included to foster well-rounded graduates (Harvey, 2001).
 - The focus on interdisciplinary education is meant to enhance adaptability in the labor market (Bryson, 2018).

- **Challenges in Curriculum Implementation**

- Limited industry collaboration restricts practical training opportunities for students
- Outdated course content in some faculties affects the relevance of graduates' skills in modern job markets (Ngwa, 2020).
- Insufficient funding and infrastructure impact the delivery of technical and professional programs (Kamdem & Ndongmo, 2022).

- **Curriculum Reform in Public Universities in Cameroon**

Curriculum reform refers to the systematic review and modification of academic programs to enhance relevance, improve learning outcomes, and align education with labor market needs (Teichler, 2015). In the context of public universities in Cameroon, curriculum reform is driven by national education policies, global higher education trends, and the need to enhance graduates' employability skills (Ngwa, 2020).

Key Drivers of Curriculum Reform

- **Labor Market Demands**
 - The shift towards a knowledge-based economy requires universities to update curricula to incorporate ICT, data analytics, entrepreneurship, and soft skills (Harvey, 2001).
 - Employers increasingly seek graduates with practical experience, critical thinking skills, and adaptability (Andrews & Higson, 2008).
- **Globalization and the LMD System (Licence, Master, Doctorate)**
 - Cameroon adopted the LMD system to harmonize its higher education framework with international standards, facilitating student mobility and employability (Kamdem & Ndongmo, 2022).
 - This reform introduced credit-based learning, modular courses, and competency-based education to enhance flexibility (Yorke, 2006).
- **Technological Advancements**
 - Digital transformation has made it essential to integrate e-learning, artificial intelligence (AI), and online certification programs into university curricula (Fonchingong, 2021).
 - Some faculties have begun adopting blended learning models, though implementation remains inconsistent (Bryson, 2018).

➤ **Challenges in Curriculum Reform**

- **Rigid Bureaucratic Systems:** Changes in university curricula must go through extensive approval processes by the Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP), slowing down reforms (Ewumbue-Monono, 2021, pp.112-130).
- **Limited Industry Involvement:** Employers are often not fully engaged in curriculum development, leading to gaps between academic training and workplace expectations (Ngwa, 2020).
- **Resource Constraints:** Many public universities lack modern teaching facilities, laboratories, and digital infrastructure necessary for effective curriculum reform .
- **Resistance to Change:** Some faculty members are reluctant to adopt new teaching methods and technologies, limiting the impact of reform initiatives (Teichler, 2015).

➤ **Strategies for Effective Curriculum Reform**

- ✓ **Strengthening University-Industry Linkages**
 - Universities should collaborate with industries to co-design courses, establish internship programs, and incorporate guest lectures from professionals (Harvey, 2001).
 - Employability surveys should be conducted regularly to assess whether university programs meet workforce needs (Kamdem & Ndongmo, 2022).
- ✓ **Integrating Soft Skills and Practical Training**
 - Universities should emphasize problem-solving, leadership, teamwork, and digital literacy in course design (Andrews & Higson, 2008).
 - Project-based learning and real-world case studies can help students develop industry-relevant skills (Bryson, 2018).
- ✓ **Expanding Digital and Blended Learning Approaches**
 - Public universities should invest in online learning platforms, virtual simulations, and MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) to make education more accessible (Fonchingong, 2021).
 - Training students in emerging fields such as AI, cyber security, and sustainable development can improve job prospects (Yorke, 2006).
- ✓ **Regular Curriculum Evaluation and Flexibility**

- A five-year review cycle should be implemented to ensure university programs remain relevant (Ngwa, 2020).
- Universities should introduce micro-credentialing programs that allow students to acquire specific job-related skills outside traditional degree structures (Teichler, 2015).

These and more would go a long way to improve on the educational system in Cameroon and the higher education to be precise.

1.6.3. Pedagogy in Public Universities in Cameroon and Its Relation to Employability

Pedagogy in public universities in Cameroon refers to the teaching methods and instructional strategies used to facilitate learning (Teichler, 2015). The effectiveness of pedagogy directly influences graduates' employability by shaping their ability to apply knowledge in real-world situations (Harvey, 2001). Some of the teaching methods include the following;

- **Traditional Lecture-Based Teaching**
 - Most universities still rely heavily on traditional, lecture-based instruction, which emphasizes theoretical knowledge over practical application (Yorke, 2006).
 - Large class sizes and limited access to modern teaching technologies hinder interactive learning (Ngwa, 2020).
- **Student-Centered and Competency-Based Approaches**
 - Some faculties have adopted active learning strategies, such as case studies, project-based learning, and problem-solving exercises (Bryson, 2018).
 - The integration of group work and collaborative learning helps students develop teamwork and communication skills (Andrews & Higson, 2008).
- **Use of Digital and Blended Learning**
 - The introduction of digital learning platforms, such as Moodle and virtual classrooms, has expanded access to educational resources (Fonchingong, 2021).
 - However, limited digital infrastructure and internet access remain significant challenges in public universities (Kamdem & Ndongmo, 2022).
- **Industry Engagement and Practical Training**
 - Some programs include guest lectures from industry professionals and partnerships with businesses for internship placements (Olayemi, 2019, pp. 56-72).

- The effectiveness of these initiatives varies, as some faculties have stronger industry connections than others (Teichler, 2015).

The curriculum and pedagogy in public universities in Cameroon play a crucial role in shaping graduates' employability skills. While strategic planning has led to improvements in curriculum design and teaching methodologies, challenges such as outdated content, limited practical training, and resource constraints persist. Enhancing industry linkages, promoting experiential learning, and integrating digital education are essential strategies for improving graduate employability in the Universities of Yaounde I and Buea.

1.6.4 Strategic Planning and Professionalisation in Cameroonian Universities

Endeley (2014, pp. 97-111). holds that Planning of Cameroonian universities is done through the following ways;

- Cameroon's adoption of the LMD (Licence–Master–Doctorate) system, inspired by the Bologna Process, expressly includes graduate employability as a central goal: “one student - one job opportunity, one student -one business enterprise”
- Programs like Pro-Actp, supported by the Ministry of Higher Education, fund universities to enhance technical equipment, enabling practical teaching aligned with labour-market needs.
- Government policy documents (e.g. Strategy for Growth and Employment 2013–2020) emphasize partnerships with the private sector, integrating universities into innovation channels and professionalizing higher education

1.7 Quality assurance and control mechanisms

Quality in higher education is a multi-dimensional, multi-level, and dynamic concept that relates to the contextual settings of an educational model, to the institutional mission and objectives, as well as to specific standards within a given system, institution, program, or discipline. (Paraschwescu, 2013, pp. 123-135). Quality may thus take different meanings depending on the understanding of various interests of different stakeholders in higher education (student, university, discipline, labour market, society, government). It refers to inputs, processes, outputs, missions, objectives, the attributes or characteristics of the academic world which are worth evaluating in the development of higher education. A wide spectrum of definitions of academic quality has been used (UNESCO, 2022).

1.7.1 Quality Assurance

An all-embracing term referring to an on-going, continuous process of evaluating, assessing, monitoring, guaranteeing, maintaining, and improving the quality of a higher education system, institutions, or programs. As a regulatory mechanism, quality assurance focuses on both accountability and improvement, providing information and judgments (not ranking) through an agreed-upon and consistent process and well-established criteria. Many systems make a distinction between internal quality assurance (i.e., intra-institutional practices given monitoring and improving the quality of higher education) and external quality assurance (i.e., inter- or supra-institutional schemes of assuring the quality of higher education institutions and programs) (Garvin, 1988,). Quality assurance activities depend on the existence of the necessary institutional mechanisms preferably sustained by a solid quality culture.

Quality management, quality enhancement, quality control, and quality assessment are means through which quality assurance is ensured. Teary (2016, p. 48) believes that the scope of quality assurance is determined by the shape and size of the higher education system. Quality assurance varies from accreditation, in the sense that the former is only a prerequisite for the latter. In practice, the relationship between the two varies a great deal from one country to another. Both imply various consequences such as the capacity to operate and to provide educational services, the capacity to award officially recognized degrees, and the right to be funded by the state. Quality assurance is often considered a part of the quality management of higher education. (UNESCO, 2022).

1.7.1.1. Quality assurance agencies

Quality assurance agencies aim to evaluate and guide career services and employability provision, influence related policy, and encourage best practices. Such agencies act as “important mechanisms” through which HE institutions can be encouraged to “enhance the employability of their graduates” (Blackmore et al, 2016, p.20). These bodies tend to operate at a national level. Within South Africa, for example, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) oversee the development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (Play foot and Hall 2009, p.47) and Careers Advice Service (CAS), which have together provided training workshops on ‘basic career development concepts and applications.

Equally, within Canada, the Canadian Association for Cooperative Education (CAFCE) is a national forum seeking to establish standards and co-operative programs across

its 79 post-secondary member institutions (BIS, 2011, p.26).²⁰ Within the UK, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is the independent monitoring and advice agency for H E. Across a number of their reports, the QAA (2014a, 2014b) have identified ‘student employability’ as a key theme worthy of further investigation. They have also advocated the monitoring of employer engagement and utilising this information as an institutional performance monitoring tool. Similarly, within the United States, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) identifies best practices and quality benchmarks in the area of graduate employability. (Blackmore et al).

1.7.1.2 Mechanisms for quality assurance in universities

Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002) as cited by Bessong (2016) hold that mechanisms for quality assurance include:

- a- Internal regulatory mechanisms and
- b- External regulatory mechanisms

Concerning internal regulatory mechanisms, this implies that all proposals for the establishment should follow strict internal guidelines because such proposals emanate from the ministry of education and are scrutinized through the national advisory council on education and the senate. In this way, all relevant inputs and queries would have been made and addressed. The vice-chancellors or rectors of universities should be carrying out regular monitoring reviews and periodic. Such monitoring should consider how effectively a program achieve its stated objectives or goals and the success of students in attaining the intended learning outcomes. This function is usually carried out by the ministry providing the program and often involves a program team appraising its performance at the end of an academic year.

The process should consider reports from external examiners, staff, society and students' feedback, reports from any professional body that accredits and feedback from former students and employers. It may result in an adjustment to the curriculum or to assessment to ensure continued effectiveness (Okebukola, 2005, cited by Bessong 2016, pp. 63-67). As far as the appointment of external examiners is concerned, universities need to appoint external examiners who should report to the chief executive of the institution. The external examiners should be independent academic experts drawn from sister institutions or from areas of relevant professional practice. External examiners give impartial advice on performance about particular aspects.

However, institutions require their external examiners in their expert judgment to report on whether the set standards are appropriate for awards or award elements by referring to subject benchmark, the framework for higher education qualifications institutional specifications and other relevant matters. The standards of students' performance and comparability of the standards with those of students following other similar in other higher educational institutions. The extent to which the process for assessment examination and determination of awards are sound and has been fairly conducted (Besong, 2016, p. 68).

Notable external regulatory mechanisms are the following:

- External examiners should shun being bought over.
- Program establishment in Cameroonian universities. As universities subject their proposed to various levels of scrutiny these same prior to establishment have to be approved. Observation by the supervisory body of the government has to ensure that the guidelines have been achieved. This is an added mechanism of external examiners to ensure quality and appropriate standards in Cameroon educational systems.
- National advisory council accreditation in Cameroonian universities. In the recent past, there has been an increasing concern on the part of the government to ensure that higher education in the country is worthy of respect. As a result, national approaches to extra-institutional examinations have been established which have taken forms that reflect different national styles, beliefs, values and norms. (ibid).

1.7.1.3 Elements of Quality Assurance

Quality Management: An aggregate of measures taken regularly at the system or institutional level to assure the quality of higher education with an emphasis on improving quality as a whole. As a generic term, it covers all activities that ensure the fulfilment of the quality policy and the quality objectives and responsibilities and implements them through quality planning, quality control, quality assurance, and quality improvement mechanisms (Tummala, 1995, pp. 85-92).

Total Quality Management (TQM): A particularly influential comprehensive approach to quality management that emphasizes factors such as continuous improvement, customer focus, strategic management, the need for explicit systems to assure the quality of higher education,

and a view of leadership and supervision that stresses employee empowerment and delegation. Such an approach to quality management emphasizes assessment that is undertaken against:

- Defined objectives or standards (set internally or by external funding bodies);
- Measures of customer satisfaction;
- Expert and professional judgment; and
- Comparator organizations. TQM is considered to have a close conceptual and philosophical link with benchmarking methodologies. Such an approach has been mostly applied in the economic sector of societies, being less used in the academic world (Mensah; 2020, pp. 9-25).

Quality Planning: It consists of the set of actions that establishes the objectives and the conditions referring to the quality of higher education and the application of the mechanism of the quality system. Quality planning includes product planning, managerial and operational planning (including its organization and programming), an elaboration of quality plans, and the provision of quality improvement measures.

Quality school environment

According to Zais (2011, pp. 35-50), School Environment means the extent to which school settings promote student safety and student health, which may include topics such as the physical plant, the academic environment, available physical and mental health supports and services, and the fairness and adequacy of disciplinary procedures. Research consistently finds out correlation between living in neighborhoods of concentration poverty and life outcomes. Poor health environment, poor public infrastructure, and polluted environment, typically have higher crime rates, unhealthy housing and high dropout rates affect considerably quality education.

Accreditation: The process by which a non-governmental or private body evaluates the quality of a higher education institution as a whole or a specific educational program to formally recognize it as having met certain predetermined minimal criteria or standards. The result of this process is usually the awarding of a status (a yes/no decision), of recognition, and sometimes of a license to operate within a time-limited validity. The process can imply initial and periodic self-study and evaluation by external peers. The accreditation process generally involves three steps with specific activities; a self-evaluation process conducted by the faculty, the administrators, and the staff of the institution or academic program, resulting in a report

that takes as its reference the set of standards and criteria of the accrediting body. A study visit, conducted by a team of peers, selected by the accrediting organization, which reviews the evidence, visits the premises, and interviews the academic and administrative staff, resulting in an assessment report, including a recommendation to the commission of the accrediting body. An examination by the commission of the evidence and recommendation based on the given set of criteria concerning quality and resulting in a final judgment and the communication of the formal decision to the institution and other constituencies, if appropriate (Mensah,2020, pp. 9-25).

Assessment: The process of the systematic gathering, quantifying, and using of information given judging the instructional effectiveness and the curricular adequacy of a higher education institution as a whole (institutional assessment) or of its educational programs (programs assessment). It implies the evaluation of the core activities of the higher education institution (quantitative and qualitative evidence of educational activities and research outcomes). Assessment is necessary to validate a formal accreditation decision, but it does not necessarily lead to an accreditation outcome. A technically designed process for evaluating student learning outcomes and for improving student learning and development as well as teaching effectiveness. **Assessment of Individual Qualifications:** The formal written appraisal or evaluation of qualifications of an individual by a competent authority to grant him or her recognition for academic and/or professional further use. (Evaluation, Accreditation, Outcomes, Quality Assessment) (UNESCO, 2020).

Audit: The process of reviewing an institution or a program that is primarily focused on the accountability of the latter, evaluating/determining if the stated aims and objectives (in terms of curriculum, staff, infrastructure, etc.) are met. In the United Kingdom, when an audit is an institutional process carried out internally, the process is described (since 2002) as an “institutional review” process. **Institutional Audit/Institutional Review:** An evidence-based process carried out through peer review that investigates the procedures and the mechanisms by which an institution ensures its quality assurance and quality enhancement. When it specifically addresses the final responsibility for the management of quality and standards that rests with an institution as a whole, the process is called an institutional review (UNESCO, 2022).

Certification: The process by which an agency or an association acknowledges the achievement of established quality standards and usually grants certain privileges to the target individual student or teacher (Assessment, Standards)

Effectiveness: An output of specific reviews (e.g. the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) or its Reports on Institutional Effectiveness) that measure (the quality of) the achievement of a specific educational goal or the degree to which a higher education institution can be expected to achieve specific requirements. It is different from efficiency, which is measured by the volume of output or input used. As a primary measure of the success of a program or of a higher education institution, clear indicators, meaningful information, and evidence best reflecting institutional effectiveness concerning student learning and academic achievement have to be gathered through various procedures (inspection, observation, site visits, etc.). Engaging in the measurement of educational effectiveness creates a value-added process through quality assurance and accreditation review and contributes to building, within the institution, a culture of evidence. (Quality Assurance, Indicators, Accreditation, Culture of Evidence) (Christopher, 1997, pp. 120-135).

Efficiency: An ability to perform well or to achieve a result without wasted resources, effort, time, or money (using the smallest quantity of resources possible). Educational efficiency can be measured in physical terms (technical efficiency) or terms of cost (economic efficiency). Greater educational efficiency is achieved when the same amount and standard of educational services are produced at a lower cost, if a more useful educational activity is substituted for a less useful one at the same cost, or if unnecessary educational activities are eliminated. A program or a higher education institution may be efficiently managed, but not effective in achieving its mission, goals, or objectives (Anderson, 2006, p.79).

1.7.4 The significance of Quality Assurance in the university

The quality assurance program is considered a core part of strategic management in HEIs. Quality assurance measures can assist in achieving two main resolutions: accountability and improvement. There is an unstable balance between the two recommendations, which often leads to the issue of incompatibility.

Accountability is a summative method, it is one of the central aspects of control, and it looks at what has been accomplished from the objectives that were identified. Accordingly, accountability is associated with information, suitability, security or standards that relate to the level of satisfaction achieved (MINESUP 2023). Accountability procedures are based on criteria established by external bodies (accreditation bodies) and authorities. It is aimed at reinforcing external understanding and control and the prospect of taking external remedial measures if required. Accordingly, quality assurance for accountability means using a

summative method. In cases where this approach prevails, the reports contain specific data on the results and are published (Billing, 2004). The aim of making them known is to draw the public's attention to the activities of HEIs (MINESUP 2023). This method is standard in countries like the UK, where there is significant institutional autonomy (Billing, 2004 , pp. 98-115).

Nevertheless, there are also other voices which state that accountability and quality improvement can be integrated into a balanced strategy (MINESUP 2023). According to Harvey (2007), improvement and accountability can be integrated into specific areas, whereas in other cases they can be treated independently of each other. The areas in which they can be related include guidelines that can provide guidance for relevant procedures and practices related to accountability requirements; performance indicators associated with the comparison of best practices between institutions; departments or; and research evidence that indicates shortcomings in practice which results in recommendations for improvement. The areas in which improvement can be treated separately from accountability include; experimental research, training and staff development.

1.7.5 Control mechanisms (Evaluation and Control)

Bessong believes that, this refers to a set of operational activities and techniques (monitoring activities and a structured internally planned and implemented policy) elaborated and used to fulfil requirements of quality. Often used interchangeably with quality management and quality assurance, it refers to an aggregate of actions and measures taken regularly to assure the quality of higher education products, services, or processes, with an emphasis on assuring that a prescribed threshold of quality is met. It aims both at monitoring the process and at eliminating certain causes generating unsatisfactory functioning. Sometimes a minimal quality control (mostly in the shape of some kind of certification) exists serving as a filtering mechanism in confirming that a higher education institution is fulfilling minimal agreed-upon quality requirements and has appropriate quality monitoring procedures in place.

1.7.5.1 The Concept of Evaluation

The final stage in the process of strategic planning or management is the evaluation of the strategy. Management should evaluate the strategy, effectiveness and progress of the organisation. The responsibility of management is to preserve and maintain the interests of the stakeholders, determine and control the internal situation, and carefully monitor external events. Evaluation is an approach for consolidation of learning processes, and a method of

compiling previous knowledge (Tambo et al., 2013, p. 289). Evaluation is an essential concept in the strategic management process; it assesses whether the budget and financial resources were appropriately allocated to the activities and programmes of the organisation (i.e., the higher education institution) to ensure efficiency and effectiveness (Thune 1996, pp. 31-44). Therefore, evaluation has become an important need because of the growing demand to check the results of the strategy, including the standards of the quality assurance implementation processes.

The principal activities for the evaluation of strategy consist of the assessment of internal and external factors which form the basis of the currently applied strategy, measurement of performance through the use of Performance Indicators (PIs), and implementing of remedial actions if required. Moreover, through proper evaluation, the institution's management can conclude whether the application of strategy and the processes of its implementation have resulted in the attainment of the objectives which have been set by the institution (Johnson et al., 2005).

Typically, a successful evaluation starts by describing the parameters which should be measured, because these standards need to be aligned with the objectives identified in the formulation of strategy and with its implementation processes (Senge, 2006; Scharmer, 2009 cited in Bryson, 2011). Most institutions apply a selected group of key performance indicators (KPIs) (like the institution focused on in this study); such indicators measure whether the adopted activities resulted in the expected outcomes. Performance indicators usually follow the critical factors of implementation, which include determining the required time for the implementation of the strategy, adequacy of institutional structure, appropriateness of institutional culture, planning of resources, and competency of leadership. In addition, a comprehensive evaluation of the external environmental factors that impact the institution is needed; moreover, it is also recommended that both qualitative and quantitative indicators are applied (Johnson et al., 2005).

Evaluation is an essential activity because managers should be sure that their strategic plan is applied efficiently and that it is achieving the intended purpose. It also allows strategy leaders to communicate better so that organisational issues/challenges can be resolved before a crisis arises. Therefore, for the evaluation to be operative, it is required to be embedded in the planning processes. (Dalrymple, 2007 as cited by Nweke, 2020).

In addition, there is the need for the concentration on teachers because they are the largest single budgetary element in schools. Moreover, parents, teachers, and administrators emphasize repeatedly the fundamental role that teachers play in the determination of school quality. Yet there remains little consensus among researchers on the characteristics of a good teacher, let alone on the importance of teachers in comparison to other determinants of academic performance. Teacher quality is the concept that embodies what the teacher does and what they can do in terms of their assigned roles in the school. Related to the concept of teacher quality is teaching quality and it has been observed that one way of determining the quality of teaching in schools is by looking at the intermediate outcome of student performance. There are several ways to evaluate a student's «quality» attributable to formal education, but the most tractable indicator is how he or she performs on tests (World Bank, 2003).

Similarly, the evaluation result of the strategic plan may require the adjustment of strategic goals, objectives and KPIs, which in turn may be reflected in the alignments of the quality assurance standards, which may also need in turn to be adjusted. In addition, this will also result in losing the comparability and compatibility of quality assurance standards institutionalised with KPIs through the various phases of the strategic plan. Teachers are central to any consideration of schools, and a majority of education policy discussions focus directly or indirectly on the role of teachers. Therefore, private secondary schools need to have a plan in advance for qualified teacher recruitment.

1.7.5.2 Significance of control mechanisms (evaluation and control)

Strategy evaluation and control are important as they help a business to keep track of progress in attaining milestones and targets. Schlebusch and Mokhatle (2016, pp. 342-348) posit that a business that constantly monitors and controls its projects can check on its progress and correct deviations in a timely and cost-effective way. Marshall, (2004, pp. 11-12) opine that evaluation and control ensure that a business enterprise measures progress against completion dates, costs and quality or standards. A business entity needs to review its strategic choices and continuously make adjustments to maintain a fit with the environment. Mohammadian (2017) recommends a systematic review, evaluation and controlling of the implementation of strategies because the best-formulated and well-implemented strategies become valueless as the business environment changes. According to Tandoh, (2021, pp. 1-17), through continuous monitoring and control, SMEs can sustain a competitive edge. Taylor and Machado (2006, pp. 137-153), expresses similar sentiments by mentioning that strategy

evaluation and control inform the managers about the reasons leading to the failure to meet a certain objective, performance standard or any other performance indicator.

A continuous evaluation of strategies offers benefits such as allowing benchmarking of progress to be established and monitored effectively, creating manager and employee commitment to achieve objectives, and enabling the monitoring of changes in the external opportunities and threats as well as the internal strengths and weaknesses of the business Lynch (2015, pp.275-289). The basic thought is that evaluation and control, keep the implementation of strategies in check in order for organisations to identify the fit between strategies and objectives. Evaluation follow four steps, namely setting standards of performance, measuring actual performance, identifying deviations from set standards and initiating corrective action. The evaluation and control construct suggest that SMEs are likely to monitor their progress in strategy implementation and take corrective action to correct deviations from the standards set (ibid).

Synthesis

This chapter has shed some light on literature on strategic planning which is our independent variable of study. We started off by looking at the higher education in Cameroon by throwing light on its role to the development of education in Cameroon. As a matter of fact, we examined the different indicators of strategic planning and their importance to these universities. We equally went further to examine strategic planning in universities in Cameroon, the university vision and mission statements, the university goals and objectives, the strategic planning process as practiced in our universities of study, the planning of the program content and quality assurance and control mechanisms.

CHAPTER TWO
GRADUATES' EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

This part of the work examines literature on graduates' employability skills by so doing it shall review concepts like; employment, the employer, the employee, the job market scenario, employability skills, schools of thought on employability skills the measurement of employability. More so, the chapter shall equally throw light on graduates' employability skills development, and their competition in the job market. The relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability would be examined. We shall equally do an empirical review of strategic planning and graduates employability skills and we will end up with the models and theories that explain these variables under study.

2.1 The concept of Employability

Employability is becoming a core issue in many countries and increased attention is being paid to the role of Higher education in developing employability (Huang et al, 2014, pp. 135-146).

Enhancing Graduate Employability skills is considered an important task within the Cameroonian university community. The labour market needs and the employers' requirements for skills from graduates vary among employers and also from one country to another. The current changing business environment emphasizes the importance of education for employability, focusing on the development of not only skills but also practical experience. To enhance competitive advantage for graduate employment, students need to develop employability skills in addition to the acquisition of subject-specific knowledge. Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) need to identify ways to incorporate this requirement.

Yorke and Knight (2003) one of the authors of the employability framework define employability as a set of achievements skills, capable and able, and this impacts all areas of university life, in terms of the delivery of academic programmes and extra curricula activities. Fundamentally then, employability is about learning how to learn and employability is not a product, but a process (LTSN cited Lee, 2002, p.30). Harvey (2002) mentioned in his report titled "Employability and Diversity" that, employability has many definitions but they break down into two broad groups. The first relates to the ability of the student to get (and retain and develop in) a job after graduation. The other set is concerned with enhancing the students' attributes (skills, knowledge, attitudes and abilities) and ultimately with empowering the student as a critical life-long learner (Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Harvey, 2002).

The ILO consider employability as "The skills knowledge and competences that enhance a worker's ability to secure and retain a job, progress at work and cope with change,

secure another job if he/she so wishes or has been laid off and enter more easily into the labour market at different periods of the life cycle”.

Enhancing the employability skills of the graduates is not a new topic and policy makers are still making plans to increase graduates’ skills to meet the needs of the current workforce. Higher education Institutions are a key player in enhancing employability and their responsibility is to identify how they can enhance the skills of their future employees. Generic skills are the key term used as employability skills in most countries, but what is meant by this term varies more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy (Stoner & Milner, 2014, p.125).

2.1.1 Educational stakeholders view on employability Skills

2.1.1.1 University of Exeter

It defined employability as, “The establishment of clear mechanisms by which students can develop their abilities to use and deploy a wide range of skills and opportunities to enhance their own academic learning and enable them to become more employable” (Lee, 2000). Employment and employability are not the same thing and should be differentiated. (Lee, 2002, pp. 23-34). Being employed means having a job, and being employable means having the qualities needed to maintain employment and progress in the workplace.

Employability from the perspective of HEIs is therefore about producing graduates who according to the University of Sydney believes that graduates should be more employable, more able to cope with change and more developed as people. In specific terms, graduates of any faculty, board of study or college of the university should have knowledge, skills, thinking skills, personal skills, personal attributes and practical skills (Bridgestock, 2019, pp.143-152). They have mentioned a specific list of requirements needed to fulfil the above skills as stated in table below.

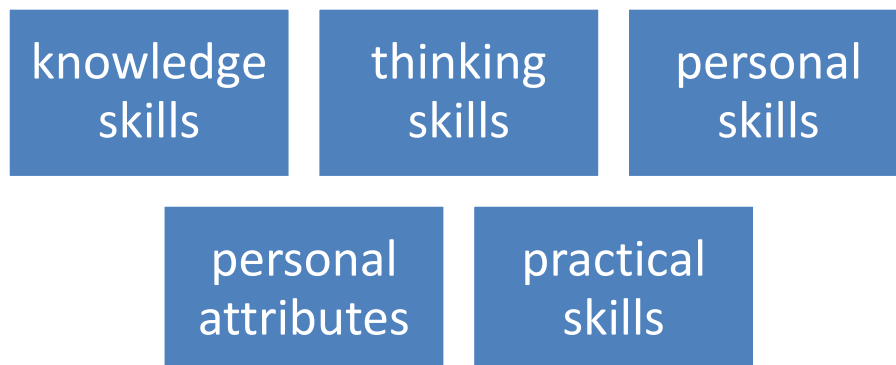
Table 1. Required Skills by universities in Cameroon

Type of Skills required by the university	Nature of the skills
Knowledge skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have a body of knowledge - be able to apply theory to practise - be able to identify, access, communicate and organise knowledge in written and oral - have an appreciation of the requirements - have the ability to appropriate technologies
Thinking skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - be able to exercise critical judgement - be capable of rigorous and independent thinking - be able to account for decisions - be realistic self-evaluators - adopt a problem-solving approach
Personal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the capacity for and commitment to life-long learning - the ability to plan and achieve goals in personal and professional spheres - the ability to work with others
Personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strive for tolerance and integrity - acknowledge their personal responsibility for their value judgement - have ethical behaviour towards others
Practical skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - be able to use information technology for personal and professional development

Source: (adapted from Andreas & Dimitri, 2020, p. 294).

The employability skills needed can be needed by the universities can be expressed in the figure below.

Figure 4: Required skills by the university



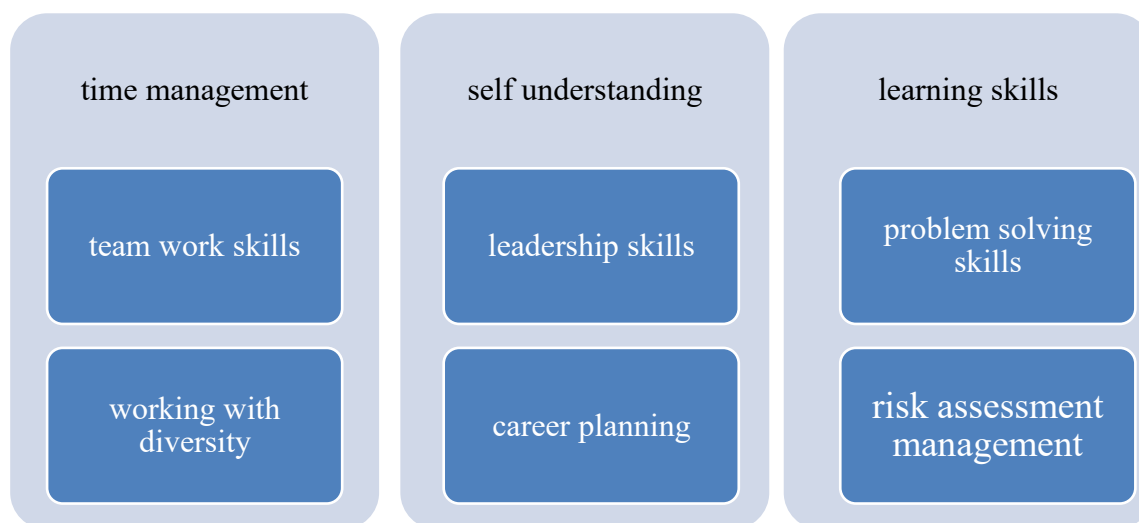
Source: (Capelli, 2015, p. 256).

Blackmore et al (2016, p. 25) affirms that students and Employers can be taken as real customers in higher education. Expectations of both customers should be considered by the HEIs as service providers in this industry. Jerzy (2000) discussed student and employer expectations from higher education. The author pointed out that young people would like to position themselves in society and most of them think of their university studies as a good way to offer them good job opportunities. Sometimes they look for modern fields of study without analysing job (employment) market prospects. On the other hand, universities are responsible for finding answers to some key questions regarding the mission and the future strategy as well as the present status of their alumni (Capelli, 2015, p. 260).

2.1.1.2 An Employer's school of thought

An employer's perspective defines employability skills as "skills required not only to gain employment but also to progress within an enterprise to achieve one's potential and contribute successfully to enterprise strategic directions" (Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry & Business Council of Australia, 2002). Enhancing graduate employability skills is considered an important task within the university community in any country. To identify employer requirements most of the universities in the world regularly conduct employers' needs surveys. Employers normally give their comments on the skills they are looking for in new employees. (British council, 2015, pp. 2253-2270; Ballantyne et al., 2004, p.).

Figure 5: Employers' expectations from employees



Source: (Paul B. et al, 2016)

- Time Management; this is the ability to manage several tasks at once, set priorities and allocate time effectively in order to meet multiple deadlines
- Self-Understanding: this means the capacity to know about strengths and personal characteristics
- Learning Skills: this refers to the desire to learn effectively from a wide range of sources including competencies such as learning what matters, organizing information and critical thinking
- Teamwork Skills: the capability to work effectively as a member of a team and to understand the dynamics that make teams successful
- Leadership Skills: the ability to lead, influence and motivate others
- Problem Solving: this implies the proficiency to identify, prioritize and solve problems. The ability to ask the right questions, sort out the many facets of the problem and determine possible solutions
- Working with Diversity: the competence to respect and tolerate different points of view, values and philosophies of life and deal constructively with people who differ from yourself
- Career Planning: the capacity to manage your career in a constantly changing the world of work

- **Understanding Workplace:** the desire to grasp the underlying values of the workplace, its dynamics and expectations
- **Risk Assessment Management:** the capacity to assess alternative courses of action in terms of their consequences and associated risks and to identify alternative ways to reduce inherent risk. (University of Sydney, 1997; Paul et al, 2016, pp. 602-618).

Matsuoka K. affirmed by Small et al (2018, pp. 148-166) that universities should conduct employers skills requirement surveys to identify real needs, in order to strengthen their graduates' skills. In most countries, government organizations pay attention to identifying these skills requirements. The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia (2002) made a pioneer attempt to discover what employers are really looking for from their workers.

According to the Employability Skills Framework presented by the organization, employers have mainly given attention to personal attributes which will mainly contribute to overall employability. Personal attributes maintained in this framework are loyalty, commitment, honesty and integrity, enthusiasm, reliability, personal presentation, common sense, positive self-esteem, a sense of humour, a balanced attitude to work and home life, an ability to deal with pressure, and, motivation and adaptability. The main skills requirement mentioned in this framework are communication, teamwork, problem-solving, planning and organizing, technology, learning, self-management, initiative and enterprise skills. Many businesses have suggested that educators should review and redevelop their curriculum and change delivery methodology to support the development of these skills and attributes. (Damoah et al, 2021; Chavez et al, 2017, pp.152-166).

2.1.1.3 The Learners oriented school of thought

The Erasmus plus program of the European Union posits that the current business environment is dynamic. Graduates from universities should compete with professional qualification holders in a job market where employers prefer to recruit professional qualification holders which can be taken as evidence from job advertisement. Therefore, there is a need to match the skills of university graduates with the needs of the industry if they are to be successful in the job market. Hence, there is an urgent need to identify the employers' perspective on the skills and attributes of potentially employable graduates and their opinions regarding the comparability of graduates with professional qualification holders. Employers

reported work-related experience as an important consideration in recruitment. (Ma et al. 2021, pp. 744-762).

Non-technical skills sought include presenting technical findings to a diverse audience and teamwork, while personality, self-confidence and attitudes towards work are considered preferred attributes (Capelli, 2015, p. 265). Employers consider graduates problem-solving and creative thinking skills are not always adequate to perform the tasks required on the job. According to the perceptions held by employers, graduates are more academically oriented while lacking awareness of the latest developments and applicability skills when compared with the professional qualification holders. However, employers mentioned the preference to employ persons with both degree and professional qualifications clearly indicating better career prospects for university students if supplemented with professional qualifications. It is recommended that undergraduate curricula in management should include more opportunities to integrate class-room instructions with actual working environments (Bhagra & Sharma, 2018, p. 12).

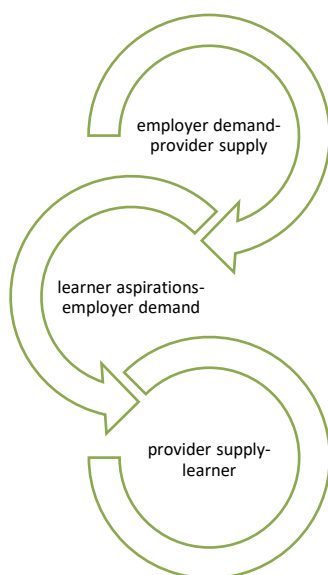
While this will reduce the gap between theory and experience, potential employers should be made aware of the nature of opportunities available to the students as a part of their curriculum to enhance team work and presentation skills and other personal development activities. Frye (2000) and his colleagues investigated the methods through which employers' and learners' 'needs can be considered in formulating future skills assessments. supported by Pearson's efficacy and research (Blackmore et al, 2016), This model helps existing systems to promote a framework for all learners to gain the skills they need and to maintain purposeful employment. The group used a supply and demand model comprising three main components employers' demand for skills, providers' supply of education and training opportunities and learners' demand for skills. This model identified the following matches and mistakes;

1. Employer demand-provider supply: the mismatch between employers' demand for particular skills and the flow of skilled people arising from provider supply,

2. Learner aspirations-employer demand: The mismatches between what learners aim to achieve through education and training and the skills needed by employers and

3. Provider Supply-Learner aspirations: the mismatch between courses offered by providers and the expectations and needs of learners (Jackson, 2013).

Figure 6: The business world school of thought



Source: (adapted from, Blackmore et al, 2016, p. 30)

2.1.1.4 The British school of thought

Matsouka K. emphasized by Small L. et al 2018, through the eyes of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) has defined employability thus Employability is the possession by an individual of the qualities and competencies required to meet the changing needs of employers and customers and thereby help to realize his or her aspirations and potential in work (CBI, 1999, p.1). The UK government has similarly arrived at a definition that, while implying that employability-development is a priority for the government, again it places individuals' skills at the center of the concept. Employability means the development of skills and adaptable workforces in which all those capable of work are encouraged to develop the skills, knowledge, technology and adaptability to enable them to enter and remain in employment throughout their working lives (HM Treasury,1997, p.1; Stoten, 2018; McCowan, 2015, pp.267-285).

2.1.1.5 The holistic school of thought to employability

Other attempts to define the concept have hinted at a more holistic approach, emphasizing the impact of both individual characteristics and labour market conditions i.e. both labour demand and supply factors.

The Canadian government's Labour Force Development Board offered the following definition: Employability is the relative capacity of an individual to achieve meaningful employment given the interaction of personal circumstances and the Labour market (Canadian

Labour Force Development Board, 1994). (Rae 2007, pp. 605-619; Williams et al, 2016, pp.877-901).

Northern Ireland Executive has explicitly suggested a wide working definition of employability as Employability is the capability to move into and within labour markets and to realise potential through sustainable and accessible employment. For the individual, employability depends on the knowledge and skills they possess, and their attitudes; the way personal attributes are presented in the labour market; the environmental and social context within which work is sought; and the economic context within which work is sought (DHFETE, 2002, p. 7), cited by Blackmore.

Cole & Tiburly believe that the concept of employability has been used in various contexts and formats over a century. In the past decade or so, factors that have given increased impetus to the use of the concept of employability have included:

- its potential role in tackling the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups;
- a reaction to the consequences of high levels of long-term unemployment and inactivity;
- the trend towards new types of relationships between employers and employees.

As a matter of fact, the increasing importance of employability in labour market policy can be partly sourced to an “emphasis on skills-based solutions to economic competition and work-based solutions to social deprivation” (Hillage & Pollard, 1998, p. 4). Within this context, the drive for employability is more than a means of offering workers the opportunity to develop flexible skills as an alternative to the security of tenure. Rather, the development of individuals’ employability is viewed as a crucial step towards improving access to employment (particularly for disadvantaged groups) and therefore a necessary element within strategies seeking to address unemployment and social exclusion.

Figure 7: The Holistic school of thought



Source: (adapted from Cole and Tiburrry, 2013, p.10)

2.2 The problem of graduate unemployment in HEI

Higher education institutions (HEI) all over the world have made graduate employability (GE) and employment outcomes (EO) a strategic focus because it is generally assumed that employers want to hire graduates who can function well in today's erratic, ambiguous, sophisticated, and uncertain world (Römgens et al., 2020, pp.2588-2603). Graduate employment rates are becoming more important in university rankings, government funding, industry quality standards, and university promotional strategies (Sin et al., 2019). On the other hand, the rate of graduate employment is a strong indicator of how equipped university graduates are for success in the workforce (Bridgstock & Jackson, 2019; Donald, et al, 2019; Healy et al., 2022). It is rather essential to make a distinction between employment as a result, which relates to graduates' capacity to meet their professional and employment goals, and employability as an antecedent, which refers to a range of personal attributes and environmental circumstances (Clarke, 2018; Donald, Baruch & Ashleigh, 2019; Monteiro et al., 2019).

It is an undeniable fact that HEI is under the obligation to produce employable graduates, with graduate employability being the predominant paradigm at the level of developing graduates' abilities, competencies, and attributes which is a global corporate mandate for HEI (Lackovi, 2019, pp.193-212). Policymakers and academics generally consented that graduate employability skills are crucial in the corporate world (Römgens et al., 2020; Abelha et al., 2020) and that higher education institutions should indeed prepare

graduates for jobs that do not yet exist and to find solutions that no one has yet thought of (Damoah et al., 2021, pp. 1311-324).

Graduates who are in the "work-ready-mode" are capable of achieving economic and financial independence and making a meaningful contribution to society since they have acquired the necessary skills and experiences. This requires that the future workforce and the changing nature of the workplace must be carefully considered in the curriculum design of HEI. Even though higher education is changing, current significant changes and labour market demands have placed a greater emphasis on skills and related stakeholder contributions than on institutional techniques for producing marketable graduates (Rowe & Zegwaard, 2017, pp. 60-76). This encourages students to choose jobs and learn skills that can become obsolete owing to automation, making the learned skills useless (Tran, 2019, pp. 101-115). According to research, higher education institutions (HEI) prioritise graduate employability as part of their strategic goal in response to demand from the political, economic, and social spheres to generate employable graduates on a worldwide scale. Employers are expecting HEI to develop students' skills outside of their field of study, and graduates themselves are encouraged to develop those skills to compete in the dynamic, competitive workplace. As a result, graduate employability development is regarded as a strategic institutional requirement for HEI (Suleman, 2018, pp. 711-721; Behle, 2020, p. 125).

The Cameroonian universities were deemed to have relatively hypothetical curricula by the British Council (2013-2016) and the French system project on the Universities' Employability and Inclusive Development, making it challenging to produce creative graduates and business owners. The study claims that Cameroonian universities are unable to create graduates who can be employed for a wage or on their own. Furthermore, there is no strategy on graduate employability strategies in Cameroon's higher education regulatory bodies namely, the National Accreditation Board (NAB) now the Cameroonian Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) in 2020. (British Council, 2015).

A university graduate will also perceive himself as being more employable if his level of capital, including human, social, cultural, psychological, and identity capital, is higher. Capital forms may therefore act as a mediator in the connection between institutional policies and graduate employability.

The lack of alignment between university-acquired graduate capabilities and employer-required skills has made graduate employment a problem. Although earlier studies have

highlighted the critical competencies that graduate education must incorporate, no study has made an effort to systematically locate and compile the literature on strategic planning and graduates employability. Harvey cited by Ferns (2019, p.102) believes that employability skills are necessary for graduates to survive in the age of digital transformation, thrive in the competitive business world, and be successful. However, graduate employability policy, strategy, and practice unquestionably undermine universities' initiatives, programs, and academic discourse.

University graduates earn significantly more than less educated folks because of the greater demand for these capabilities, which lessens inequality. Second, higher education increases a person's motivation to keep learning throughout their lives. Workers are expected to have several careers throughout their lives, not just several jobs. Tertiary education, which provides a wide variety of course options and flexible delivery modalities including online learning and open institutions, fills this rising need. Thirdly, higher education especially universities has become increasingly desirable in the evolving employment landscape by serving as a platform for innovation. How effectively postsecondary education systems function on these three fronts will determine their significance for the future of work. Skills acquisition is rapidly evolving into a continual process as opposed to a predetermined, unalterable course. By making sure that the doors to alternative pathways do not inescapably close when one track is opened, flexibility in students is increased (Howitt, 2019).

The focus of skills-based employability strategies has concentrated on the development of disciplinary skills required for professional practice within the curriculum as well as generic and transferable skills, like teamwork and problem-solving, which are applicable and useful across multiple employment contexts (Clanchy & Ballard, 1995, pp. 155-166; Jackson, 2016). To develop competence, these must be successfully employed in the workplace.

Moreover, while knowledge and skills are traditionally the main focus of higher education, several universities have recently begun to make strides in influencing many other factors that have an impact on graduates' employability. Being an "entrepreneurial university," which entails boosting the economic and consequently the employment capacity of a local region through research-based innovation, knowledge exchange, and direct commercial action or directly creating jobs, hiring its students and graduates, and being a "job creator" (Etzkowitz, 2016, pp. 83-97).

Theresa Doh (2012, p.15) believes that in an educational system like the Cameroon, higher education where practical skills are minimal, a graduate's faith is indeterminate in the job market. It is probably disappointing in the job market, due to the high level of unemployment leading to poverty, famine, and theft amongst others. Researchers have observed that University graduates in Cameroon are somewhat victims of educational mismatch and social malaise. The mismatch originates from the fact that the knowledge learned does not fully tie in with the knowledge needed in the job market. From high school, students enrol in universities wherein, they are schooled on static facts, theoretical base education, and education void of orientation and at times obligatory. After three years of such practices, the students are faced with the need to work to improve living standards, to eliminate poverty in their families, for growth and development. Unfortunately, the job market presents the type of skills they need to employ, plunging these youths into confusion and hopelessness. Unemployment becomes their next home, poverty, misery, juvenile delinquency, low standards of living and many others.

Finding employment for graduates and current students is indeed the objective of many universities' internal employment centres and recruitment firms. Some of these companies focus their recruitment efforts, particularly on university students from various groups who could encounter obstacles in the labour market. Incubators and programmes for student entrepreneurs are intended to assist students in finding their independent jobs. Through career fairs, industry networking engagements, industry mentoring programs, and work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities like placements and internships, students can enhance their social capital and professional networks while also developing their skill sets (McCowan 2015, p. 269).

❖ **The government's response to the problem of job search**

With the context of sub- regional integration, job markets overly exist both national and international. This aspect is viewed via the cases of international employment mostly by private sectors world for instance, many workers leave Cameroon and work in other countries. This notion of intercontinental employment was championed by the poverty reduction strategy paper signed in Cameroon in 2003. Article 36.5 (labour market) states that sub- regional integration is an effective strategy for its insertion into an increasing global economy. Cameroon and other economic communities of central African state (CEMAC) zone member states agreed to accelerate several actions including the immediate introduction of the CEMAC passport and the elimination of all impediments to the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital,

(PRSP, p. 68). This opened more chances for employment of university graduates, however, the graduates of the University of Yaounde I and Buea seem to be left behind, and they lack the necessary skills to compete for cross-boundary jobs.

In Cameroon, two main job markets exist; the public sector (civil service) and the private sector. Down history lane, from the 1998 law of orientation on the education of Cameroon, citizens have been psychologically conditioned to acknowledge the state as the only source of employment in Cameroon. This stigma is however largely emphasised in universities via the type of curriculum, pedagogy, and state policies in the institutions it is further cemented by the fact that graduates from the said system are generally jobless or do not have the skills to pick neither a national nor an international job in the private sector except otherwise, they undergo vocational training or specialization in private universities (Ngang et al, pp. 183-190).

The Cameroon government possesses several sectors in which graduates are employed annually. Such sectors like the Higher Teacher's Training College, (ENS/HTTC), Government Teacher's Training College (GTTC), National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM), the Army core, National Security and a host of others. These bodies launch and employ a considerable number of youths annually; access to these institutions of professionalization is strictly by merit although with some irregularities (bribery and corruption) within the system, however, the state remains a favorable job supplier. Undoubtedly, for the reasons of job security, the majority of the unemployed youths especially those of secondary and higher education levels preferred paid jobs from the public service NIS (2022) (Ntemgwe, 2016, p. 74-90).

The state is highly concerned with the issue of graduate unemployment in Cameroon. In this light, she has been making several efforts in this domain to keep the youths employed. Several reforms have been registered and have resulted in the reduction of poverty trends since independence. Since the 1960s, Cameroon focused its policy on the implementation of a five-year plan. This plan was satisfactorily achieved thanks to a conducive international environment, as a result, per-capital income doubled between 1960 and 1980, living conditions of the population greatly improved and several infrastructures were developed which are today considered the basis of economic activity and social promotion (Vision 2035, 2009; p.8).

In 2003, the government signed the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in which the issue of unemployment was cardinal. This paper was applicable up to 2007, having huge successes and failures. Vision 2035 took off from 2006, a twenty-five-year agenda, with

a more committed mission in the fight against youth unemployment. In order to sufficiently enhance this mission, the Cameroon government created the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) for the period 2010/2020 so as to have a clear view and practical evaluation possibilities.

The GESP (2010/2020) holds that the state is poised to reduce the underemployment rate from 75.8% to less than 50% in 2030 by creating some ten thousand formal positions per year over the next ten years. Moreover, the government is aware that to become rich, the major way to poverty reduction, is to have high employment rate. Thus, growth will be achieved with a proper tackling of unemployment. The government intends to redress this situation by integrating actors of the informal sector into the formal sector and the idea is generally to reduce the share taken up by the informal sector in national economic activity. At the same time, the government hope to create about ten thousand employment opportunities per year in the formal sector through its implementation of this strategy (Teneng, 2016).

Matching words with actions, the Cameroon government engaged in a mass employment process where, the decision to employ 25,000 young Cameroonians taken by the president of the republic of Cameroon on the 10th February 2011 (NIS, 2011) went a long way to inculcate a new and positive momentum in Cameroon's job market and huge relieve on the few who met the conditions. This presidential decision was highly applauded by the society and most especially by the unemployed graduates who have been languishing in some private jobs and joblessness. This was because it intervened in a socioeconomic context where there was a strong employment demand for the job market (unemployment rate at 5.6%). This decision covered just 10% of the employment as stated by the Employment and Informal sector Survey (EESI 2) in Cameroon and the private sector carries the burden. (World Bank, 2021).

The portion of the age group targeted was 17 to 40 years old. This recruitment constitutes an important demographic weight accounting for about 37.4 % making 7.257,881 people of the whole population in 2010, comprising 50.4% of women and 49.6% of men. This population of this age group is more in Yaounde amounting to 48.3% of 70.7% graduates (NIS, 2011). Within this age group, unemployment is alarming, especially in the metropolitan towns of Douala and Yaounde, Higher education graduates hitherto being the most affected by unemployment and underemployment for those who are employed, a chunk of them were consumed in the most cherished public service. Undoubtedly, for the evident reasons of job security, the majority of unemployed youths especially those of secondary and higher education prefer jobs in the public service or the modern private sector (NIS, 2022).

Some government created organs like PAJER-U, PIFMAS (*Projet d'insertion socio-economique des jeunes par la creation des Micro-entreprises de fabrication du materiel Sportif*), created in November 2007 by MINJEC, PIAASI (*Program Integre d'appui aux Acteurs du Secteur Informel*) created in 2014 by the Ministry of Employment and vocational training. These organs were created by the respective ministries to train young Cameroonians on different areas of experience, and projects that accompany them in the achievement process as a means to reduce unemployment amongst youths in Cameroon. Apart from the traditional launching of public exams in Cameroon yearly, another set of 400,000 jobs were created and launched in 2016 to employ the youths. The state is the most appropriate job market in Cameroon (Mve, 2020).

But on the other hand, this decision has resented drawbacks in the economy of Cameroon. A good number of youths taken into the job market do not have basic skills, they are saturated with theories and baseless facts. Moreover, those taken from University and pumped into schools as teachers simply have the mission to either 'un-teach' or derail the young generation. They have no idea about the pedagogy, ethics and deontology of a teacher.

With this decision, bachelor's degree holders are taken and sent to colleges to teach and Masters students are as well incorporated into the university system to teach with neither a lesson nor seminar on pedagogy, lesson plan, ethics and deontology needed by every teacher. It must interest you to know that the coming of new and complicated methods like the Competence Base Approach (CBA) whose aim is to inculcate basic skills into the students which can permit them to solve basic problems on a daily basis happens to be a very hard knot to untie by many trained teachers talk less of these teachers who have never had the time and or opportunity to be schooled on that. They carry the same theory to class and implant it on the next generation (Ngu & Teneng, p.710).

This crisis is suffered by the secondary and university students as the teacher's inability to master the pedagogy of teaching and curriculum constantly plunges them into the mess of joblessness due to the lack of skills. The probability is high that the state might be planting a very bad seed in the Cameroon economy. What will become of tomorrow if the young generations are handled by untrained personnel as such? The same unskilled knowledge will be carried along and the same problem of unemployment and fragile economy will resurface. (Samfoga, 2015, p.90).

Teachers taken by mass employment opportunity to teach in both secondary and University should take obligatory remedial classes, seminars, conferences by the various schools, sub-divisions or divisions, or the whole region with specific lessons on pedagogy, ethics and deontology of the job before handing over the young generation to them.

The private or informal sector is another platform which is faced by the unemployment problem in Cameroon. This sector is made up of industries (Brasseries of Cameroon, firms, enterprises, Non-governmental organisations (NGO, Parastatals, Camair-Co, ENEO,) farming, and the list is endless giving the rich natural endowments of the country that baptised her as “Africa in miniature”. Although Cameroon is endowed with abundant natural resources, steady economic growth and a key location in central Africa, the investment climate in Cameroon is plagued by endemic corruption and a heavy-handed and slow bureaucracy. The private sector is characterised by cost minimisation and profit maximisation. This means that, they are consciously or unconsciously pruned to low wages and poor working conditions, especially in our context where there is no active labour law (Tanyi, Ngwa & Ngonba, 2019, pp.205-222).

Despite all these, the private sector serves as a remarkable job market to young graduates in Cameroon in diverse fields. It is worth noting that they face many difficulties in selecting the skills available when they launch a vacancy. Difficulties stem from a lack of skills by the applicants, skills mismatch, limited capital and limited number of applicants, poor trading conditions, and high taxes amongst others. This is explained by the fact that the University’s teachings are more or less contrary to the needs of the job market (Doh, 2012, p.15).

❖ **Government strategies to curb youth unemployment in Cameroon**

Some government strategy to curb youth unemployment include the following

➤ **The National Development Strategy (NDS30)**

The National Development Strategy 2020–2030 (NDS30) was adopted to address structural issues, including youth unemployment. It focuses on transforming education and enhancing employability through job creation and technical training. Some Key Measures included;

- Aligning education with labour market needs.
- Creating a National Employment and Vocational Training Observatory.
- Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships in curriculum development.
- Enhancing technical and vocational education (<https://minepat.gov.cm>).

➤ **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**

The government restructured TVET programs to improve practical skills and employability.

Modernization programs included:

- Construction of pilot vocational schools across ecological zones.
- Integration of ICT and entrepreneurship modules into secondary and university education.
- Collaboration with industry partners to design relevant training programs (<https://www.ilo.org>).
- Creating pilot vocational schools across ecological zones. Aligning programs with industry needs via surveys and partnerships. Equipping technical colleges with workshops and ICT infrastructure.
- Techno-pedagogy adoption in state universities has reportedly improved employability: 86.6% of graduates noted enhanced creativity/self-reliance, 95.5% improved productivity, and 94.6% better job mobility (ILO, 2022)

➤ **Promotion of Entrepreneurship and SME Support**

Ndedi (2018, 22-30.) considers that, to address the scarcity of formal employment, the government promoted youth entrepreneurship and supported Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The government enhanced the legal/regulatory framework for SMEs and entrepreneurship, though Cameroon still ranks low (167/190) on ease-of-doing-business [on policy.org](http://policy.org). Startup growth: Number of enterprises rose from 94,000 in 2009 to 209,000 in 2016 a 123% increase. Key Measures were;

- Creation of the National Employment Fund (NEF), which provides start-up capital and business incubation.
- Tax incentives and simplified administrative procedures for startups.
- Entrepreneurship education in higher education institutions.

➤ **Digital Transformation and ICT Integration**

The Digital Cameroon 2020 Plan was introduced to create employment through ICT and prepare youth for digital careers. Key Measures;

- Establishment of digital training centers.

- Promotion of digital jobs in rural areas.
- ICT integration in public universities.
- Partnering with international platforms for MOOCs and certifications.

From the *Digital Cameroon 2020* plan: Direct ICT-related job creation rose from 1,000 in 2016 to 50,000 by 2020. In 2018, the government specifically encouraged youth to explore digital opportunities amid the rise of new web professions (Nkafu, 2022).

➤ **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) Partner-Driven Employability Programs**

Nsom, V. (2022, pp. 75–84) perceives that, the government encourages partnerships between higher education institutions and the private sector to create demand-driven curricula.

It is aim at “Skills for Employability” (SFE) program:

- Targets STEM graduates in Francophone Africa.
- Aims to certify 200 Master’s students, 160 business trainees, and 2,250 MOOC participants 30% of whom are women
- Private sector internships & graduate pipelines:
- Institutions like Ecobank & Shell run internship/graduate-entry programs in collaboration with universities like Yaounde
- Internships and graduate trainee programs in collaboration with companies (e.g., Ecobank, Orange).
- Business-university linkages in curriculum development.
- Advisory boards involving industry experts in universities.

➤ **Techno-Pedagogy and Soft Skills Integration**

Tchoumba & Tchadjeu (2022, pp. 123–132.) believe that universities have begun integrating techno-pedagogy, soft skills, and project-based learning into academic programs to enhance graduate flexibility and creativity. Evidence:

- A study in state universities showed 95.5% of students believed techno-pedagogy enhanced their productivity.
- 94.6% reported better job mobility.

➤ **Gender-Specific Programs Women’s Employability Initiatives**

According to Nkafu (2022), to close the gender employment gap, which is over 6% (female unemployment higher), the government and NGOs provide targeted programs for women in STEM and ICT. Key Measures

- Digital and business training for young women.
- Gender-sensitive employment policies.
- Scholarships and mentoring programs.
- Female unemployment was 61% higher than male in 2021; 78% of women in underemployment versus 63.7% of men
- Digital sectors now employ only 20% women, despite the sector making up 3.5% of GDP in 2016
- In response, policies and programs have been launched to deliver digital training specifically to women offering skills in coding, digital marketing, and more.

➤ **International and regional programs. Partner-Driven Employability Programs**

Partnerships with international organisations: collaboration with the African Development Bank, UNDP and the ILO to fund youth employment and training projects

- Scholarships and mobility programs: Encourage students to take advantage of international scholarships that offer both academic and practical training components.
- “Skills for Employability” (SFE) program:
 - Targets STEM graduates in Francophone Africa.
 - Aims to certify 200 Master’s students, 160 business trainees, and 2,250 MOOC participants 30% of whom are women
 - Private sector internships & graduate pipelines:
 - Institutions like Ecobank & Shell run internship/graduate-entry programs in collaboration with universities like Yaounde (UNESCO, 2022).

2.3. Development of Job Market Insight

Most countries traditionally use an establishment survey to collect Job Vacancy information. Canada for example, conducts a quarterly Job Vacancy and Wage Survey by using

100,000 establishments to complement the job vacancy statistics program. United Kingdom and Australia on the other hand combine job vacancy surveys with data extraction methods to produce job vacancy indicators. However, the establishment survey, while consistent, is very costly, especially in sustaining the data collection in longer terms. Moreover, the “survey fatigue syndrome” where numerous surveys are distributed to similar establishments every year or quarter can cause incorrect responses which can alter the government's human capital planning. (Ngwa & Ngonga, 2020, pp.112-125).

Furthermore, the yearly and occasional vacancy reporting which depicts lack of information may cause inefficient human capital decisions and responses. Hence, analyzing job opening listings from online job portals has become another alternative to collecting job vacancy information. Even though the number of job vacancies advertised on job portals does not represent the overall demand, however, the proportion is relatively high compared to the other sources and keeps on increasing with the rapid technological advances, thus greater exposure of job seekers to the Internet. The development of big data expands the tools by populating the job vacancy info via scraping on job postings on recruitment portals and employer websites. Many studies related to job vacancies have relied totally on web-based job vacancy advertisements and found the results reliable (Teneng et al.,2020, pp. 67-85).

2.3.1 The future of jobs in the digital age

During the Fourth Industrial Revolution Era, most-large technology companies such as Google, Amazon, Facebook, IBM, and Microsoft placed a high priority on the application and development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) (Phan, 2020). In addition, the ability of AI to work together with other emerging technologies such as 3D printing, block chain, the Internet of Things, biotechnology, virtual and augmented reality, and so on, will make dramatic and rapid changes in our lives and societies. As a result, AI technologies are nowadays impacting nearly every industry sector. Many industries are, and some of them are revolutionaries by AI, such as Finance, Travel, Health Care, Transportation, Education, Agriculture, and so on. According to the report of Accenture Consulting, titled “Banking Technology Vision 2019 – Banking in the Post-Digital Era”, 96 per cent of bank business executives agree that new technologies have accelerated their pace of innovation over the past three years. In addition, AI technology is ranked by 47 per cent of business executives as a leading technology that would have the most significant impact on their organization over the next three years (Accenture, 2019).

Some examples of how AI is improving the financial industry are the use of AI to make credit decisions, the use of catboats for better customer service, the use of AI for fraud detection, and so on. With AI-powered operations, a bank can expect cost savings of between 20 and 25 per cent (Accenture, 2019). According to the report of the Statista Research Department (2018), the travel and tourism industry is one of the world's largest industries with a global economic contribution (direct, indirect, and induced) of over 7.6 trillion U.S. dollars in 2016. As with other industries, AI and other emerging technologies will affect and change the travel and tourism industry (Phan, 2020). Many AI services are implemented to improve the travel and tourism industry such as travel service catboats, check-in by facial recognition, and hotel bookings by voice command. Supporting AI technologies, the health care industry will be changed to allow people to receive more efficient and safer service. Traditional medical operations, such as analysis of health records or analysis of historical medical trends, are ideally suited to AI-powered tools.

2.3.2 Graduates competition in the job market

According to Kai-Fu, who is the founder of Sinovation Ventures, many jobs are most likely to be replaced by AI and robotics technologies in the future. He has developed a formula which says that every kind of job that takes less than 5 seconds to think will be done by robots (Quartz et al, 2017). Based on Martin Ford, who is the author of a book named "Rise of the Robots: Technology and the Threat of Jobless Future", AI and robotics technologies will have an impact on the labor market. He supposed that many jobs are going to disappear, especially any kind of job that is routine or repetitive on some level (Ford, 2015). Besides, according to several experts, AI and robotics technologies will take over many human jobs that require and rely on an analysis of data and trends, including jobs in healthcare and financial industries. Based on other experts, human jobs that require little human qualities such as emotional intelligence, creativity, intuition, negotiation, coaching, empathy, and complex communication will probably be replaced by robotics technologies.

The McKinsey report proposed kinds of human jobs that involve physical labor in a predictable environment such as assembly lines, fast food, or cleaning jobs will be the first to be replaced by robotics technologies (Manyika et al., 2017, p.65). Besides, with the proliferation of AI technologies, including computer vision, machines such as cars, boats, trucks, and drones now can see. As such, self-driving machines have now begun to replace traditional jobs in the transportation industry, like taxi drivers, bus drivers, shippers, and so on.

According to futurist Thomas Frey, 64 jobs will likely be replaced by AI and robotics technologies in the self-driving car era.

2.3.3 Jobs that are harder to be replaced

Shortly, there are many human jobs which will be replaced by AI and robotics technologies. However, according to the study of Oxford Martin School, there are still many human jobs that will be harder to be replaced by AI and robotics technologies. These jobs are grouped into three categories based on required skills, such as jobs that require hands-on manipulation, creativity, and social perception (Frey & Osborne, 2013). There are examples of jobs of these groups, and their probability of becoming automated: Hands-on Manipulation, Oral surgeons, Makeup artists, Chiropractors, Firefighters, Creativity, Choreographers, Curators, Art directors, Social perception, Mental health workers, Clergy, Nurses, Coaches and scouts.

According to Rouhiainen (2018), several additional factors make some human jobs harder to replace by AI and robotics technologies. These jobs include jobs that do not involve large quantities of data, human interaction-based jobs, jobs with minimal repetition or routine, and jobs that are difficult to learn through simple observation.

2.3.4 New job opportunities

New job fields Even though AI and robotics will replace human workers in many kinds of jobs and will make many jobs to be disappeared, but both will also generate many new kinds of jobs for people. According to Koop et al, (2017, p. 3330), several fields will offer new innovative jobs and opportunities in the future. These fields include:

Artificial Intelligence, making smart machines (including machine learning, deep learning, and neural networks), Augmented or Mixed Reality: Layering virtual data and images over the "real" world.

- Virtual Reality: Creating entirely virtual spaces.
- Drones: Flying, driving, walking, and swimming robots.
- Brain-machine Interfaces: The ultimate user interface: brain to a computer.
- Internet of Things: Connecting every "thing Robotics and Automation: Manufacturing, science, assistive, companionship, and other types of robots.

- Genomics: Understanding, treating, and even perhaps enhancing natural DNA in us and other organisms.
- Data Science: Understanding, cleansing, and operationalizing data.
- Block chain: Radically democratizing and publicizing records and structures of all kinds.
- Nanotechnology and Swarm Intelligence: Molecular-level engineering.
- Quantum Computing: Atomic-level computing.
- 3D Printing: Just-in-time one-off manufacturing and building. Based on a study by Forrester Research, as a direct result of AI and robotics technologies, approximately 15 million new jobs will be created in the USA by the next decade (Passy, 2017, p. 555). In addition, according to a study of McKinsey Global Institute, as many countries will soon need to implement renewable energy technologies, up to 10 million new jobs will be created in the fields of wind energy, solar energy, and energy efficiency (Chamberlain, 2017).

2.4 Measuring employability

According to Knight and Yorke (2004), quoted by Paul B (2016) confirmed that the concepts of employment and employability are not interchangeable. To them, when we talk of employability, we are concerned with employment or just talking about developing the skills that many employers want to see in graduates recruited. In addition, Chavez et al, (2017, pp.155-166), say that employability is involved with a much broader development of students into graduates who feel ready to prepare for what life holds for them beyond University, “it is refreshing to think that life might grow into something broader than a particular set of skills and competences into a richer idea of graduate readiness”.

Meanwhile, employment is mostly the relationship between two parties usually based on a contract where work is paid for, where one party which may be a corporation, for-profit, not-for-profit, organization, co-operative or other entity is the employer and the other is the employee. Employability is best measured in terms of the outcome of the recent graduate’s employment rates and as an institutional achievement. Individual employability implies the propensity for a graduate to get a job. According to (Flanders, 1995), as cited by Harvey (2001), this involves different indicators like;

- The job types: this entails graduate jobs, for others, it implies getting a graduate-level job. They may be referred to as ‘fulfilling work’, as a job that ‘requires graduate skills and abilities’ or as a ‘career-oriented’ job.
- Timing: Here, employability is signaled by getting a job within a specified time after graduating, or by doing so before there is any need for retraining.
- Graduate attributes: this implies that graduates have and can demonstrate these attributes to get a job and the employers are fully aware of the effective attributes that are necessary for the effective functioning of their organisations (Harvey, 2001).

➤ **Ranking of employability rates of graduates**

Institutions are ranked in terms of the employability rate of their graduates. Higher institutions can do no more than play their part, through the experience they provide for their students, in encouraging and enabling students to become employable. In some institutions or parts of institutions, this employability development is explicit and integral to the education provided and in others, it is not. Faculties like Medicine, journalism and initial teacher training have of study closely linked to learning in practice settings that are directly related to future employment. Most philosophy, literature, and social science, on the other hand, tend not to be closely linked with specific employment. Nevertheless, in those areas that do not include statutory professional practice employability is, in some cases, built in through devices such as placement opportunities, employer-linked projects, visits and work-shadowing.

In employability measurement, the following indicators are most appropriate; Institutional effectiveness (by the proportion of graduates who gain employment), institutional effectiveness might be indicated by an audit of developmental opportunities of the institution, the survey of graduates’ satisfaction with their program of study and the extent to which it prepares them for the job market (Harvey & Knight, 1996).

Employability is also measured at the level of employers. Harvey assumes that the graduate’s recruitment procedure may be based on a rational appraisal of rational attributes of the individual-by-individual bases in which case the employment of graduates may superficially be seen as an indicator of the graduate’s employability and rather tenuously of the indicative of the employability enhancement activities of the institution. This however may be influenced by some factors which mediate employment such as; type of higher education institution, mode of study, student’s location and mobility, subject of study, previous work

experience, age, gender, ethnicity and social class (Cristina & Maji, 2020). These indicators either enhance or discourage graduates' employment by the employer.

2.5 Employability Skills Development

In the Gecko skill development programme and with regards to the theory of human capital of Becker, graduates' skills development encompasses the process of acquiring and refining a range of competencies that are essential for success in the workplace. These skills extend beyond technical knowledge and expertise, emphasizing areas such as communication, problem-solving, teamwork, adaptability, and leadership (Blackmore et al., 2016).

In today's competitive job market, graduates require a wide range of skills to enhance their employability. An extensive literature review on graduates' skills development provides valuable insights into the various factors that contribute to their employability in the (Erasmus Plus program).

Employability Development Skills Programmes (EDSP) or Employability Development Opportunities (EDO) are available at higher education institutions (HEI) all over the world to improve students' employability. One of them is the development of career centres, as well as optional or required employability programmes, certain topic disciplines linked with employability activities, and various forms of work-integrated learning (Smith et al., 2018; Jackson & Dean, 2022). The focus is increasingly on strengthening employability skill sets in degree programmes to improve students' job outcomes and prepare them for the workforce after they complete their studies (Holmes, 2017; Tran, 2019).

2.5.1 Factors Influencing Graduates' Employability Skills development

According to Paul et al (2016), the following factors may affect graduates' employability skills their thoughts are supported by Asiedu (2024, pp. 352-317), who affirms that the following factors influence graduate's skills development. This falls inline with the human capital theory of Becker and Tomilson capital forms. They are among others;

➤ Higher Education Curriculum

A curriculum that integrates real-world tasks, problem-solving, and soft skills enhances graduates' employability. A study in the Faculty of Arts, Letters, Social & Human Sciences found that curriculum quality across its goals, module content, teaching resources, and evaluation methods had strong positive correlations (ranging from $r = .522$ to $.772$, $p < .001$) with graduate employability (Mbeboh, 2022).

➤ **Soft Skills Development**

Communication, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving are consistently sought by employers from jobseekers, (Andrews & Higson, pp. 411-422, 2008). Technological Competence

Digital literacy and familiarity with modern workplace tools are increasingly essential to bring about graduate employability skills (Bennett, 2019, pp. 31-61).

➤ **Personal Attributes and Attitude**

Motivation, resilience, confidence, and willingness to learn significantly impact employability. (Yorke & Knight, 2004).

➤ **Labour Market Conditions and Industry Engagement**

The alignment of graduate skills with employer needs and active collaboration between universities and industries improves outcomes. (Holmes, pp. 538-554, 2013).

➤ **Educational Planning (Policy, Pedagogy, Infrastructure, Staff)**

Educational planning factors including government policy, curriculum design, teaching methods, staffing, and campus infrastructure showed significant positive correlations with youth employability (range $r = .580$ to $.780$, all $p < .05$) (Fossimock, 2017).

➤ **Higher Education Institutions**

Higher education institutions play a crucial role in developing graduates' employability skills. They can offer specialized training and workshops to enhance specific skills. Collaborations with industry partners can provide students with real-world experiences.

➤ **Internships and Work Placements**

Practical experiences help students apply theory and develop workplace-ready skills. Smith et al, 2014). Engaging in internships and work placements during studies can significantly contribute to graduates' skill development. These experiences provide practical exposure to the work environment and allow graduates to apply their knowledge. Internships also offer opportunities for networking and building professional connections (Rukuni, 2018, p.89).

➤ **21st-Century Curriculum Implementation & Technological Readiness**

The implementation of innovative, technology-rich curricula emphasizing project-based learning, communication, presentation skills, planning, and problem-solving was found to

enhance graduate competitiveness, though rapid tech changes and limited professional training were noted as persistent barriers (Ngwabienwu, 2020).

➤ **Entrepreneurial & Income-diversification Training**

MSc graduates taking entrepreneurship-focused courses reported a strong interest in creating multiple income streams. Over 77 % received side-skill training, and 97 % aimed to start personal ventures highlighting that fostering entrepreneurial competencies improves employability prospects (Meyo et al, 2024).

➤ **Teachers' Quality & Practical Supervision**

Quality of teaching staff significantly affected training outcomes. At Buea (and Bamenda), lecturer quality correlated strongly with graduate employability ($r = .412, p < .001$). Clinical nursing interns in Buea also indicated that factors such as preparedness, motivation, and supervisory support influenced acquisition of practical clinical, communication, and leadership skills (Nyenty & Besong, pp. 341-352, 2020).

2.5.2 Assessing Graduates' Employability Skills

Going by the ideas of Matsouka K, the following assessment can be made for graduates' employability.

- **Self-Assessment**

Graduates can assess their employability skills through;

- Self-reflection and self-evaluation
- Self-assessment tools, such as questionnaires, can help graduates identify their strengths and areas for improvement. This process allows individuals to tailor their job applications and highlight relevant skills.

- **Employer Perspective,**

Employers play a vital role in evaluating graduates' employability skills during recruitment processes

- Interviews, assessment centres, and psychometric tests are commonly used methods to assess candidates' skills
- Employers often seek evidence of graduates' ability to apply skills in real-world scenarios (Ballantyne et al., 2004).

Graduates' employability skills play a significant role in bridging the gap between academic qualifications and workplace requirements. In today's competitive job market, possessing a strong skill set enhances graduates' chances of securing employment and ensures long-term career growth. Employers seek candidates who can effectively navigate challenges, contribute to team objectives, and demonstrate a proactive approach to professional development. Graduates can maximize their potential for success in the competitive job market (Submanasini et al, 2018, p. 77).

2.5.3 Employability Skills in Yaounde I and Buea Universities

In the University of Yaounde, studies on curriculum content in English-speaking public universities (including those in Yaounde) found that curriculum content positively affects employability, especially when it includes soft skills, critical thinking, and technical skills as perceived by students (Fokong et al. 2024, pp.14-30).

In the university of Buea a study on professionalization at UB (using the BMP reform) reported that while student-centred methods and ICT are intended, actual implementation suffers from insufficient human and material resources; assessment and teaching moderately reflect professionalization. Also, the presence of the Google Developer Student Club (GDSC) at UB helps bridge theory and practice, offering workshops, projects, and networking that build technical and collaborative skills (ibid).

➤ **Factors that Develop Specific Employability Skills**

- **Curriculum Content and Coherence;** A competence-based curriculum (as introduced through the LMD reform) shifts focus from rote learning to integrated learning developing transversal competencies, ethical judgement, and workplace readiness. Curriculum coherence aligning university programmes with industry needs is central to strategic planning and influences skill acquisition
- **Lecturer Quality and Pedagogical Approach;** Lecturer quality has a direct impact on graduates' employability. In the anglophone regions (including Buea), studies note that the quality of teaching staff significantly affects skill acquisition and readiness for the workforce . Professionalized teaching requires active, student-centred pedagogy, use of ICT, and assessment strategies aligned with real-world competencies.
- **Industry-University Partnerships and Infrastructure;** Strategic partnerships such as the AUF-supported ENTREPRENDRE program and university incubators support entrepreneurial skills, internships, and innovation-based learning. However,

infrastructure gaps (e.g., limited labs, digital resources, and partnership networks) reduce the effectiveness of skill development and internships

- **Operationalisation of “Future Skills”;** according to Ngoei (2024, pp.6514-6530), introducing the concept of “future skills” competence-based, cross-disciplinary, technologically supported can better position students for evolving job markets. Successful implementation requires strong digital/technological capacity and interdisciplinary departments.

2.6. How Strategic Planning affects Graduates' Employability

Graduates entering the job market face fierce competition, to stand out among their peers, they need to possess a diverse set of employability skills that are valued by employers. These skills include; communication, teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking, adaptability, leadership, practical, soft and personal attributes. Strategic planning plays a vital role in developing these skills in graduates. This would be examined below.

❖ Enhancing Communication Skills

According to Harvey (2003), as quoted by Tran (2014), Effective communication is key to success in any professional setting. Strategic planning exposes graduates to various communication channels, such as presentations, reports, and meetings. Through these experiences, graduates learn to articulate their thoughts clearly, listen actively, and convey information effectively. These skills enable them to effectively collaborate with colleagues, negotiate with stakeholders, and present their ideas convincingly.

❖ Fostering Teamwork and Collaboration

In today's interconnected world, teamwork is highly valued by employers. Strategic planning often involves working in teams to develop strategies and solve complex problems. Graduates participating in strategic planning processes learn to collaborate with diverse individuals, contribute their expertise, and leverage the strengths of their team members. These experiences enhance their ability to work effectively in multidisciplinary teams, fostering innovation and creativity. (Eduarda & pillar, 2020, pp. 45-59).

❖ Developing Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking Skills

Strategic planning requires graduates to analyze situations, identify problems, and propose solutions. This process cultivates their problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. Graduates learn to think analytically, evaluate information objectively, and make informed

decisions based on data and evidence. These skills are highly sought after by employers who value employees capable of solving complex problems and driving organizational growth (Babalola, 2016).

❖ **Cultivating Adaptability and Resilience**

In today's rapidly changing business landscape, adaptability is crucial. Strategic planning exposes graduates to uncertainties and challenges, preparing them to adapt to unexpected circumstances. Graduates learn to embrace change, be flexible in their approach, and quickly adjust their strategies to align with new realities. This adaptability enables them to thrive in dynamic work environments and seize opportunities for personal and professional growth.

❖ **Nurturing Leadership Abilities**

Strategic planning empowers graduates to develop leadership skills. As they actively participate in strategic discussions, graduates learn to take initiative, inspire others, and influence decision-making processes. These experiences help graduates cultivate self-confidence, effective communication, and the ability to motivate and guide team members. Such leadership qualities are highly valued by employers seeking individuals who can drive organizational success (Asiedu, 2016).

Strategic planning plays a pivotal role in shaping graduates' employability skills. By participating in strategic planning processes, graduates enhance their communication, teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking, adaptability, and leadership abilities. These skills equip graduates with a competitive edge in the job market, enabling them to secure employment and excel in their chosen careers. As strategic planning continues to evolve, it remains an essential component in preparing graduates for the challenges and opportunities of the workforce (Lubbe et al., 2021, pp. 215-232).

2.7 The importance of strategic planning to graduate's employability

Firms that do strategic planning significantly outperform those that do not have strategic plans since they spend most of their time realizing and reacting to unexpected changes and problems instead of anticipating and preparing for them and are always in crisis management situations. The triple helix model states that the three actors that is the academia, industry and government interact freely to utilise knowledge and technology for the benefit of the economy (Bomani et al., 2019, pp.1-15). In this model, the academia (universities) transfer

technological and entrepreneurial skills to students and the community. We would look at this through the light of our five research objectives (indicators).

2.7.1 The relation between Strategic vision and mission statements and employability skills

The University of Yaounde 1 just like the University of Buea puts students and their success first. Our educational mission is not only to develop students as thinkers, communicators, citizens and leaders, but also to prepare them to secure post-study employment and achieve professional success. The university's commitment to higher education as empowerment invites us to embrace a broad vision of employability. This vision both acknowledges the complexities of an ever-changing world and calls for the optimism of possibility. It speaks to the power of innovation, flexibility and sustainable development to benefit society and deliver impact for communities near and far. It asks us to tackle with confidence the challenges of technological progress, globalization, new business and organisational models, and an ever-evolving workforce. Finally, it requires us to link pedagogy with research and professional practice in creative and meaningful ways. (University Employability Strategy, 2022 - 2025).

The Employability Strategy, however, articulates our ambition to graduate students who are knowledgeable, skilled and socially responsible. It sets out systematic objectives to provide diverse and inclusive opportunities to explore, evidence and reflect employability and professional skills. This approach to teaching and learning is central to a distinctive Macquarie experience that realises each student's individual potential (Baker & Henson, 2010, pp. 62-75).

Moreover, the university, will continue to build on our success as a progressive and transformational institution that nurtures and encourages our students' enthusiasm for lifelong learning, the future world of work, and their passion for effecting change. The university's vision for employability in the future world of work (Samfoga, 2015).

The University aspires to be impactful and sector-leading within Australia and around the world for graduate employability. We will ensure our coursework suite and curricula enhance discipline-specific and industry-informed employability outcomes. We will leverage our alumni, industry and partner connections particularly in the Macquarie Park Innovation District to deliver outstanding Work Integrated Learning (WIL) experiences. We will connect students by integrating sustainable development across curricula and providing opportunities to apply this knowledge in interdisciplinary spaces. We will prepare our students for success

in the demanding and dynamic future world of work through appropriate co- and extra-curricular activities, initiatives and support. We will prepare our graduates to excel in demanding jobs, tackle uncertainty with optimism and seize opportunities to be innovators (Ibid).

We will achieve our aspirational vision by first adopting a cohesive and strengths-based institutional approach to support and progress students' employability and graduates' success. Also, by advancing the institutional approach to employability and capability development through scaffolded course design and delivery. More so, by co-designing and delivering curricula with industry, partners, alumni and students to ensure relevance and future focus. Equally by equipping students with skills to engage the future world of work, social leadership and career success with confidence.

Adopting a cohesive and strengths-based institutional approach to support and progress students' employability and graduates' success. By so doing the university will; Provide high-quality support services that are aligned to the University's Employability Framework and demonstrate sustainability, inclusivity, scalability and adaptability. Thereafter establish an integrated approach to curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Then later provide students and graduates with support for ongoing career development and transition-to-work opportunities. Furthermore, it shall Plan some case studies and metric targets to support and progress students' employability and graduates' success (Blackmore et al.: 2016).

Advancing the institutional approach to employability and capability development through scaffolded course design and delivery.

Finally provide formal/non-formal/co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for students to develop global perspectives, sustainable practices and transferable employability skills Supporting graduate success and enhancing students' ability to demonstrate job-readiness and achieve their career goals. Support and provide opportunities for students and graduates to showcase their potential for employability to future employers thereby expanding the opportunities available for students to be employed while studying (Howitt, 2019).

2.7.2 The benefits of strategic goals and objectives to graduate's employability skills

Jackson (2021, pp.183-199) affirms that objectives are distinguished from goals in that objectives are specific, measurable, attainable, and directed towards limited spatial and institutional frameworks. These objectives are supposed to be developed in the implementation of certain alternatives and then the choice of the best strategic alternative, which sets a timetable

that can be implemented with relatively high efficiency and effectiveness. One of the main goals of the strategic plans at the university is to ensure the academic success of students, which is supposed to be achieved through serious objective tests and the adoption of the latest methods, means and systems available. Further, it is aimed to diversify the financial resources of the university in order to devote the independent management of the institution, and improve the infrastructure and educational processes, and encourage community participation by deepening the university's interaction, and its functions in the surrounding community.

Scaling up these goals, deriving precise targets from them, and applying them on a scientific basis requires some relevant initiatives to improve graduate participation by transforming them from recipients of information into developers and to be updated in all teaching, research and testing facilities. This requires the establishment of serious interactive relationships with other universities and community organizations at all levels of local, national and international, and the development of a marketing strategy covering all products and services (Ghouri et al, 2020, pp.1576-1606).

Sylvanus and Teneng (2020, pp.705-710) added that, by supporting graduate success and enhancing students' ability to demonstrate job-readiness and achieve their career goals. Strategic targets and measures are established to support institutional and faculty performance across all key objectives and supporting strategic activities

2.7.3 Strategic planning process and graduates' employability skills

Pei-Lee and Chen-Chen (2008, pp. 94-105) argue that the success of employability prospects is a result of the institution's organisational structure, management policies and priorities. Given that strategic planning concerns the determination of long-term goals and how the goals will be met (Taylor & Miroiu, 2002), universities that have employability as part of their strategic initiatives will have teaching and learning operational strategies that embrace the impartation of employability skills to their students.

In some universities, employability is enshrined in the strategic plan of the institutions. The vision, mission, strategic goals, and strategy capture employability. It is central to the strategic planning of a University. Suradi et al. (2017) concurred that the success of employability is hinged on a well-designed and implemented strategic plan. If employability is not stated in a university strategy, implementation becomes a challenge as it is viewed as a non-core component of the strategy. University leadership should be dedicated to employability to ensure graduates have successful access to the job market. Dedicated and

visionary leadership is key to the successful formulation and implementation of strategic plans (Immordino et al., 2016). A university strategic plan determines the type of human resources required to attain the strategic goal. The strategic plan clearly defines individuals with specific knowledge, skills, experience and exposure to offer courses in technology and entrepreneurship and foster an employability spirit among university students (Genç et al., 2020).

In this way, strategic planning plays a pivotal role in imparting employability skills to students in view of graduation. Such skills are important for socio-economic development, and better equip the society to propel envisaged projects. In the strategic planning process, a university identifies key stakeholders (Immordino et al., 2016, pp.35-42). One of the key stakeholders for a university is industry. Industry, through industrial attachments or internships, creates an opportunity for students to have exposure to reality (Abbas, 2018). Students are exposed to industrial technology, as well as the commercial part of the industry. In that way, students acquire techno-preneurial skills. The industry is also invited by universities on campus as guest lecturers to share their practical experience with business and technology.

Some universities have established strategic partnerships with international universities (Farel et al., 2018,). Such partnerships create platforms for universities to explore new ideas, and share information on techno-preneurship for the benefit of students. Through strategic planning, universities provide facilities such as laboratories, research assistants, business incubators, science parks and many other important resources (Abbas, 2018). These facilities enhance the transfer of entrepreneurship skills to students and the community.

A university's strategic plan should clearly spell out the resources and facilities to achieve the missions and goals (Modecki et al., 2017, pp.417-426). Some universities have, through research and development, produced products for the market. Students gain employability skills, as they are involved in these researches and production of products. The degree program offered, and courses taught in those degrees are a product of strategic planning (Immordino et al., 2016, pp. 35-42). In some universities courses that prepare graduates for employability are taught in both science and arts degree programmes. The aim is to produce a graduate who has both technical and entrepreneurial skills that are critical for business growth and economic development. Massachusetts University of Technology (MUT) teaches entrepreneurship to engineering students (Walker, 2012). Consequently, entrepreneurship courses have increased employability intentions among science and engineering students (Souitaris et al., as cited in Walker, 2012). In Botswana, Botswana International University of

Science and Technology (BIUST) provides both science and engineering students with theoretical and practical entrepreneurship courses (BIUST, 2017).

This is a new concept in Sub-Saharan Africa. University strategic planning also influences the pedagogical approaches to be adopted in imparting employability skills to students (Immordino et al., 2016, pp. 35-47). Such pedagogical methods include lectures, study visits to research centres, the use of university incubation centres, market and company visits, industrial attachment, project presentations, the use of industry experts or guest lecturers, and group discussions. University operational teaching and learning strategic plans determine the allocation of resources for teaching approaches adopted in the institution. In addition, they determine new course developments in line with market demands as well as the associated infrastructure requirements for such new courses (Taylor & Miroiu, 2002). Depending on the strategic direction of a university, some institutions have established centres of entrepreneurship that serve to impart entrepreneurship skills to science and engineering students (Walker et al., 2017, pp. 1-28). In addition, such centres combine with partners from industry, academia, and government to stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit among students and the community. In this way, entrepreneurship becomes an interface between universities and their stakeholders.

Strategic planning improves organizational performance as it helps firms to develop strategic understanding which in effect focuses on Company direction; focus drives performance and performance drives results (Taiwo & Idunnu, 2009, pp.147-164). A participatory and transparent management understanding, the effective and efficient use of resources, performance-based assessment and budgeting as well as the rapid developments experienced in informatics and communication technologies have obliged institutions of higher education to prepare their strategic plans both due to a legal obligation and to realize their institutional transformation.

2.7.4 The link between planning of program content and graduates' employability skills

The planning of the program content can influence graduate's employability in the following ways:

➤ Curriculum Mapping

Australian universities have already begun to address employability skills through the formal articulation of graduate attributes and the integration of those attributes into the curriculum. From this, the following lessons can be learned to enhance the situation of

Cameroon, as far as curriculum planning is concerned. Curriculum mapping is one means to ensure that graduate attributes, and therefore employability skills, are given an appropriate focus, and disciplines are aligned with course content.

Some universities have put institution-wide initiatives in place to undertake curriculum mapping, with a range of support systems. Where no university-wide initiatives exist, there are also many examples of individual faculties that have undertaken curriculum mapping in their own right. One is to map the articulation of the course curricula: teaching approaches, topics, and assessments, along with course aims, teaching philosophy and stated outcomes. This will allow staff and students to understand the articulation of these elements, and for staff to strengthen this articulation. Interestingly, Course Outlines are also requiring in the articulation of these elements, and the mapping process will assist in the development of informative Outlines.

The other is to map an entire program in terms of how individual courses contribute to the overall goals of the degree. This involves looking at Graduate Attributes: those generic qualities, skills and understandings that we expect our students to develop over their period at training. These are more than specific disciplinary expertise or technical knowledge but include broader capacities that contribute to the student's life-long capacity to act as a professional, citizen and learner. The process maps the introduction and development of these attributes in the courses that a student completes. A whole program map allows a clearer sense of where gaps or overlaps exist in terms of developing, practicing and assessing these broader capabilities or attributes. Both of these components are relevant to the objectives of this project (Grunig,1990, p.18).

Curriculum mapping in existing curricula to identify where particular skills are covered in the curriculum. Some universities are mapping graduate attributes, or generic skills, against existing curricula to identify where specific skills are addressed and where there are gaps in the curriculum and to further identify and develop skills (Sumsion & Goodfellow, 2004, pp. 329-346). Some universities have taken highly structured approaches to mapping graduate attributes across curriculum, to ensure that these attributes can be readily seen across an entire program or qualification. This enables the identification of gaps and alignment of graduate attributes with discipline-specific content. (Baldrige National Quality Program, 2005).

Design courses in alignment with the University's Employability Framework Embed and scaffold targeted WIL and assessment throughout every course. More so, it would Make

student training available and accessible to all students. Then the Co-designing and delivering curricula with industry, partners, alumni and students to ensure relevance and future focus. As such it would consult with industry, partners, alumni and students to define the capabilities and skills that graduates will need to succeed in the future world of work. Thereafter it shall contribute to the development, implementation and enhancement of courses, and revise assessment tasks to reflect industry and professional requirements, responsibilities and evaluation of students. Equipping students with skills to engage the future world of work, social leadership and career success with confidence, can be done by; ensuring that every course articulates the employability skills that will be developed throughout the course. Assess targeted employability skills using industry-relevant assessment tasks (Adenyinka, 2018, pp. 47-54).

➤ **Teaching Methods**

Cooper (2005, pp.51-67), asserted that “The changing nature of higher education in developed countries has shifted our focus as teaching and learning professionals, in that the teaching of skills has become as important as the teaching of content”.

The development of employability skills in higher education students requires academic staff to have informed knowledge of current industry practice and an awareness of how different workplaces are structured and function. Teaching skills, as well as knowledge, mean that academic staff are required to move beyond traditional lecturing and use a range of teaching methods. As well as teaching ‘about’ particular skills, academic staff can model those skills and develop them through the teaching methodologies they use. Certain courses, such as science or information technology, have always had a strong practical component, in both teaching and assessment, yet increasingly universities are encouraging the use of different teaching methodologies to develop graduate attributes in their students (Tambo et al., 2013, p.289).

The nexus between learning graduate attributes and teaching processes is described by the Business / Higher Education Roundtable (B-HERT) in the B-HERT Position Paper No. 9 2002 in this way: (there is a) strong and recurrent link between the development of generic skills by learners and teaching and learning methods that exhibit such features as:

- adult learning principles
- holistic approaches to learning
- problem-based learning

- lifelong learning skills
- learning how, why and exploring what if, not just learning received facts

Learner reflection, evaluation and articulation of learning experiences as a critical aspect of the learning process and an active learner-center approach in which integrated thinking and action occur on tasks that are relevant and meaningful to learners. (Blackmore et al.). This can better be viewed in table 2 below. Design courses in alignment with the University's Employability Framework Embed and scaffold targeted WIL and assessment throughout every course. More so, it would make student training available and accessible to all students. Then the Co-designing and delivering curricula with industry, partners, alumni and students to ensure relevance and future focus. As such it would consult with industry, partners, alumni and students to define the capabilities and skills that graduates will need to succeed in the future world of work.

Thereafter it shall contribute to the development, implementation and enhancement of courses, and revise assessment tasks to reflect industry and professional requirements, responsibilities and evaluation of students. Equipping students with skills to engage the future world of work, social leadership and career success with confidence, can be done by; ensuring that every course articulates the employability skills that will be developed throughout the course. Assess targeted employability skills using industry-relevant assessment tasks (Adenyinka, 2018, pp. 47-54).

Table 2: Teaching strategies suited to the development of employability skills

Employability skills	Teaching strategies
Communication	Writing and presenting, written and verbal reports, Role plays, Demonstrations, Working in groups
Teamwork	Team or group projects, Learning sets Group discussions, Syndicates, Communities of practice
Problem-solving	Case studies, Simulations, Investigative projects and research, using various problem-solving tools and techniques, Developing or designing models, Problem solving in teams and networks, Decision making activities
Initiative and enterprise	Brainstorming activities, designing innovative and creative practices and solutions, initiating change / designing change processes, Simulation activities

Planning and organising	Research and data collection, developing action plans, Planning and organising events, Time management activities, Goal setting activities and scheduling tasks, Collecting and analysing information
Self-management	Development of portfolios and work plans, using log books to record time management skills, and monitor own performance, Career planning exercises
Learning	Reflective journals, log books, diaries Mentoring and coaching activities, Self-evaluation tools

Source: (adapted from Blackmore et al., 2016)

➤ **Work Integrated Learning (WIL)**

Work Integrated Learning is the generic term used to describe a range of which provide students with a combination of workplace experience and formal learning which are integrated as part of a course of study in higher education (Mtawa et al., 2021, pp. 1525-1541). Other terminology for WIL includes industry-based learning, cooperative education, student placement and work practicum. The features that WIL share are:

- They are based on identified industry needs and expectations of graduates and employees which are integrated into the curriculum
- There is a work component as part of the curriculum design
- There are industry partners who, in addition to providing advice on curriculum design, also provide workplaces for students to gain experience
- There is a formal system which supports the students and provides a framework for organizing and assessing the student's work and experience.
- WIL provide a range of benefits and outcomes:
 - Academic benefits, including increased motivation to learn and improve performance in the classroom
 - Personal benefits, including increased development of employability skills, such as communication, teamwork and initiative
 - Career benefits, such as greater employment opportunities and salaries

- Work skills development, such as increased competence in technical knowledge and skills, as well as awareness of the role of work values and ethics in successful workplace performance.

➤ **Mentoring**

Increasingly universities are offering structured mentoring to students as a way to deepen students' understanding of their intended profession and to build relationships that will assist them following graduation. The University of Melbourne runs a Career Mentor Connection (CMC) program. The CMC locates mentors who may be urban planners, GPs and medical specialists, landscape architects, horticulturalists, engineers, architects or those in other businesses. Often mentors are required to have at least five years of professional experience. Career mentors and students meet four to six times per year and have regular email/phone contact. They are (Alrifai, 2019). Supported with guidelines, newsletters and individual monitoring by CMC coordinators.

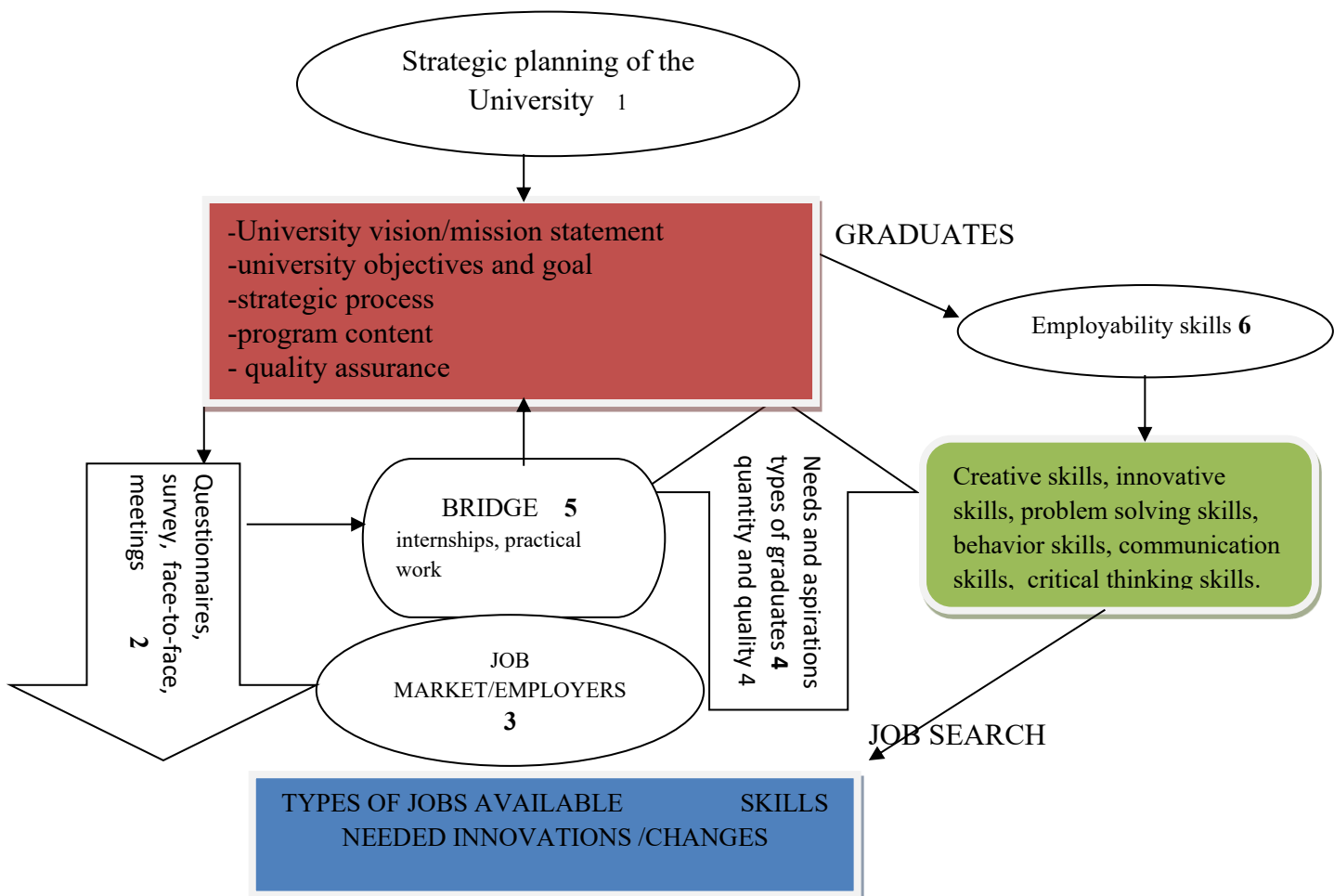
2.7.5 Enhancing Employability skills through Quality Assurance strategy

According to ASAIHL 2009, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka 120 graduates do not have the required competencies, knowledge, skills and experience (Suleman, 2018, pp. 263-278). This falls in line with our country Cameroon. Alrifai believes that employers are the second party in this model and from this view, graduates failed to fill requirements and core potentials. The third party is the educational institute and this system is criticized for not accommodating the volume and variety of student demand, high unit cost arising from unproductive overheads, inflexible curricula and teaching methods, and, lack of research output, the fourth party is the government that also should involve finding a solution to the problem. The author found that the employability concept currently considers factors such as achievements, competencies, attitudes and socioeconomic backgrounds, which most of the private sector uses in making selection decisions. An achievement includes results, graduate rank, winning university colours, and the age of the candidate. (Nweke, 2021). Competencies include communication, decision-making, leadership and teamwork. Attitudes cover the values, orientations and outlooks of candidates. Socioeconomic status deals with affiliations, and family status. There are several alternative models created by researchers for understanding the parties and their role in implementing employability skills into higher educational institutes. All stakeholders: the government, the university system administrators, employers and

graduates themselves must be involved in this process to find out skills requirements, the way of improving these skills and solutions to skill gap (Teneng, 2016).

The aforementioned facts have given us an analysis of the importance of strategic planning to graduates' employability skills through the lenses of vision and mission statements, goals and objectives, the strategic planning process, program content and quality assurance and control mechanisms.

Figure 8. The university strategic planning and graduate employability skills integrated pathway.



Source: (adapted from Samfoga, 2012, p. 125)

The figure above labelled 1 to 6 is the grounded technique that facilitates the possible correlations that exist between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills. This figure indicates the possible means through which the school-to-job nightmare that graduates face in most educational systems can be tackled. The University has the autonomy to plan and manage its system to give learners a better future through employment. In order to achieve

this, the university visits the employers/job market constantly to ascertain the realities and changes in society. Together with the employers, students and the community for which it is due, map out contextual vision/mission statement, objectives/goal, through quality assurance, employ quality in the program content, ICT and tailor contextual policies and determine the type and quantity of manpower to transform the students before graduating them to the society and the job market in general. With a training period punctuated by constant internship and practical work, the learners should acquire competencies, skills, know-how and self-confidence within the time frame allocated for education. Upon graduation, the graduates will fit in the various fields of training thus high employment among university graduates. This will permit them to take care of themselves, their families and the general society (positive externalities) thereby improving living standards, economic growth and development in the country in general.

2.8 Empirical Review on Strategic Planning and Graduates' Employability Skills

This section examines past studies which treat the phenomenon under study. Here we shall look at what other authors have written on strategic planning in the university with respect to our research questions. Numerous studies have explored the topic of strategic planning and graduates' employability skills, shedding light on the factors influencing skill acquisition, effective strategies for skill enhancement, and the impact of these skills on career success. The following review presents a comprehensive analysis of various research works.

The relationship between strategic planning and graduates employability has been the focus of growing empirical interest particularly in the context of higher education reforms labour market alignment. This section reviews key empirical studies relevant to strategic planning in universities , graduates employability and universities graduate employability and university-industry partnerships with an emphasis on African and Cameeroonian contexts.

▪ Strategic planning and higher education outcomes

Several studies have explored the role of strategic planning in enhancing institutional performance and educational outcomes. For instance Oketch (2016, pp. 341-356) conducted a mixed methods study involving ten universities across Kenya, finding that institutions with well-defined strategic plans demonstrated higher levels of graduates readiness and industry relevance. Their findings suggested that strategic planning positively influenced curriculum reforms, staff development and internship placement strategies. However, the study did not directly link strategic plans to measurable employability outcomes.

In Nigeria, Adetayo (2018, p.1258) used a quantitative survey of 300 university administrators to assess how strategic management practices influenced university performance. The study found that vision clarity, stakeholder's engagement and periodic monitoring were significantly correlated with graduates satisfaction and employment rates. The authors argue that universities adopting strategic plans aligned with national employability agendas saw better results in graduates' placement. However, the study emphasized administrative outcomes more than student centered- employability metrics.

- **Employability skills and curriculum alignment**

A growing study of empirical work has investigated how higher education prepares students for the labour market. Mbah and Fonjong (2020, p.) conducted a study at the university of Buea , involving 150 recent graduates across three faculties . Using structured interviews and questionnaires the study found that while graduates were confident in their academic knowledge, they lack key employability skills such as communication, problem solving- solving and digital literacy. The study conducted that the university curriculum had limited intergration of employability components and strategic planning in this area was either absent or poorly implemented.

In a comparative study, Alemu (2021) examined employability skill development in Ethiopia and Rwanda. Through interviews with academic staff and employers, the study highligheted that strategic frameworks that incorporate labour market feedback in to curriculum design significantly enhanced the relevance of graduate training . Universities with stronger ties to industry and ongoing planning cycles were more responsive to changing job market needs.

- **University – industry collaboration**

University- industry partnerships have been recognized as a strategic avenue for enhancing employability. Ndifor (2022, PP. 45662) examined the nature and effectiveness of university- industry inkages in Cameroon. Based on qualitative data from administrative staff and private sector employers in Yaounde, they found weak institutional frameworks for collaboration. Employers noted a mismatch between university outputs and industry needs, while universities lacked a formal strategic mechanisms to involve industry partners in planning or curriculum development.

A study by Tambo and Ndongmo (2018) in the university of Yaounde I used a case study method to explore partnerships projects. Their findings revealed that most collaborations

were ad hoc and externally driven (for example; by donor agencies) rather than embedded within a university's long term strategy. They argued that without a coherent strategic plan linking university training and employment outcomes, such partnerships had limited impact.

- **Curriculum alignment with labour market demands**

Strategic planning allows universities to revise and align academic programs with evolving industry requirements. Empirical studies shows that institutions that incorporate labour market analyses in to their curriculum planning significantly improve the employability of their graduates (World Bank 2020).It helps bridge the gap between academic traing and and employment realities. In Cameroon there is a growing demand for digital entrepreneurial and soft skills in areas often neglected like rigid curricula.Yaounde I and Buea can partner with industries to co-design courses that enhance relevant skills.

- **Institutionalisation of employability support services**

Research by UNESCO (2021) hightens the role of institutional structures such as career services, internship offices and soft skills workshops in enhancing graduates work readiness. Strategic planning facilitates the establishment and sustainability of these structures. At the university-wide strategic employability office could coordinate training in communication, CV writing, job search among others. At the University of Buea, for instance informal industry linkages exists, but lack of planning hinders their scalability.

Strategic planning fosters the formation of long term partnerships between universities and employers. According to the ILO (2020), such collaborations enhance student access to real-world learning through internships, guest lectures and co-designed projects. In the Cameroonian context, formalized university-industry relations remain underdeveloped partly due to the absence of strategic directions.The university of Buea computer science Department can partner with local tech start ups for applied project work.

- **Setting and measuring employability target**

Empirical studies from OECD (2019) show that universities with strategic employability goals such as increasing the rate of graduates employment within six or twelve months are more likely to achieve positive outcomes. These metrics support accountability and continuous improvements. Tracer studies, if included in the strategic plans of Yaounde I and Buea could offer valuable data to inform reforms.

- **Mobilization and prioritisation of resources**

Strategic planning enables effective resource allocation towards employability-enhancing initiatives. For example entrepreneurship labs, communication skill programs and professional mentoring are more likely to be funded when they are included in an institutional plan (African Development Bank, 2021). This is particularly important in resource-constrained public universities.

- **Institutional effectiveness and continuous quality improvement**

Strategic planning provides mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of employability interventions. CHEA (2020) emphasizes that institutions with embedded feedback systems (for example, alumni surveys employer feedback) can adapt quickly to emerging gaps. Strategic plans can guide this process through defined review cycles.

- **Adoption of global best practices**

Strategic planning promotes alignment with international benchmark such as; the Bologna Process, African Union Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) and the UNESCO Graduate Employability Guidelines. Universities engaging with global standards enhance both domestic and international employment prospects of their graduates.

Moreover, Tchombe and Abongwa (2021) indicate that the university has adopted external quality assurance processes, particularly through partnerships with accreditation agencies and international academic networks. These partnerships help ensure that the university's programs meet the expectations of global educational standards. Despite these efforts, challenges remain, particularly in the areas of limited resources and insufficient training for staff involved in quality assurance activities. Mba (2019) argues that while the university has made significant strides in implementing quality assurance mechanisms, more investment is needed in faculty development and infrastructure to sustain these initiatives effectively.

The University of Buea, known for its commitment to quality education, has also integrated quality assurance and control mechanisms into its strategic planning process. Nkongho and Ngwa (2020) describe how the university has developed a structured approach to quality assurance, with an emphasis on continuous program evaluation, student feedback, and faculty assessment. The university employs various mechanisms such as student satisfaction surveys, faculty performance reviews, and curriculum audits to ensure the maintenance of high academic standards.

The University of Buea places particular focus on aligning its quality assurance processes with both national and international benchmarks. Fonyuy and Tabi (2022) note that the university has adopted quality assurance standards established by the Cameroon Ministry of Higher Education, as well as international accreditation frameworks, to ensure its programs meet recognized educational standards. This alignment is especially evident in the university's adoption of the Bologna Process, which helps standardize academic qualifications across European and African universities.

However, Nkongho and Ngwa (2020) highlight that the University of Buea faces challenges in the effective implementation of quality assurance mechanisms due to insufficient funding and a lack of comprehensive staff training programs. While the university has established a quality assurance framework, the financial constraints limit its ability to expand the scope of quality assurance activities, especially in relation to new and emerging disciplines.

Both the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea align their quality assurance mechanisms with their strategic planning processes. Mba (2019) points out that at the University of Yaounde I, quality assurance is embedded within the broader strategic vision of institutional development, which includes a commitment to achieving higher standards of academic excellence, research productivity, and societal impact. The university's strategic planning documents highlight the importance of quality assurance in meeting national goals related to higher education, such as improving student outcomes, increasing research output, and fostering innovation.

Tchombe and Abongwa (2021) highlight that the integration of quality assurance into long-term planning has allowed both universities to remain responsive to external demands, including the expectations of students, faculty, employers, and accreditation bodies.

Additionally, Nchang and Ndifor (2019) highlight that both universities face resistance to change from certain faculty members who are not fully engaged with the quality assurance process. This resistance can hinder the development of a culture of continuous improvement, which is essential for the successful implementation of quality assurance strategies.

Research has shown that effective quality assurance mechanisms have a positive impact on institutional performance. Tabi (2021) found that the University of Yaounde I's commitment to internal and external quality assurance processes has led to improvements in academic outcomes, including higher graduation rates and increased research output. Similarly, the University of Buea's focus on continuous program evaluation and stakeholder feedback has

enhanced the quality of its educational offerings, leading to greater student satisfaction and better job placements for graduates.

Both universities also benefit from enhanced credibility and recognition in national and international academic circles due to their commitment to quality assurance. As noted by Fonyuy and Tabi (2022), the adoption of international accreditation frameworks has not only improved the universities' academic offerings but also helped them attract more funding, establish global partnerships, and increase their visibility in international.

- **Graduates employability skills**

Klees et al. (2021, pp. 200-217) highlighted the significance of tertiary education in fostering the development of transferable cognitive skills (critical thinking and problem-solving) as well as socio-behavioural skills (teamwork, resilience, self-confidence, negotiation, and self-expression), which are crucial for recent graduates' employability. The study's assessment of how the nature of work has evolved in response to tertiary education identified three methodologies. The demand for higher-order general intellectual capacities, such as complex problem-solving, critical thinking, and sophisticated communication, has increased because of technological advancement and integration. The above attributes are transferrable across industries but cannot simply be accumulated through formal education.

Additionally, studies by van der Heijden et al. (2021, p. 96) reinforce governments' and employers' appeals to universities to boost graduate career opportunities by fostering both general and discipline-specific employability skills. This argument is supported by Asiedu et al. (2021), who urge educational institutions to highlight graduates' transferrable cognitive and socio-behavioural talents, including critical thinking and problem-solving, as well as teamwork, resilience, self-confidence, and self-expression. Despite this, there is a dearth of research on the effectiveness of the strategies and techniques used by institutions to produce employable graduates. According to the principal purposes of HEI employability programmes are short-term employment outcomes, professional readiness, and living and working productively and meaningfully throughout one's lifetime. Regardless of how well articulated a goal might be, institutions have varying unstated and implicit approaches within and between institutions.

In another study, Baah-Boateng (2013, pp. 385-399) reported that there is a weak link between schools, universities, and businesses as a result of discrepancies between the skills that employers desire, and those that graduates exhibit. The quality of higher education

institutions' offerings, which place a strong emphasis on employability and labour market trends to help graduates succeed in their chosen jobs, is what mostly determines how employable graduates are (Bennett, 2019, pp. 31-61).

Teye-Kwadjo (2021, pp. 249-270) reports that only 10% of university graduates find employment after their first year of study. A significant portion takes ten years to do so due to several difficulties, such as lack of employability skills, lack of funding capital for entrepreneurial endeavours, poor graduate attitudes toward their jobs, and the industry's inability to absorb the numbers required to support the e-commerce industry.

According to Artess et al. (2016, pp. 69-109), graduate employability depends on more than only the information and skills they have received via their institutions. It also depends on various employability-enhancing tactics developed by universities. Some scholars contend that certain capital assets or forms are important for graduates' employment (Bakari & Khoso, 2017; Tomlinson, 2017, pp. 338-352). These capital kinds include human capital, social capital, cultural capital, identity capital, psychological capital, and social capital. Weller (2019, pp. 144-156) asserts that the production and use of capital have the potential to improve their variety of options and their capacity to act in ways that are economically viable. Capital may have an impact on how people learn to develop employable skills, according to Jackson and Tomlinson (2022, pp. 46-62). A graduate from a university will also believe himself to be more employable if his level of capital, which includes human, social, cultural, psychological, and identity capital, is higher. Capital forms may therefore act as a mediator in the connection between institutional policies and graduate employability.

Ambepitiya, (2016), studied employability and job expectations of university students using a sample of 68 undergraduates to ascertain the extent employability and expectations affect job opportunities of educated youth. The findings confirmed the view that there is a mismatch. The author claims the more person has been educated, the greater the likelihood that she or she may be unemployed. This situation arises out of the high rate of entry to the labour force on the one hand and the relatively sluggish expansion of the economy. Public services are experiencing resource constraints to generate employment due to a lack of funding and lack of organizational planning. Today, the private sector is becoming the dominant player in the economy and is expected to generate more employment opportunities. However, most of the students are expected to select future employment in a government sector after their graduation and the employment expectations of students vary by study programme.

Ngang, et al (2024) look at the Partnership of University Institutions with Industries and Graduates' Employability in Cameroon: Case of Graduates of Technical and Professional Schools of the University. They assert that graduate employability remains a global interest in this 21st century as workplace demands and economic sustainability are growing, changing, and driving new competencies and needs as well as the need for an innovative, flexible, and motivated workplace. The quality of university graduates is not only crucial to individual productivity but also to national productivity, economic growth, and development. Therefore, this study examines the influence of the quality of partnerships between university institutions and industries on the employability of graduates from technical and professional schools of the University of Ngaoundere.

In the year 2023, a study on institutional strategies and graduates' employability development skills, aimed to assess the effect of institutional strategies on the development of employability skills, mediated by graduate capital forms among business education students in some selected public and transnational universities in Ghana. Institutional theory underpinned this study. The institutional strategy constructs of curriculum design, extracurricular activities, work-integrated learning, internship and job placement, university engagement with industries, career centres, and student engagement with employability development opportunities predicted the dependent variable graduate employability with the mediating variables. On a sample of 1280 survey participants, structural equation modelling was used. The findings showed that all of the constructs included in institutional strategies had a favourable, significant impact on the growth of graduate employability abilities.

Etomes (2019, p.) on her study on graduates' employability and career opportunities, the suggestion gave by many of the graduates and employers is the need for Higher Education to engage in professionalization as a way to curb graduates' unemployment. According to the agenda 2063 framework, Africa needs to significantly improve its human capital in order to achieve the economic transformation envisaged under Agenda 2063. HE is the highest provider of Labour force in the economy and providing adequate resources for teaching is of paramount importance

Gaps and implications for the study

Across the reviewed studies, a common limitation is the insufficient examination of how strategic planning processes themselves and not just outcomes influence the integration of employability skills in university education. Few studies have analysed the extent to which

universities in Cameroon particularly Yaounde I and Buea, operationalized strategic goals relating to employability. Moreover, the role of vision and mission statement, quality assurance mechanisms, internal stakeholders (for example; employers, students faculty) in shaping employability-oriented strategies remain underexplored. These gaps underscore the need for an indept empirical investigation in to how strategic planning frameworks within Cameroonian universities are designed, implemented and monitotored in relation to graduate employability.

2.9 Operationalization of concepts in the Study

2.9.1 Independent Variable: Strategic Planning

Strategic planning refers to a systematic process through which universities define their long-term goals, allocate resources, and implement policies to improve educational outcomes (Bryson, 2018). It encompasses various dimensions, including curriculum development, institutional policies, faculty development, and industry partnerships.

➤ Framework of Strategic Planning in Universities

▪ Strategic vision and mission statements

The vision and mission statements of universities form the foundation upon which strategic planning is based. They guide decisions related to academic programs, research priorities, student development, and community engagement. A well-crafted vision statement serves as a blueprint for where the institution aspires to be in the future, while the mission statement outlines the university's core purpose and key objectives.

Tabi (2021,p.45) underscores the importance of aligning a university's mission and vision with its strategic planning process, particularly in the context of Cameroon, where universities are tasked with meeting national and international educational standards. The study found that universities with clearly defined missions and visions are better positioned to create comprehensive strategic plans that address both academic and administrative challenges. These institutions are more likely to invest in research, infrastructure, and partnerships that enhance their reputation and contribute to the socio-economic development of Cameroon.

The mission and vision statements provide the two ends of an analytical view of the institution from which the strategic plan is developed. The mission and vision represent the current and envisioned state of the institution. The strategic plan is used to bridge the gap between the two. It is regularly assumed by members of the campus community that a vision statement can only be produced if market research has been conducted to determine what

educational needs are not being met by peer and aspirational institutions. This perception is only partially true. Market research is more effective if it is conducted after the vision statement has been written and approved. What is needed to complete a strategic plan is, more often, an environmental scan.

Education mission must be defined in the strategic planning phase so that it functions well, because “strategic management is a holistic process with many components that must effectively interact and function together” (Taylor & Machado, 2006, p.139). Before starting the education process, institutions primarily define their mission. Mission can be defined as the primary aim of any educational institution and it declares what the organization wants to do (Kotler and Murphy, 1981, p.478). Missions need to be defined and they must guide the institutional leaders to determine what steps to be taken and what the vision will be (Dooris et. al., 2002, p.7).

- **Strategic planning goals and objectives**

Strategic planning in higher education has become a critical tool for aligning institutional goals with national development priorities and labor market needs (Bryson, 2018). Universities worldwide are increasingly focusing on equipping graduates with employability skills to enhance their competitiveness in the job market (Knight & Yorke, 2016). In Cameroon, universities such as Yaounde I and Buea are central to this discourse, given their pivotal roles in producing the country’s workforce. This review synthesizes empirical studies on strategic planning and graduate employability, highlighting their implications for higher education institutions (HEIs) in Cameroon.

- **Strategic planning process**

In the strategic planning process, the University of Buea has set clear goals related to the enhancement of educational quality, particularly through the regular review and improvement of academic programs. Going through the ideas of Nchang and Ndifor (2019), the university has implemented feedback loops that involve various stakeholders, including students, faculty, and industry partners, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of academic programs. This participatory approach has been instrumental in improving the alignment of program content with labor market needs and national development priorities.

- **Program content**

Teneng, also looked at the influence of curriculum on graduate’s employability skills in Cameroon, she examined the influence of the curriculum on graduate’s employability skills

and the results showed that all the stakeholders should collaborate and participate in the elaboration of the curriculum for the university learners in Cameroon. By so doing the learner's problems would be identified and curriculum designers would design a curriculum that suits their needs.

Agborbechem (2016), curriculum structure and the Cameroonian labour and industrial market education in Cameroon, affirmed that the labour market has come under serious criticism for failing to deliver in accordance with its promises as stipulated in the education law. With the improving situation of democracy and freedom in Cameroon, entrepreneurship has become a major prerequisite for the rapid economic development of the nation. It is for this reason that, these researchers decided to carry out a study on curriculum structure and the Cameroonian labour and industrial market. The curriculum of the English-speaking educational subsystem was evaluated. The study revealed that the present curriculum no longer meets the demands of the society. A curriculum revision was recommended from the findings.

Ndongnyam, (2023), set out to assess the influence of the professionalization of courses in higher education on graduate employability in Cameroon. Lack of marketable skills and work experience were observed as obstacles to finding wage-paying jobs and growing individual career employability. A focus on employability education in higher education (HE) with a marked orientation towards the acquisition of marketable skills through a more market-friendly curriculum could become the safest route to escape the graduate unemployment trap and help in the development of individual career employability.

Babalola (2021, pp.1-5) looked at the impact of Strategic Planning on Science Education Curriculum Implementation for Academic Performance in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions. In his work, he explored the effects of strategic planning on the Implementation of the Science Education Curriculum in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions using Kano State as a case study Kano State. His work revealed that the implementation of the Science Education Curriculum in Nigerian tertiary institutions needs a standard Strategic planning to ensure students' performance and reduce drop-out. The quality of strategic planning of Science Education in Nigerian tertiary institutions is poor as the priority was not given to the goals which could give the institutions a competitive advantage over other institutions in the world ranking. There is inadequate quality control of strategic planning during the implementation of the Science Education Curriculum in Nigerian tertiary institutions. There is a significant difference in strategic planning needs for the implementation of the Science Education Curriculum in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

➤ **Quality assurance and control mechanisms**

The University of Yaounde I, as a central academic institution in Cameroon, has developed and implemented quality assurance and control mechanisms aimed at improving the academic standards and operational efficiency of the institution. According to Tabi (2021), one of the key elements of the university's quality assurance framework is the creation of internal assessment bodies that regularly monitor and evaluate academic programs. These bodies, including academic committees and program review panels, are responsible for assessing curriculum relevance, teaching quality, and student learning outcomes.

In the context of strategic planning, the University of Yaounde I integrates quality assurance measures into its long-term development goals. Mba (2019) highlights that the university has prioritized the establishment of comprehensive internal quality audits, which evaluate the effectiveness of teaching methods, research outputs, and administrative processes. These audits serve as a tool for identifying weaknesses and areas for improvement in both academic and non-academic units, helping to ensure that the university meets both local and international accreditation standards.

➤ **Strategic Planning in Higher Education**

Strategic planning in universities involves long-term goal setting, resource allocation, and policy formulation to improve academic programs and institutional performance (Mintzberg, 1994). Studies show that strategic planning positively impacts university governance, quality assurance, and student outcomes (Rowley & Sherman, 2001). A study by Ogbonnaya et al. (2020) found that African universities adopting structured strategic plans recorded higher graduate employment rates due to curricula alignment with labor market needs.

In Cameroon, research by Tchombe (2019) indicates that while strategic planning frameworks exist, implementation challenges, including inadequate funding and administrative inefficiencies, hinder their effectiveness. The Universities of Yaounde I and Buea have attempted reforms to integrate professional training programs and industry partnerships (Ewumbue-Monono, 2021).

2.9.2 Dependent variable: Graduates' employability Skills

Employability skills refer to a set of competencies that enable graduates to secure, maintain, and progress in their careers (Yorke, 2006). These include critical thinking, communication, problem-solving, digital literacy, and teamwork (Andrews & Higson, 2008). Empirical studies have demonstrated that universities that incorporate soft skill training into

their curricula produce more employable graduates (Harvey, 2001). A study by Kamdem and Ndongmo (2022) analyzed employability gaps in Cameroonian universities and found that many graduates lacked industry-specific skills, particularly in technical and managerial fields. The research highlighted the need for universities to integrate experiential learning, internships, and mentorship programs to bridge this gap.

➤ **The Relationship Between Strategic Planning and Employability**

Several empirical studies affirm that effective strategic planning enhances graduate employability by aligning educational programs with labor market demands (Teichler, 2015). A case study by Olayemi (2019) on Nigerian universities showed that institutions with robust strategic frameworks had higher employability rates due to their emphasis on entrepreneurship and career development initiatives. In the Cameroonian context, Ngwa (2020) examined how the University of Buea's strategic plan affected employability. The findings indicated that structured collaborations with industries, skill-based curriculum reforms, and career advisory services significantly improved employment outcomes. Similarly, at Yaounde I, studies by Mbangwana (2021) revealed that while efforts had been made to integrate strategic planning in graduate training, mismatches between academic offerings and labor market needs persisted.

➤ **Challenges in Implementing Strategic Planning for Employability**

Despite its benefits, implementing strategic planning in universities faces several challenges. Financial constraints, bureaucratic hurdles, and resistance to change are notable barriers (Altbach, 2013). Research by Chuo (2018) highlighted that in Cameroonian universities, lack of coordination between academia and industry, inadequate policy monitoring, and limited resources hinder effective strategic implementation. Additionally, a study by Fonchingong (2021) revealed that many employers in Cameroon perceive university graduates as lacking practical skills, emphasizing the need for stronger university-industry linkages, entrepreneurship programs, and policy reforms.

The empirical review underscores that strategic planning plays a crucial role in enhancing graduate employability. However, effective implementation requires adequate funding, industry collaboration, and policy commitment. Cameroonian universities, particularly Yaounde I and Buea, must adopt evidence-based strategies, including curriculum reforms, skills-based training, and career development initiatives, to improve employment outcomes. Future research should focus on longitudinal studies to track the impact of strategic

planning on employment trends and explore innovative policy measures to enhance university-industry collaboration in Cameroon.

2.10 Theoretical Framework on strategic planning and graduates employability skills

Lester (2005) defines theoretical framework as the blue print for the entire dissertation inquiry. The author asserts that the theoretical framework serves as the guide on which to build and support the study and also provides structure to define how the researcher will philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically and analytically approach the dissertation as a whole. There are models and theories which guide the comprehension and evolution of the study. These theories are related to the planning process, university goals and objectives, university vision mission statements program content and quality assurance and control mechanisms. Theories that guided this study include the institutional theory, the systems theory and the goal-setting theory. We shall start by looking at models thereafter we will examine the theories on which the research is grounded.

2.10.1 Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is critical in steering universities toward long-term success. Various theories and models help institutions address complexities, stakeholder demands, and environmental changes. This would be examining subsequently. We shall start off with the theories thereafter we shall look at the models.

2.10.1.1 Models on Strategic Planning

There are many models and approaches which can be used by school stakeholders during the strategic planning process to achieve the objectives of universities in Cameroon. According to Sokpwuwu, (2020) also cited by Mohammadian (2017) they include the following: the classical strategic planning model, the strategic planning (Bryson) model and the strategic planning adaptive model.

🚩 Classical Strategic Planning Model -1965 of Igor Ansoff

The Classical Strategic Planning Model is primarily associated with H. Igor Ansoff in 1965 and later expanded by scholars in strategic management, such as Bryson (2018) for public and non-profit organizations, including universities. The classical model is a linear and rational process typically divided into the following key steps:

- Mission and Vision Definition
 - Establishes the institution's purpose and long-term aspirations.

- Clarifies what the university aims to achieve and why.
- Environmental Scanning
 - Analyzes internal and external factors (SWOT, PESTLE).
 - Identifies opportunities, threats, and trends in higher education.
- Goal and Objective Setting
 - Defines measurable and time-bound objectives aligned with the mission.
 - Often includes strategic priorities like research excellence or student success.
- Strategy Formulation
 - Develops strategies to bridge the gap between current state and goals.
 - Involves selecting among alternatives for academic programs, partnerships, funding, etc.
- Implementation
 - Allocates resources, assigns responsibilities, and sets timelines.
 - Strategies are translated into actionable plans across departments.
- Monitoring and Evaluation
 - Uses KPIs and feedback mechanisms to track progress.
 - Adjusts strategies based on performance and changing contexts.

Figure 9: The classical strategic planning model



Source: (Ansoff, 1965)

Significance to Education

- Structure and Clarity; strategic planning provides a clear roadmap for achieving institutional goals.
- Accountability; it enhances transparency in planning, budgeting, and resource allocation.
- Alignment; it lings academic and administrative functions with broader educational missions.
- Performance Measurement; it facilitates continuous improvement through regular assessments.

It is especially effective in stable or moderately changing environments, where long-term goals and systematic planning can be followed with minimal disruption. The classical model fosters mission alignment and institutional effectiveness in higher education contexts (Rowley & Sherman, 2004).

Limitations

- May be too rigid in rapidly changing environments.
- Can lack flexibility and responsiveness.
- Often top-down, with limited input from faculty or students.

Strategic planning model of Bryson – 2018

This model offers a systematic framework for decision-making and performance management in universities (Bryson, 2018). This model is a structured framework that organisations use to define their goals, set priorities, allocate resources and outline the steps needed to achieve long term success. It helps guide decision- making and ensures that an organisation stays focus on its mission and vision.

Bryson argues that strategic planning in education should:

1. Be participatory and inclusive.
2. Focus on clarifying institutional mission and values.
3. Use tools like SWOT analysis, stakeholder analysis, and strategy mapping.
4. Emphasize public value creation and strategic thinking, not just planning.

This approach is especially relevant for universities, where diverse stakeholder interests (students, faculty, employers, government) must be balanced within dynamic environments.

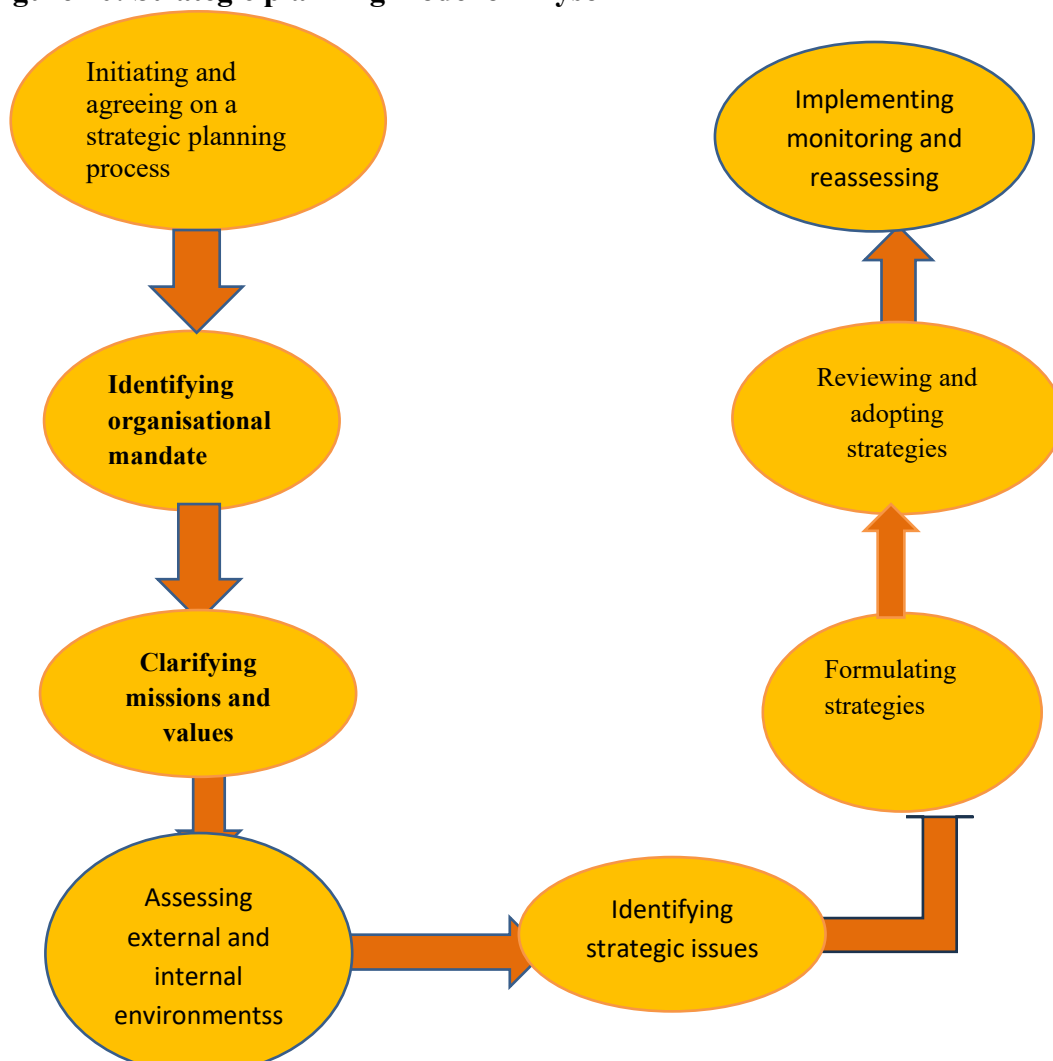
Application in Educational Institutions

Bryson's model involves an eight-step strategic planning process, which includes:

1. Initiating and agreeing on a strategic planning process
2. Identifying organizational mandates
3. Clarifying mission and values
4. Assessing external and internal environments (SWOT)
5. Identifying strategic issues
6. Formulating strategies
7. Reviewing and adopting strategies
8. Implementing, monitoring, and reassessing

These steps are applicable to educational settings when universities seek to improve employability skills, curriculum relevance, and institutional effectiveness.

Figure 10: Strategic planning model of Bryson



Source: (adapted from Kathleen, 2003, p. 20)

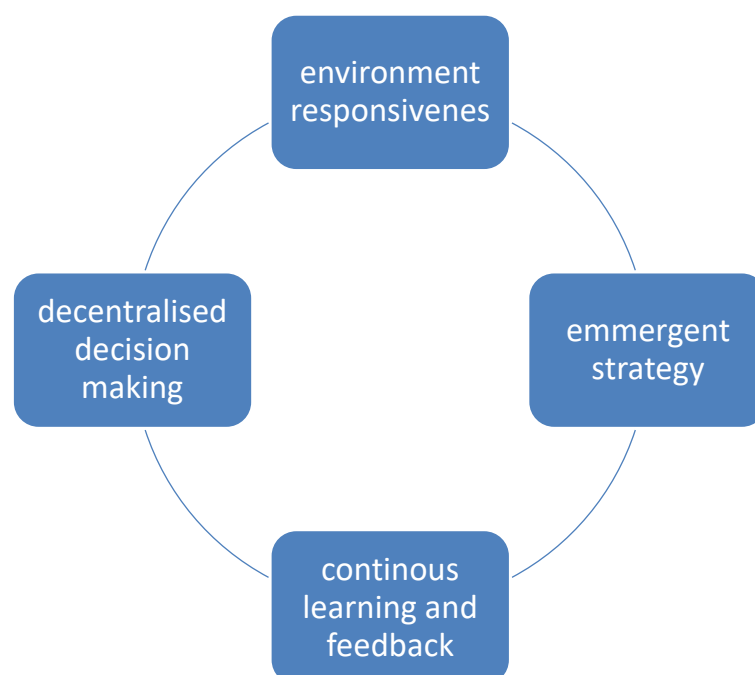
🚩 The Strategic Planning Adaptive Model – 1970s of Henry Mintzberg

The Adaptive Model of strategic management began to take shape in the 1970s and 1980s, but it became more formally articulated through the work of Henry Mintzberg in the early 1990s. Some key Milestones:

- **1978–1987:** Mintzberg began criticizing traditional (classical) strategic planning models for being too rigid and disconnected from real-world organizational behavior.
- **1994:** Mintzberg's book *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning* was published. This work formally introduced the idea of strategy as an emergent, adaptive process, marking the full expression of the Adaptive Model. So, while the conceptual foundations emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s, the Adaptive Model was formally born with Mintzberg's 1994 publication.

The Adaptive Model is most closely associated with Henry Mintzberg, a leading scholar in strategic management. Unlike classical models, Mintzberg emphasized the non-linear, emergent nature of strategy, where plans adapt over time in response to environmental shifts. The Adaptive Model views strategy as a flexible and evolving process rather than a rigid, top-down plan. It acknowledges the dynamic and complex nature of higher education environments. Key components include:

Figure 11: The Adaptive model



Source, (Mintzberg, 1978)

- Environmental Responsiveness
 - Strategy emerges in response to changes in funding, policy, technology, and societal needs.
 - Encourages real-time adjustments rather than fixed long-term plans.
- Decentralized Decision-Making
 - Greater involvement of departments and units in identifying opportunities and risks.
 - Recognizes that useful strategies often originate from operational levels (bottom-up).
- Continuous Learning and Feedback
 - Strategic planning is seen as an ongoing process involving feedback loops, experimentation, and learning from past actions.
- Emergent Strategy
 - Strategy is discovered and shaped through experience, not just designed in advance.
 - Especially relevant when dealing with uncertainty, ambiguity, or crisis situations. Mintzberg (1994) argued that strategic planning in universities must account for complexity, favoring emergent, adaptive processes over rigid, analytical models.

Significance to Higher Education

- Flexibility and Innovation; it enables universities to pivot quickly in response to external shocks such as policy reforms, economic downturns, or global crises like COVID 19.
- Encourages Experimentation; it fosters a culture of innovation, where strategic initiatives can be piloted and scaled based on results.
- Better Fit for Complex Systems; universities are loosely coupled systems with diverse missions and units. Adaptive planning accommodates this complexity more effectively than top-down approaches.

- Resilience in Change; it supports long-term institutional sustainability by allowing for adaptation to fast-evolving educational landscapes. Universities benefit from adaptive strategies that evolve through experience and context-specific learning (Mintzberg et al., 2005).

Limitations

- Lack of Clear Direction: May result in fragmented or inconsistent strategies if not balanced with overarching goals.
- Hard to Measure: Outcomes can be difficult to quantify due to ongoing change and informality.
- Requires Strong Leadership: Leaders must foster a strategic culture that values flexibility and innovation while maintaining coherence.

The SWOT Model -1960s of Albert Humphrey

This is a strategic planning framework used to identify and evaluate the internal and external factors that can affect the success of a project, organization or policy. The acronym stands for **Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and threats**. It was put up by Albert Humphrey in the 1960s and 70s others included; Learned and Heinz Wehrich. It helps decision makers develop a comprehensive understanding of both the internal capabilities and the external environment, thereby enabling better strategic choices. Strategic planning requires a specification of the internal environment's strengths, weaknesses, and the external environment's opportunities and Threats (Stanford Research Institute). These four groups are summarized in an acronym (SWOT) in order to accurately and objectively identify goals, objectives and plans. With SWOT's identification in the university, the following facts in relation to each of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are respectively recognized. (Humphrey, 2005).

Strengths

- Geographical location is a strength when the university is located in the urban centre and near other universities and research centres such as the university of Yaounde I situated at the heart of the Mfoundi Division.
- Availability of perfect and enough infrastructure with advanced and professional staff.

- The diversity of scientific specialties, which are supposed to be organized and directed among the scientific departments and colleges which are adopted in teaching the latest educational technologies.
- The variety of students enrolled in the study are of different origins.
- Issuing scientific journals of the university.
- Giving serious attention to postgraduate studies: Masters, PhD and professional diplomas.
- Develop continuous education to maintain the permanent development of graduates scientifically and academically.
- Preparation of training courses on teaching and researching methods for the purpose of professional preparation in education and research.

Weaknesses

The following weaknesses can sometimes be observed at the university.

- Lack of coordination between the registering offices at the secondary schools and the admission departments at the universities, cause a delay in studying in the first stages of university. This leads to a shorter study period.
- The ineffectiveness of part of the curriculum adopted for the needs of society and the labour market.
- Lack of training and technical skills, whether at the level of administrators or teachers.
- The small size of the library in terms of the capacity of the place and the number of references and sources and the lack of an electronic library and sophisticated systems for ordering, receiving and classification.
- Lack of language labs facilitating learning different languages.
- High ratio of students to teachers with crowded halls in large numbers.
- The absence of annual or quarterly plans at the levels of teaching staff and scientific and administrative departments, especially for research, seminars, conferences and workshops. This leads to the absence of strategic thinking, whether at the level of departments or colleges.

- Concentration of students' interest in obtaining a certificate only, without learning and acquiring skills. Consequently, the absenteeism rates are high and the curriculum vocabulary is rarely prepared. In many cases, there is less serious preparation for the exams, including the final exams.
- Extreme weakness in the basic curriculum materials of the university, especially in the basic national languages and computers, created severe difficulties for students in understanding their lectures and further preparing and discussing.
- Absence of systematic materials or specialized in ethics.
- Lack of an officially approved and stable institutional monitoring and evaluation system.
- Decreased efficiency and effectiveness of communications and advanced information systems.
- Teachers need to pay more attention to scientific research and publishing in refereed academic journals to develop their teaching abilities, enrich their lectures and raise their academic ranks.
- Lack of effective databases to achieve integration at all levels, i.e. between departments and colleges, between colleges and the corresponding departments and colleges in other universities locally and internationally.

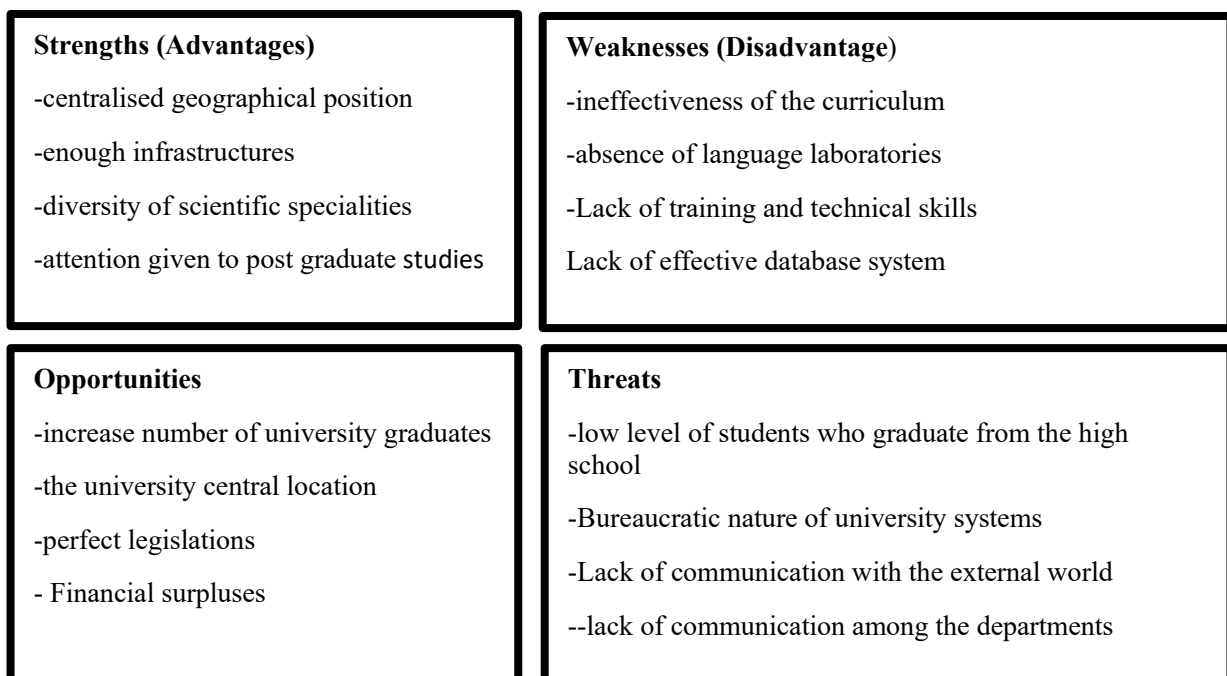
Opportunities

- The presence of the university in the capital attracts the majority of the population, services and funds.
- Increasing numbers of high school graduates, looking for admission sites in the university, especially with the growing interest of the community for university degree holders.
- Increasing the local and international orientation towards emphasizing the total quality system for higher education and scientific research.
- The existence of integrated and perfect legislation for higher education.
- The safe (internal, surrounding and external) environments of the university would increase the ability of the university to attract professional teachers and smart students.
- The financial surpluses resulting from student fees can provide a relatively high potential for self-financing of their regular expenses and for covering an important aspect of the University's development and projects.

Threats

- Low levels of students who graduate from high school and are at the lowest grades of success. They also suffer from severe weakness in languages and computers.
- Lack of communication between the scientific departments and their curricula on the one hand and labour markets and conditions and requirements of employment on the other hand, which causes high unemployment rates among graduates further resulting in frustration among students.
- The university's lack of communication with its graduates causes ignorance of the shortcomings of the curriculum and its practical requirements.
- Lack of communication with the external community is evident from the weakness of the real orientation towards the surrounding and external environment (economic, political, social, technological and administrative) while preparing curricula and lectures and follow-up references.
- The bureaucratic complexities that hinder the implementation of many of the university's and projects.

Figure 12: The SWOT Model



Source: (Mohammadian, 2017, p.45)

2.10.1.2 Theories on strategic planning

The Strategic Planning Theory

Strategic planning in higher education institutions (HEIs) involves a systematic process of defining the direction and making decisions on allocating resources to achieve specific educational and institutional goals (Bryson, 2018). For universities in Cameroon, such as the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea, strategic planning is crucial for adapting to the ever-evolving educational landscape and improving the quality of education provided to students

▪ Core Concepts in Strategic Planning Theory

1. Goal-Oriented Decision Making

- Strategic planning focuses on setting long-term objectives and figuring out how to achieve them.
- Often includes mission, vision, and values statements as guiding principles.

2. Environmental Scanning

- Understanding both internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external (opportunities and threats) environments.
- Tools: SWOT Analysis, PESTLE Analysis, Porter's Five Forces.

3. Strategic Fit

- Theory emphasizes aligning an organization's resources and capabilities with its environment.
- The idea of "fit" is central in models like the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Porter's Competitive Strategy.

4. Deliberate vs. Emergent Strategy (Mintzberg)

- Deliberate strategy: Carefully planned and executed.
- Emergent strategy: Evolves organically in response to real-world conditions.

▪ Strategic Planning Process (Typical Steps)

1. Define mission and vision
2. Environmental scanning (internal + external)

3. Set strategic goals
4. Formulate strategy
5. Implement strategy
6. Evaluate and control performance

- **Application at the University of Yaounde**

Recent studies indicate that Yaounde I has adopted a crisis-sensitive and technopedagogical planning approach, especially in response to disruptions like COVID-19 (Tchameni Ngamo et al., 2023). This involves integrating e-learning, digital pedagogy, and planning for continuity in education all of which enhance employability through digital literacy and adaptability.

A study by Tchameni Ngamo et al. (2023) found a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.57$, $p < .001$) between strategic planning components (curriculum innovation, staff development, infrastructure, etc.) and graduate employability outcomes. This aligns with the Design School model by ensuring internal capacity is built to meet external labor market demands.

- **Application at the University of Buea**

At the University of Buea, strategic planning is aligned with professionalization of education and competence-based approaches. The university's strategic documents and academic reforms emphasize graduate readiness, use of ICT in teaching, and curriculum alignment with national development goals (Tchombe et al., pp. 78-96, 2020).

Buea's approach aligns with Porter's Positioning School, as the institution aims to enhance its competitiveness through distinctive employability-oriented programs. However, challenges such as limited infrastructure and inconsistent pedagogical reform remain (Neba, pp. 45-57, 2012).

- **Criticisms of Strategic Planning**

- Too rigid in fast-changing environments.
- Assumes predictability and rational decision-making.
- Often top-down and excludes lower-level employees.

Strategic planning theory offers a robust framework to guide universities in aligning their academic offerings with market expectations. In both Yaounde I and Buea, there is

evidence of theoretical application through curriculum reforms, technological adoption, and focus on skill-based learning. However, the success of these strategies depends on their adaptability, inclusiveness, and alignment with broader socio-economic goals.

Goal setting theory - Locke and Latham (2002)

This study will be conducted within the framework of goal-setting theory, which refers to the effects of setting goals on subsequent performance. A goal is the object or aim of an action, to attain a specific standard of proficiency, typically within a specified period. Key thinkers behind the theory are Edwin A. Locke, from the University of Maryland, and Gary P. Latham, from the University of Toronto. (Locke & Latham, 2002). Locke began goal-setting research in the 1960s. His research revealed an inductive relationship between goal setting and improved production performance. Locke and Latham describe themselves as industrial-organizational psychologists, with a primary interest in predicting, explaining, and influencing performance on organizational or work-related tasks. Accordingly, the researchers focused on conscious performance goals, together with the level of task performance (Locke & Latham, 2002). Goal setting theory indicates that the source of motivation is the desire and intention to reach a goal; if individuals or teams find that their current performance is not achieving desired goals, they typically become motivated to increase effort or change their strategy (Locke & Latham, 2006). Locke and Latham goal-setting theory states that several mechanisms are particularly important for how goals affect performance: direct attention, energizing, task persistence, and effective strategies. Direct attention refers to focusing attention and effort toward goal-relevant activities, and away from distractors (irrelevant activities). Energizing means that goals have an energizing function; high goals lead to greater effort than low goals. Task persistence refers to the amount of time spent on the behaviour to achieve a goal. When participants can control the time, they spend on a task, hard goals prolong effort. Effective strategies indicate that in the desire to achieve a goal, the individual seeks out different ways to achieve it.

They identified four moderators, or conditions, that must be met to make goals effective in invoking motivation through the mechanisms noted above. They are goal acceptance/commitment, goal specificity, goal difficulty, and feedback on progress toward the goal. Accepting the goal is the first step in creating motivation. Two key categories of factors facilitating goal commitment are; factors that make goal attainment important to people, including the importance of the outcomes that they expect as a result of working to attain a goal and their belief that they can attain the goal (self-efficacy) (Locke & Latham, 2002). The

second moderator, goal specificity, indicates that a goal must be specific and measurable. Goal specificity indicates the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the expectations of the goal. Specific goals, Locke and Latham found, lead to higher task performance than vague or abstract goals. For performance to increase, goals must be challenging, specific, and attainable (Locke & Latham, 2002). The third moderator, goal difficulty, refers to goals being an effective motivation tactic if difficulty is taken into consideration. This means that goals should be set high enough to foster high performance, but low enough to be attainable (Locke & Latham, 2002).

Interestingly, when goals are set too high or too difficult, not only do motivation and commitment suffer, but integrity may as well. A study conducted by Ordonez and Scheitzer (2004) found that people tend to be dishonest if they fall short of their goals. Setting goals that are too high not only jeopardizes motivation and commitment but can also lead to corruption and dishonesty (Ordonez & Scheitzer). The fourth moderator, feedback, refers to the fact that for goals to be effective, people need summary feedback that reveals progress concerning their goals. Without feedback, people are unaware of their progression (or regression). Feedback is most effective when it is directed at setting more challenging goals (Locke & Latham, 1979).

Significance

The goal-setting theory is a useful theoretical framework for considering whether the inclusion of specific academic goals in strategic plans leads to improvements in academic achievement. Dishon-Berkovits (2014) conducted a study of motivational influences on academic achievement for students enrolled in an introductory college course. Goal-setting theory was used as a theoretical framework to develop an understanding of academic performance. Students were given assigned performance or assigned learning goals. The study indicated that to ensure academic success, the most advantageous goals a teacher should assign in a classroom are assigned learning goals.

These results also suggested that successful students are those who adopt a combination of mastery and performance-approved goals. Dishon-Berkovits found that a specific, challenging learning goal led to higher academic achievement than a specific challenging performance goal. Dishon-Berkovits also indicated that while goal-setting theory was not often examined in the context of academic achievement, results demonstrated that concepts from goal-setting theory can be effectively applied to our context.

✚ The Stakeholder Theory – 1984 of R. Edward Freeman

The Stakeholder Theory was developed by R. Edward Freeman in 1984. Initially applied in business ethics and corporate management, it has since been adapted to non-profit and educational sectors, including higher education institutions. Stakeholder theory emphasizes that organizations such as universities must consider the interests and influences of all individuals and groups who are affected by or can affect the organization's operations. Key principles include:

- Identification of Stakeholders
 - Internal stakeholders: students, faculty, staff, administrators.
 - External stakeholders: government, alumni, industry partners, accreditation bodies, community members.
- Engagement and Participation
 - Promotes participatory governance in strategic planning.
 - Encourages open communication, consultation, and collaboration among stakeholders
- Balancing Interests
 - Seeks to balance often competing stakeholder needs and expectations.
 - Strategic decisions reflect shared goals and negotiated compromises.
- Ethical Responsibility
 - Institutions are ethically obliged to consider stakeholder well-being and societal impact not just internal goals. Stakeholder theory encourages inclusive planning and promotes responsiveness to the diverse expectations surrounding university operations (Freeman, 2010).

Significance to Higher Education

- Democratic Governance: Enhances transparency, trust, and shared decision-making in university administration.
- Improved Planning Quality: Incorporating stakeholder perspectives leads to more robust, realistic, and relevant strategies.

- Institutional Legitimacy: Universities seen as socially responsive and ethical gain legitimacy and long-term support.
- Student-Centric Focus: Promotes student engagement and satisfaction as central elements of strategy. Engaging stakeholders in the planning process improves institutional accountability and relevance in education (Amaral & Magalhães, 2002).

It can be applied to strategic planning committees involving representatives from academic and non-academic units. To surveys and focus groups with students, alumni, and faculty to inform university vision and policy. Also, to community partnerships for research and outreach alignment with regional development goals.

Limitations

- Conflicting Interests: Balancing diverse views can delay decision-making.
- Power Imbalances: Some stakeholder voices may dominate over others. Complex Implementation: Requires time, coordination, and cultural change within hierarchical institutions

2.10.2 Explanatory models and theories on employability skills

Some theories, models and approaches helped to give us insight into the understanding of the indicators of graduates' employability problem. They include among others, the human capital theory the signaling theory by Andreas and the Cost-benefit theory by Andreze. We will start with the models thereafter we shall examine the relevant theories of the study

2.10.2.1 Models on employability

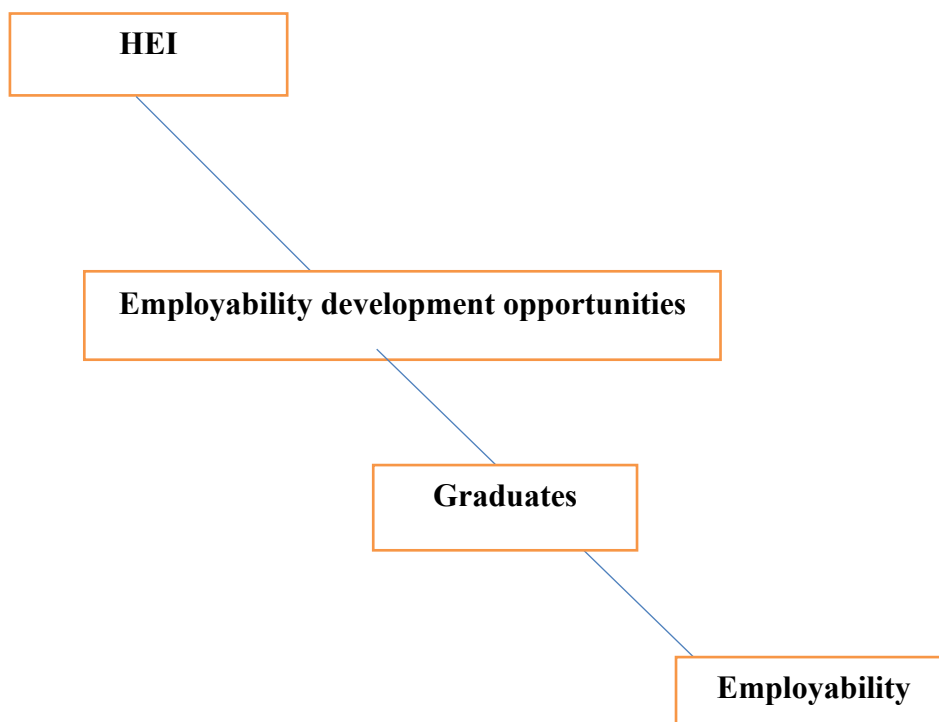
Various employability models have been emphasised in the theme of evaluating the pertinent literature. There are several of them, including the Magic Bullet Model, the Employability Model, the Triple Helix Model, the USEM Model, the UKCES Model and the Graduates Capital Forms. On the development of students' employability in this study, six of the models or frameworks have been found to have a significant effect on this work

- **The Magic Bullet Model of Employability- 2020, Behle H.**

Harvey (2002, pp. 97-101) presented the Magic Bullet Model, a straightforward framework for increasing graduate employment. This paradigm supports the notion that a college degree can assist students in acquiring employability skills that result in employment. This model demonstrates how Higher Education Institutions (HEI) assist graduates in

developing their employment abilities. The model, however, says nothing about the development strategies referred to as employability development strategies in this study. A variety of approaches are needed to effectively enhance graduate employability due to the diversity of higher education institutions and students (Harvey, 2002). Employability skills development strategies include among others; skills development, education and qualification, career planning and guidance, work experience, and exposure, job search and application skills, entrepreneurship and self-employment skills, networking and industry exposure. Figure 13 depicts the Magic Bullet model.

Figure 13: Magic Bullet Model of Employability



Source: (Harvey, 2002, p.41)

Harvey (2002), presented another model in the field of employability. He pointed out the importance of linking all factors together with all parties involving this process to develop graduate attributes. Three main parties involved in this process are graduates (students), HEIs and employers. Graduates have the responsibility to choose and engage with the employability development opportunities provided by HEIs and they also can use their extracurricular experiences to enhance these skills. The author identified employability development activities as the development of employability attributes, work experience, the development of self-promotional and career management skills and a willingness to learn and reflect on learning.

- **The Employability Framework /Model (USEM Model of Yorke and Knight)**

This was proposed by York and Knight in 2004 as an effective working definition of employability and a framework for embedding into the curriculum. USEM focus on the holistic development of graduates to be employable, not just trained for jobs. USEM stands for;

U –understanding (subject knowledge)

S – skills (generic and transferable)

E – efficacy beliefs (self theories, self- efficacy)

M – metacognition (reflection and learning to learn)

“The USEM model provides a framework for thinking about how to embed employability into the curriculum and encourages us to reflect on the way curriculum includes an assessment that develops the student’s efficacy and meta-cognition and relate this to the development of subject knowledge and professional skills that are transferable to the practice context”

This implies that the curriculum should constitutes courses which develop not only students’ knowledge but the student’s efficacy skills and meta cognition hence preparing them for eventual employment.

The model also presents three core processes having an impact on employability, which are; a pedagogic process that encourages development, self-reflection by the student and the articulation of experiences and abilities. The author also pointed out that employability development opportunities, to some extent, are affected by the sub-theme of enhancing employability through quality assurance, through subject disciplines of the graduate and some programs areas tend to be more active in promoting employability.

Figure 14: The Employability Model

Source: (adapted from Blackmore et al., 2016, p.72).

- **The Triple Helix Model - 2000 of Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff**

The Triple Helix Model of innovation, proposed by Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (2000), emphasizes the collaboration between three key actors: universities, industry, and government. The model suggests that these sectors can work together to foster innovation, enhance knowledge transfer, and support the development of a skilled workforce.

Figure 15: The Triple Helex Model

Source : (Etzkowitz, H., & Leydesdorff, L. 2000, pp.109-123).

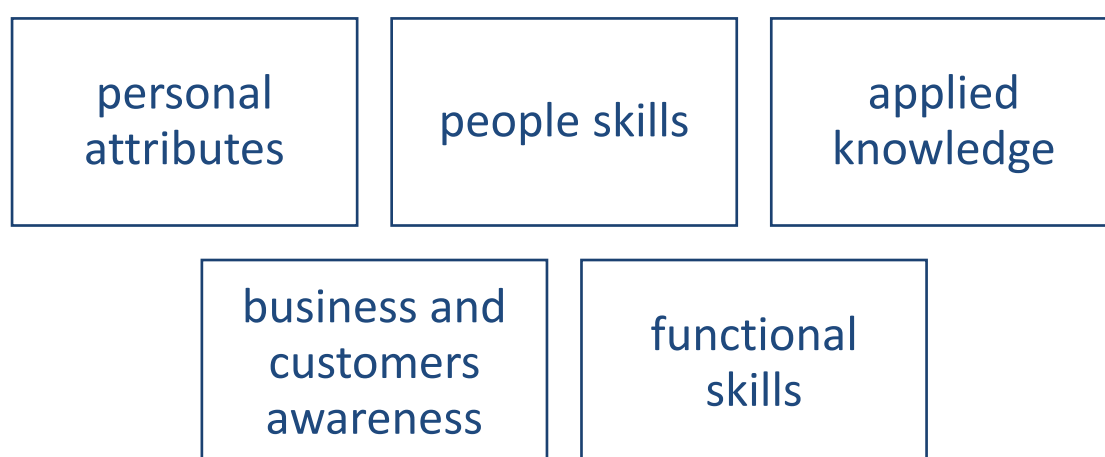
This model is highly relevant for examining how strategic planning in universities can improve graduates' employability. The collaboration between universities like Yaounde 1 and Buea, the private sector, and government agencies can lead to the development of curricula and training programs that are closely aligned with the needs of the job market. This cooperation also supports the creation of internships, research projects, and job placement opportunities, all of which are crucial for enhancing employability. (Etzkowitz, H., & Leydesdorff, L. 2000, pp.109-123).

- **The UKCES Employability Model**

The United Kingdom Commission for Employment (UKCES) employability model concentrates on the idea that the graduate employee should begin with a positive approach to employment (figure) according to the UKCES (2009, p. 10) this means “being ready to participate, make suggestions, accept new ideas and constructive criticisms and take responsibilities for outcomes”.

Here, the importance of individual development is stressed, communication, technological and numerical skills are the three most important factors according to this model. These skills are seen to be the keystones in fulfilling more non-specific skills such as “thinking and solving problems” and “self-management” (UKCES 2009, p.11; Priest, 2016).

Figure 16: UKCES employability model



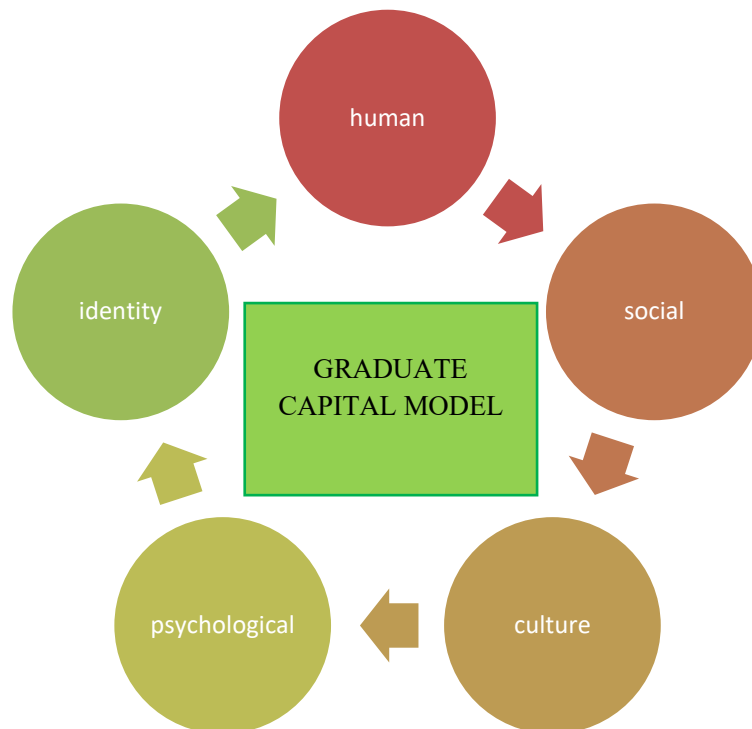
Source: (UKCES, 2009, p.11)

The UKCES model emphasises the wholistic approach to employability focusing on a combination of skills behaviour and attributes that result to effective performance in the work place. They include the following; Personal attributes, People skills, applied knowledge, Business and customers awareness and Functional skills. These are capable in bringing about effectiveness and efficiency in the workplace.

- **The Graduate Capital Forms-2017 of Tomlinson**

The five forms of capital that Tomlinson (2017, p. 295) identified are human capital, social capital, cultural capital, identity capital, and psychological capital and their relationships with graduate employability as shown in Figure below. The knowledge and skills graduates acquire to position themselves for employment are known as human capital. Graduates from vocation-related courses often have a straightforward ability to apply technical knowledge when they begin working, compared to individuals from general education disciplines, which lack a direct path to employable knowledge (Tomlinson, 2017, p. 299). Once more, social capital is the ability of a student to build social networks and relationships that will advance their knowledge and provide access to jobs and other objectives. Students who have a high level of cultural capital could therefore present captivating profiles while also being attuned to the cultures of numerous organisations and industries.

Additionally, psychological capital is the capacity to enter and adjust to a fluid job market as well as the endurance of challenges and pressures, according to Tomlinson (2017, p. 300). Last but not least, identity capital aids learners in comprehending their experiential values and accomplishments to aid in the creation of a professional profile and the building of plans for achieving career objectives. Higher education institutions continue to be acknowledged for having a big influence on graduates' employability and job prospects. Importantly, if it is directed by professional capital practitioners, a new vocabulary may be adopted by students and recent graduates are used to frame the management of their employability. (Pham, Tomlinson & Thompson, 2019, p. 398; Pham & Jackson, 2020, p. 240). This is demonstrated in figure 17.

Figure 17: Graduate Capital Model

Source: (adapted from Tomlinson, 2017)

2.10.2.2 Theories

The various theories that grounded the study on graduate’s employability skills are; the human capital theory, the theory of employability and the social capital theory.

❖ The Human Capital Theory -1974 of Becker

The “Human Capital theory” (HCT) was founded by Becker in 1974 to facilitate the formulation of higher education policies. It links economic success to the education of the workforce. According to Becker (1974), manpower or human resources should be trained to permit the graduates to impact the skills in the economic sector of the economy in order to permit economic growth and development of the country. In this light, Knight and Yorke (2014) affirmed that the development of employability in graduates has become a significant expectation that governments around the world have to vary extend imposed on national higher education systems.

According to Becker, expenditure on schooling and medical care and lectures on the virtues of punctuality and honesty are human capital. This is because it raises earnings, improves health and adds to a person’s good habits in society. They are called human capital because people cannot be separated from their knowledge, skills, health or values in the way

they can be separated from financial and material assets. In contribution to this, Allan Fisher in 1946 emphasised the economic dimension of educational policy and the need to consider it as an instrument of economic policy. In his argument, he considers that human progress has been too handicapped by the neglect of human capital, visibly in the limitation of the imperfect system of education. This has created bottlenecks in the economic process due to scarcity of skilled labour. Lack of skilled labour is tantamount to unemployment and thus a fall in economic growth (Rosen, 1989, p. 145).

According to Tafah et al. (2012), human capital measured by education and health impacts significantly and positively on economic growth. In this analysis, they showed that in the long run, a 0.1 change in primary and secondary school enrolments will lead respectively to 0.7% and 0.39% in the growth of gross domestic products (GDP), the same way, a 1% change in life expectancy is expected to lead on average on a variation of 1.12% of growth. Considering the above statistics and the fact that Human Capital is still very limited in Cameroon, Tafah and others argue that H.C is an important source of growth and the authority needs to adopt policies to develop H.C in order to achieve the growing ambition of the country (Ntamack, 2012, p 57).

According to Schultz (1992), H.C. consists of the accumulation of all prior investments in education, on-the-job training, health, migration and other factors that increase individuals' productivity and therefore earnings. Labourers have become capitalists, said Schultz, through the acquisition of knowledge and skills that have economic value. This knowledge and skills are in great part the product of investment and combined with other human investments to make people productive in all dimensions. Schultz asserted that H.C.T helps us understand three main perplexing questions on economic growth;

- Firstly, consider the long-period behaviour of the capital-income ratio. Schultz cancels the old belief that a country which amasses more reproductive capital relative to its land and labour would employ such capital to a greater extent because of its growing abundance and cheapness. He proclaims that the estimates now available show that less of such capital turns out to be employed relative to income as economic growth proceeds.
- Secondly, why national income has risen more than the combination of land, persons-hours worked and the stock of human capital? The explanation for this lies in the return

to scale to improve equality of input particularly the improvement of human capital to produce goods and services.

- He combined the two ideologies above to construct the third one known as the essentially unexplained large increase in real earnings of workers. He was puzzled that it could be a windfall. Or a quitrent pending the arrangement of labour supply? Or a pure rent reflecting a fixed amount of labour. One is made to understand here that it seems to represent the return on investment made on human beings. This aforementioned idea is also supported by Deming (2022, p. 78).

According to Schultz, developing nations have perpetrated a misleading development doctrine, assigning primary importance to the formation of physical capital. This one-sided effort is underway to meet the demands of the nation's economic growth. He therefore emphasised H.C.T as an orthodox portion of the core of labour economics.

Outcomes of Human Capital Theory

The approach to measuring the non-market outcomes of education and the social benefits including externalities is offered. According to Solow (1956), as cited in (McMahon, 2000, pp. 4-37), the structural model indigenizes the key content of the classic model like population growth, saving rate, dissemination of technical changes and political stability as well as poverty an aspect of sustainability.

Social outcomes; are those that are of primary interest to comprehensive economic development with sustainability. All are rather standard goals of economic development. According to McMahon, these standard goals are; health impacts including greater longevity and reduced infant mortality, increasing democratization, human rights and political stability, impacts of these in rates of investment in physical capital with feedback effect on economic growth, impacts on poverty reduction and reduction in inequality, implications of environmental sustainability and implications on homicides and property crimes rates.

Externalities according to McMahon is the consequences of investments or an industry or any commercial activity which affects other parties without being reflected on the market price, for instance, pollution of the environment. It is also the cost or benefit that affects a party who did not choose to incur that cost or benefit. The government always prefers that companies should "internalize" all externalities so that the cost and benefits will affect mostly parties who choose to incur them. These externalities in H.C.T become more glaring in our society as it shows principally on the rate of unemployment amongst University graduates, the

consequences of poverty in our society as a result of unemployment, the inability of both the state and individuals to invest in H.C, the fall in Economic growth and GDP of the country and many others.

Significance of the theory to this work

With cognizance of this theory, the University and private individuals should invest more in H.C. Contextual application of this theory to our study will encourage investments in specific areas like the school curriculum, educational policy, pedagogy, personnels and infrastructure. These investments carry alongside technological skills, pedagogical skills, entrepreneurial skills, and know-how competencies to be inculcated into the program of study. These permit these young people the double advantage of impacting the economic sector of the country and improving their standards of living and that of their families. The emergence of this theory brings to light the relationship between education and economic activity, portraying how they both need each other. Research holds that the economy finances education, meanwhile education supports economies. The students in universities today will tomorrow become persons and form the human capital that the economy needs. Therefore, training is primordial to get them armed for future challenges. Human capital theory becomes, therefore, an indispensable tool for this study (Gruzina et al. 2021, p.67)

Moreover, this theory is significant to this study in the sense that Cameroon as a single developing country, needs to study and apply the relationship between Human Capital and growth. This is because Cameroon is in dire need of good growth performance in order to be able to meet the millennium development goals and realise its dreams of becoming an emerging economy by 2035 (Tefah et al. 2012). Therefore, H.C.T becomes a vital tool for these dreams to be realized, citizens will be filled with talents, abilities and knowledge which are needed to boost the economic activities of the country. This theory through this research, will inculcate the desire to invest in H.C. in both the state and private individuals, owing to its high returns. Investment in education and health are prerequisites for sustainable economic growth. More educated workers are efficient at work and earn higher than less educated workers. Meanwhile, a healthy worker is more productive than a sick worker.

This theory is also significant to this study as the economics of H.C. will bring about particular dramatic changes in the incentives for more women to invest in H.E. in Cameroon. It must not be only through women's education but also through outside school training of workers, on-the-job training and even formal or informal training. Moreover, we cannot omit

the influence of families on the knowledge, skills, health, values, and habits of their children. Parents affect educational attainment, marital stability, propensities to smoke and to get to work on time, and many other dimensions of their children's lives.

❖ **The Theory of Employability- 2006 of Yorke and Knight**

The theory of employability refers to the capacity of a graduate to gain, sustain, and progress in employment, not solely based on having a qualification, but also through the possession and demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge, personal attributes, and adaptability (Yorke, 2006). Holmes (2013) further advanced this theory by introducing a processual model of employability, highlighting that it is not just about possession of skills, but also about identity formation, employer recognition, and contextual factors.

The Theory of Employability centers on the idea that employability is not solely about having a job but involves a combination of skills, attributes, knowledge, and personal capacities that enable individuals to gain and maintain employment and progress in their careers. It extends beyond qualifications to include a person's ability to adapt, reflect, and present value to employers in a dynamic labor market (Yorke, 2006).

Key elements commonly included in employability theory are:

- Transferable skills (e.g., communication, teamwork, problem-solving)
- Career management capabilities
- Personal attributes (e.g., resilience, initiative)
- Knowledge of the labour market
- Professional identity and agency

Several scholars have contributed significantly to shaping the theory of employability:

- Mantz Yorke (2006): Defined employability as a set of achievements skills, understandings, and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations.
- Lee Holmes (2013): Emphasized that employability is not just about skills possession but also about performance and recognition how individuals demonstrate and employers perceive value.

- Michael Tomlinson (2017): Introduced the concept of graduate capital, categorizing employability into different forms of capital (human, social, cultural, identity, and psychological), each contributing to employment outcomes.

A simple outlook of employability is where individuals handle their careers across employment opportunities and organizations, who in return offer employment as long as the person is needed. Hillage and Poland (1998) however, define employability as being capable of getting and fulfilling work through the ability to be self-sufficient within the labour market, to realize the potential through sustainable employment. There can be many factors that candidate has to consider to the thought of being employable.

Significance of the theory to the study

The theory of employability has had profound implications for higher education policy, curriculum design, and student development. This include:

- Curriculum Integration: Universities now embed employability skills into curricula through work-based learning, problem-solving activities, and soft skills development (Bridgstock, 2009).
- Career Readiness: It promotes the development of career self-efficacy, helping students build a sense of control over their career paths (Tomlinson, 2017).
- Holistic Learning: Encourages institutions to focus on personal development planning, helping students to reflect on their strengths and areas for growth beyond academic performance.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Facilitates stronger links between education providers and industry to ensure graduates are equipped for real-world challenges.

The theory shifts education from focusing solely on knowledge acquisition to the formation of adaptable, reflective, and proactive graduates who can navigate complex job markets. In Cameroon's competitive and often informal labor market, the theory of employability suggests that universities must do more than provide qualifications. They must equip students with tools to navigate uncertainty, build professional identities, and understand how to present their value to employers (Bridgstock, 2009; Tomlinson, 2017).

In both Yaounde I and Buea, employing this theory means rethinking traditional pedagogies, fostering stronger links with the private sector, and helping students develop self-awareness, agency, and a growth mindset all crucial to lifelong employability.

Applying the theory of employability to strategic planning at the University of Yaounde I and the University of Buea offers a framework for aligning educational goals with the needs of the labor market. Through focusing on strategies that integrate skills development, professional identity formation, and external engagement, both institutions can enhance their graduates' readiness for meaningful and sustainable employment.

❖ **Social Capital Theory- 1986 of Pierre Bourdieu**

The Social Capital Theory, developed by scholars such as Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988), and Robert Putnam (2000), emphasizes the value of social networks, relationships, trust, and norms in facilitating access to resources and opportunities. In the context of higher education, social capital enables students to build professional connections, access mentors, and gain insider knowledge critical for navigating the job market (Field, 2000). Higher education institutions often use strategic planning to embed employability into the curriculum fostering networks, industry partnerships, and experiential learning. Graduates with strong social capital (mentors, internships, alumni networks) are better positioned to secure employment and adapt to workplace demands.

Employability skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability are often developed through strategically planned academic and extracurricular activities that encourage network building and real-world engagement. The core elements of Social Capital Theory include:

1. Networks – The structure of relationships among individuals and institutions.
2. Trust and Reciprocity – Mutual expectations and obligations that promote cooperation.
3. Norms and Sanctions – Shared values and informal rules that govern behavior within a network.
4. Resources – The support (e.g., information, influence, opportunities) accessible through social ties.

These elements shape how individuals access resources and opportunities, with implications for education, employment, and social mobility.

Outcomes

In education, social capital manifests in several positive outcomes:

- Improved academic achievement – Students with stronger family and community networks often perform better.
- Increased engagement and retention – Socially connected students are more likely to feel supported and stay in school.
- Enhanced career readiness – Access to internships, mentors, and professional networks boosts employability.
- Inequality reproduction or disruption – While social capital can empower, unequal access to it can also reinforce social divides.

Significance to education

Social capital is highly significant in educational contexts. It influences student success, educational equity, and employability. Educational institutions increasingly recognize the importance of facilitating network-building opportunities, such as:

- Mentorship programs
- Industry partnerships
- Alumni engagement
- Peer learning communities

By fostering these, institutions can help students especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds gain the social capital needed to succeed academically and professionally.

Social Capital Theory holds critical significance for graduates as they transition into the workforce, particularly in the development and application of employability skills. Social capital defined as the resources embedded within an individual's social networks can enhance access to job opportunities, mentorship, industry knowledge, and personal development (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988). Graduates who possess rich social networks often gain informal insights and referrals, which are increasingly valuable in competitive job markets (Putnam, 2000). Moreover, participation in professional communities, university-industry collaborations, internships, and alumni networks allows graduates to acquire and refine key employability skills such as communication, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving (Bridgstock, 2009).

Social capital also fosters career self-efficacy and identity development, allowing graduates to navigate workplace environments more effectively (Jackson, 2016). In this

context, institutions of higher learning play a vital role in strategically cultivating social capital through experiential learning, peer mentoring, and industry engagement programs thus aligning educational outcomes with labour market expectations.

Ultimately, social capital complements technical knowledge by embedding graduates within supportive networks that accelerate professional growth, enhance career readiness, and increase their chances of employment (Tomlinson, 2017).

Social capital serves as a catalyst in transforming formal learning into practical employability. Graduates with access to rich social networks through faculty relationships, industry connections, and peer collaborations are more likely to:

- Understand workplace expectations.
- Access job leads and internships.
- Develop soft skills in real-world settings.
- Build career identity and self-efficacy (Jackson, 2016; Tomlinson, 2017).

Without deliberate strategic efforts to foster such networks, universities risk producing graduates with academic credentials but limited workplace adaptability.

For universities, social capital is crucial in the context of employability. The strategic planning processes at Yaounde 1 and Buea can enhance social capital by fostering relationships with industry partners, alumni, and employers. These relationships provide students with opportunities for internships, jobs, and career development. Effective strategic planning can strengthen these connections, thus improving graduate employability by enhancing students' access to professional networks. (Bourdieu, P.1986, pp. 241-258).

Strategic planning in universities such as Yaounde I and Buea must continue evolving to institutionalize social capital-building mechanisms including alumni engagement, internship programs, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and industry partnerships. These efforts will not only enhance graduate employability but also contribute to national development by creating a more agile and opportunity-ready workforce.

➤ **Strategic planning and graduates employability skills model**

This is developed to explore how strategic planning processes in universities influence graduates employability skills in Cameroon s higher education institutions (Yaoune I and Buea).

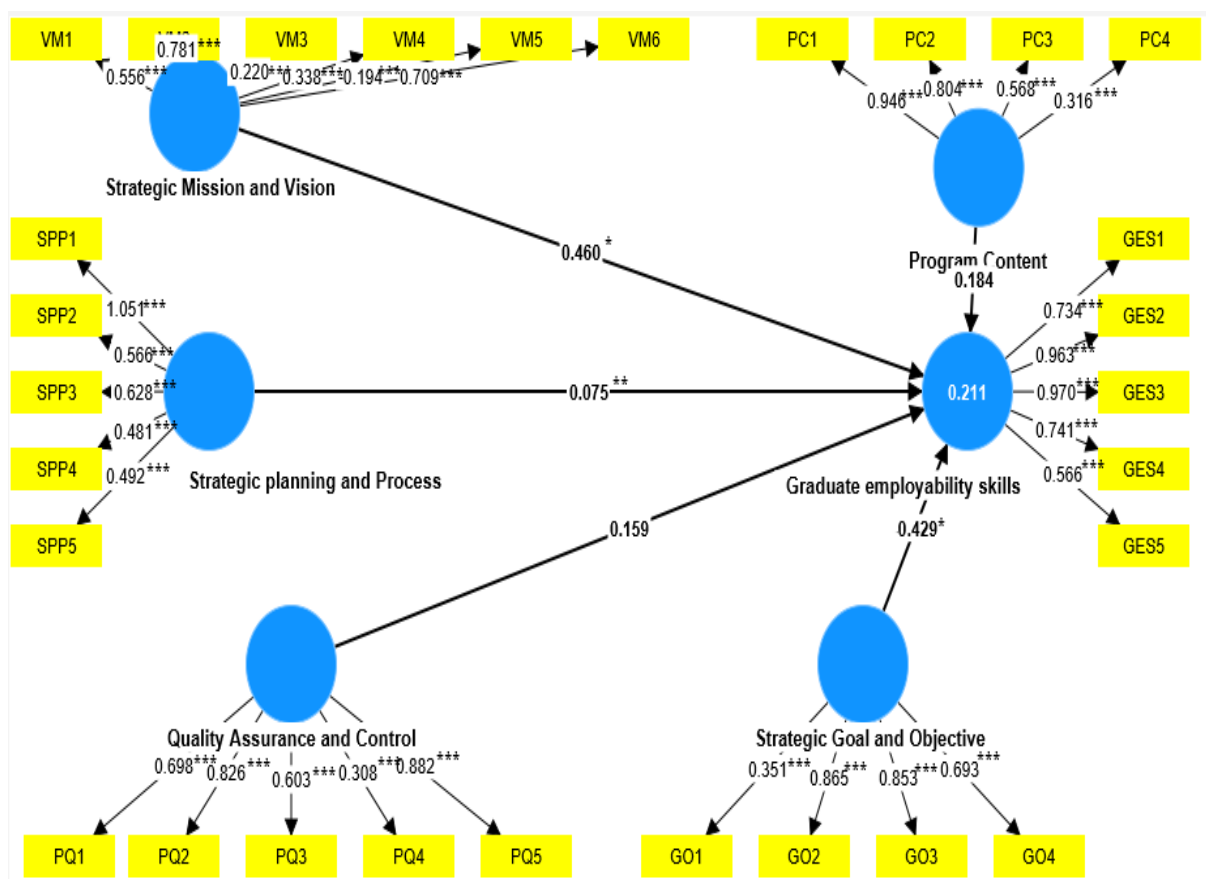
▪ **Theoretical foundations**

Grounding the model in theory

- Strategic planning theory of Bryson, 2018: emphasizes the role of structured planning in organisational outcomes
- Human capital theory positions graduate employability skills as investment yielding returns.
- The Theory of Graduate Employability, as described by Harvey (2001), explores the various factors that influence a graduate's ability to secure employment
- The Social Capital Theory was proposed by Bourdieu (1986) and later expanded by Coleman (1988), focuses on the value of networks and social relationships in facilitating access to resources and opportunities

▪ **Model components SP-GES Model comprises of**

Figure 18. Estimated Structural Model



***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05. SEM model –fit: CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.912 (ref. 0.90), R squared = 21.1 Root Mean Square Error Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.05, Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = 0.07 (ref.0.08.)

Figure 20 represents a structural equation model (SEM) that examines the relationship between strategic planning factors (indicators) and graduate employability skills. The model was developed based on data from universities, specifically the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea. Here's an analysis of the key components in the model:

❖ Key Constructs and Their Relationships

1. Strategic Vision and Mission (SVM)

- Measured through indicators VM1, VM2, VM3, VM4, VM5, and VM6.
- This construct has a *direct positive effect (0.460)* on Graduate Employability Skills (GES), meaning that a well-defined vision and mission of these universities contribute significantly to improving employability skills of its graduates.

2.Strategic Goals and Objectives (SGO)

- Indicators: GO1, GO2, GO3, GO4, Go4, GO5.
- Has a strong impact (*0.429*) on Graduate Employability Skills, indicating that clearly defined institutional objectives play a significant role in shaping employable graduates.

3.Strategic Planning and Process (SPP)

- Indicators: SPP1, SPP2, SPP3, SPP4, SPP5.
- It has a *weaker positive impact (0.075)* on Graduate Employability Skills, suggesting that planning efforts alone may not be sufficient unless effectively implemented.

4.Program Content (PC)

- Indicators: PC1, PC2, PC3, PC4, PC5.
- Has a smaller effect (*0.184*) on Graduate Employability Skills, meaning curriculum design has an influence but may not be the strongest predictor

5.Quality Assurance and Control (QAC)

- Measured through QAC1, QAC2, QAC3, QAC4, QAC5.
- This does not show a direct link to Graduate Employability Skills, but indirectly supports employability through the assurance of academic quality.

6.Graduate Employability Skills (GES)

- Indicators : GES1, GES2, GES3, GES4, GES5.

- The dependent variable of interest, which is influenced by all the above factors.
- **Insights and Implications for Universities**
- The strategic vision and mission have the strongest direct effect on employability skills, meaning universities should focus on aligning their long-term strategies with employability goals.
- Strategic goals and objectives also significantly contribute, indicating that clear institutional priorities help prepare students for the job market.
- Universities should enhance their planning processes to align with the goal of employability
- Program content has a moderate impact, suggesting curriculum reform can improve employability but must be accompanied with other initiatives.
- Quality assurance and strategic planning have indirect effects, meaning they support other factors but do not directly enhance employability.

For the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea, these findings suggest that strengthening the universities' strategic vision, defining clear institutional goals, and refining program content are key to improving graduate employability. Strategic planning alone is not enough, universities must also focus on execution, quality assurance, and alignment with job market needs.

Synthesis

This chapter sets out to present literature on graduates' employability in some state universities. It throws light on the literature on the employability skills of graduates by emphasizing the literature on employment, employability, employability skills, it equally went further to look at the job market scenario, skills and attributes required by the job market for the graduates. This chapter also examines the effect of strategic planning indicators under study on the employability skills of the graduates. It also threw light on empirical review, models and theories to substantiate our variables under study. The subsequent chapter will focus on the research methodology used for this scientific investigation.

PART TWO
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To examine the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills in some state universities in Cameroon specifically the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea, the third chapter of this study is titled Research Methodology. This chapter adopts the following methodological aspects which are; the area of the study, the research design, the population, the target and accessible population, the sample size and sampling techniques. It further presents the research instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, administration of the instruments, and the data analysis technics, procedures and presentation as well as the chapter summary.

3.1 Research Design

In this study we employed a correlational-descriptive research design where we looked at the connection, link and relationship between the independent variable (strategic planning) and the dependent variable (graduates employability skills). We investigate the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills without controlling or manipulating any of them. A correlation reflects the strength and direction of the relationship between our study variables, the direction of the correlation would be determined from our results if it is positive or negative. Correlational research determines the relationship and the degree of relationship between our variables. It is also important for hypothesis testing theory strengthening. It also measures the strength of a linear relationship between two variables. It simply calculates the level of change in one variable due to the change in the other. The strength of the correlation between our quantitative variables is typically measured using a statistical analysis called Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's r)

3.1.1 Justification of Correlational Research Design

Correlational research design is appropriate for exploring the relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them, making it a valuable approach for studies that seek to identify patterns or associations between variables that occur naturally. In the context of this study on the universities of Yaounde 1 and Buea, the variables of interest are strategic planning and graduate employability skills.

- ❖ **Purpose of Correlational Design**, a correlational design helps in identifying whether a relationship exists between strategic planning within universities and the employability skills of their graduates. Since the goal of this research is not to manipulate variables but to observe and measure existing relationships, this design is suitable. This study does not aim to test a cause-and-effect relationship but rather to

examine the strength and direction of the association between strategic planning processes (such as curriculum development, internship programs, industry collaborations) and graduates' employability outcomes (such as job placement rates, skills acquisition, and employer satisfaction).

- ❖ **Non-manipulation of Variables**, in this study, both strategic planning and employability skills are variables that cannot be manipulated in a controlled environment. Universities typically implement strategic plans in various areas (academic programs, career services, skill development workshops), and graduates possess a set of employability skills that develop over time. These variables are naturally occurring and cannot be ethically or practically controlled for the purpose of an experimental study. Thus, correlational research is the most appropriate approach to analyse the relationship between these naturally occurring variables (Creswell, 2014).
- ❖ **Understanding Relationships Between Variables**, the goal is to understand how the strategic plans of the universities may influence the skill sets of graduates. For example, universities may implement specific strategies that enhance students' job-readiness (e.g., offering career workshops, facilitating internships, or fostering industry partnerships), and the research will explore whether these initiatives correlate with higher employability skills. A correlational design can determine the direction and strength of these associations, providing insights into how certain strategic actions contribute to graduate employability.
- ❖ **Statistical Analysis of Correlation**, a key feature of correlational research is the use of statistical analysis to measure the degree of association between the variables. In this study, statistical tests such as Pearson's correlation coefficient will allow for the determination of the strength and direction of the relationship between strategic planning efforts and employability skills. The correlation coefficient helps in understanding whether there is a positive, negative, or no significant relationship between the two variables (Field, 2013).
- ❖ **Relevance for Policy and Practice**, by identifying relationships, the findings from a correlational study can be used to inform university strategies. If a strong positive correlation is found between effective strategic planning and higher graduate employability, university administrators may use this evidence to further refine their institutional strategies to better prepare students for work.

➤ **Justification of the descriptive design**

This study employed a descriptive research design, according to Creswell it is a study that describes the characteristics of a population of the phenomenon under study. Primarily it is used to gain an understanding of that phenomenon which is a research method used to try and determine the characteristics of a population or a particular phenomenon. Using descriptive research, you can identify patterns in the characteristics of a group to essentially establish everything you need to understand, why something has happened. It seeks to understand phenomena in-depth.

3.1.2. Survey research design

The study employs a correlation descriptive survey design because it is particularly useful for studying attitudes, opinions and behaviours within a population. We would study the opinions behaviours and attitudes of our participants in this work which examines the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills at the University of Yaounde I and Buea.

3.1.3 Quantitative research

We used the quantitative research in this study in order to investigate the extent to which strategic planning influence graduate's employability skills in selected universities in Cameroon. This is done through a well-constructed questionnaire in a survey research design. Quantitative research is employed because it permits us to test our hypotheses, it equally permits us to answer questions like when or where. We used this design because it permits us to generalize findings to larger populations, the potential for statistical analyses and hypothesis testing and the capacity to uncover patterns and relationships among variables. However, it also has limitations such as the potential for over simplification of complex phenomena and the reliance on predetermined categories and measurements (Creswell 2003; Williams, 2011).

3.2 Area of the study

This study is carried out in Cameroon in the Central Africa. It borders Nigeria to the west, Chad to the northeast, the Central African Republic to the East and Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and the Republic of the Congo to the South. In Cameroon, the educational system owes its origin to its colonial history. Consequently, the system is dominantly a hybrid of the French and British educational systems (Samfoga, 2015). The Centre Region occupies 69,000 km² of

the central plains of the Republic of Cameroon. It is bordered to the north by the Adamawa Region, to the south by the South Region, to the east by the East Region, and to the West by the Littoral and West Regions. It is the second largest of Cameroon's Regions in terms of land area. Its major ethnic groups include; the Bassa, Ewondo, Eton, Bafia and Vute. The Mfoundi Division has seven Sub-Divisions Yaounde I, Yaounde II, Yaounde III, Yaounde IV, Yaounde V, Yaounde VI, and Yaounde VII Sub-Division. Specifically, the study is carried out in the Mfoundi division of the centre region of Cameroon, where the University of Yaounde 1 is found.

This study was carried out in the Centre region and the Southwest regions of Cameroon. Where the University of Yaounde I is situated, forms the Yaounde capital and covers a large surface area. Yaounde, the administrative capital of Cameroon, is at the heart of the Centre, drawing people from the rest of the country to live and work there. The Centre's towns are also important industrial centres, especially for timber. Agriculture is another important economic factor, especially the region's most important cash crop cocoa. There are also plantation zones, with most inhabitants being sustenance farmers (Mve, 2020).

3.2.1 Reasons why these universities were selected for the study

The choice to explore the relationship between strategic planning and graduate employability skills in the universities of Yaounde 1 and Buea is motivated by several key factors that align with educational, societal, and economic needs. This section provides a detailed justification for selecting this area of study, framed within the context of academic relevance and societal impact.

- **Relevance to the Changing Job Market**, globalization and the evolving workforce, as the job market becomes increasingly competitive and influenced by globalization, universities must adapt their strategies to equip graduates with the skills necessary to thrive. In Cameroon, universities like Yaounde 1 and Buea must respond to these changes by aligning their strategic planning with the demands of both local and international employers (World Bank, 2018). This research seeks to investigate how these institutions' strategic plans are influencing graduates' employability skills in a rapidly changing economic landscape.
- **Graduates' Transition to Employment**, there is growing concern about the gap between the skills graduates acquire in academic settings and the skills needed by employers (Oketch, 2016). This study focuses on understanding how well universities'

strategic plans align with industry requirements, providing insight into how universities can improve their graduate employability programs.

- **Need for Evidence-Based Strategic Planning**, strategic development in Higher Education: Strategic planning is a critical aspect of university development, influencing all areas of university life, from curriculum design to career services (Kotler & Fox, 1995). Universities in Cameroon, especially Yaounde 1 and Buea, are increasingly investing in strategic planning to enhance their academic offerings and prepare students for the workforce. However, there is limited research on how these strategies affect the employability of graduates. This study seeks to fill this gap by providing empirical data on the relationship between strategic planning and employability outcomes. Improving Employability Skills: Strategic planning can influence employability by designing programs that develop students' practical and soft skills, including teamwork, leadership, and communication (Blau, 2017). Understanding the role of strategic planning in fostering these skills is essential for universities aiming to improve the employment prospects of their graduates.
- **Contextual Relevance in Cameroon**, Cameroonian Higher Education Landscape: The higher education system in Cameroon, particularly at Yaounde 1 and Buea, faces challenges such as high unemployment rates among graduates and a mismatch between academic curricula and industry expectations (Duruji & Olawale, 2020). Understanding how these universities' strategic plans contribute to the employability of their graduates is crucial for addressing these challenges and improving the national education system.
- **Regional Significance**, both Yaounde 1 and Buea are key institutions in the central and southwest regions of Cameroon. Researching these universities specifically allows for a deeper understanding of regional disparities in employability outcomes and the role of strategic planning in addressing these issues. The findings could inform broader educational reforms and help to better align universities' strategic goals with the socio-economic realities of Cameroon.
- **Contribution to Policy Development**, influence on Higher Education Policy, this study can provide valuable insights for policymakers seeking to improve the alignment of higher education institutions' strategic planning with the labor market. By understanding the link between strategic planning and employability, university administrators and policymakers can implement targeted policies and initiatives to improve employability outcomes for graduates (Biemans, 2011, pp. 283-301).

- **Contribution to Academic Knowledge**, expanding Knowledge on Higher Education and Employability: Research on the relationship between strategic planning and employability skills is still in its early stages in the context of Cameroon. This study will add to the limited body of literature on how strategic planning in universities affects graduates' success in the labor market. By focusing on two major universities, it will provide a comparative analysis and add valuable empirical data to this field of research. Guiding Future Research, the results of this study may serve as a foundation for future research on higher education strategies and their impact on employability. The findings can inspire further exploration of the topic in other African countries or in different institutional contexts.

The university of Yaounde one was equally chosen for the study because it is bilingual university, from it the research can have access to both English and French graduates to participate in the study. Also, because in this university there is already a professional program in most of the departments and these graduates already have their certificates so it would be good for us to find out from them if they are already working or can find jobs to do. This area was chosen for this study because it harbours the first university of Cameroon. Cost considerations were made in line with the fact that a study of this type requires primary data and its collection requires a lot in terms of time and financial cost. The ease with which data could be collected for the study in this area was not equally left out and the closeness of the researcher to the area was among the determinants of the choice of the study area.

The university of Buea was equally chosen for the study because it is the first Anglo-Saxon university of the country created in 1993. More so, because UB has many professional fields and departments and so the researcher thought it would be good for her to research on the aspect of employability there so as to find out if the skills they receive is what is required at the job market (Wikipedia, 2023).

3.2.2 Characteristics of the study area

According to the university of Yaounde I (2022). The characteristics of the study area in terms of strategic planning and graduate employability skills in the universities of Yaounde 1 and Buea in Cameroon can be described in terms of the following dimensions:

- **University Profile**
 - **Yaounde 1 University:**

- Location: Situated in the capital city, Yaounde, which is the political and administrative hub of Cameroon.
- Academic Focus: Yaounde 1 is a large, public university that offers a wide variety of academic programs ranging from humanities, science, engineering, and social sciences.
- Strategic Planning: The university likely has a broad strategic plan that focuses on expanding infrastructure, increasing research output, and improving teaching quality. This plan also emphasizes international collaborations, curriculum development, and student career preparedness.
- Graduate Employability: The university might focus on enhancing the employability of its graduates by fostering partnerships with industries and providing career services to help students transition into the job market.

- **University of Buea:**

According to the university of Buea (2022). Buea is located

- Location: Located in Buea, in the English-speaking region of Cameroon, this university is known for its historical importance in Cameroon's educational landscape.
 - Academic Focus: University of Buea offers programs in areas such as social sciences, management, education, and natural sciences. Its academic and research interests are often aligned with the needs of both the local and national economy.
 - Strategic Planning: University of Buea's strategic plans likely emphasize quality education, student support services, infrastructure development, and expanding access to international networks and research.
- Graduate Employability: The University might have an increasing focus on improving graduate employability by collaborating with local industries, offering internships, and building soft skills through extracurricular activities and mentorship programs.
 - Educational Environment
 - Academic Quality: Both universities are likely to be influenced by the national educational policies, but each university's focus on academic excellence can vary. The universities might aim to improve research standards, teaching

methodologies, and accreditation of programs to align with global education standards.

- Curriculum Development: In both universities, curriculum development and the integration of employability skills such as teamwork, leadership, communication, and technical knowledge are critical. These skills are often integrated into academic programs to help students be competitive in the job market.
- Teaching Methods: The teaching approaches may vary, with an increasing shift towards student-centered learning, practical experiences, and internships to foster employability skills. While traditional lecture-based methods still dominate, there is growing interest in innovative teaching methods and technologies.

➤ **Graduates' Employability**

- Industry-Linked Training: Both universities are likely engaging in efforts to link their programs with industry needs. These efforts might include establishing partnerships with local and international companies, organizing job fairs, and offering internships that can help bridge the gap between academic learning and practical skills required in the workforce.
- Soft Skills Development: Programs might be evolving to focus not only on academic and technical skills but also on enhancing the graduate's ability to communicate, work in teams, and solve problems. Soft skills such as critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and adaptability are increasingly emphasized in both universities.
- Career Services: The universities might offer dedicated career services that include career counseling, job placement assistance, networking events, and workshops. These services are essential in improving the employability of graduates in a competitive job market.

➤ **Strategic Initiatives**

- Both universities are likely to have some strategic initiatives aimed at improving employability outcomes:

- Curriculum Review and Reform: A strategic focus on aligning curricula with the demands of the job market and integrating employability-focused programs such as career readiness courses, internships, and co-op programs.
- Professional Development: Both institutions are likely to offer professional development opportunities to students, which include skill-building workshops, leadership programs, and networking events with professionals from various fields.
- Collaborations with Alumni: Both universities may actively engage alumni networks to mentor students and help them navigate their careers after graduation.

Summarily, both universities Yaounde 1 and Buea are part of Cameroon's growing academic landscape, and they are working towards improving strategic planning, academic quality, and graduate employability. The alignment of their programs with industry needs, soft skills development, and infrastructural improvements will play a crucial role in enhancing the employability of their graduates.

3.2.3. The University of Yaounde I (UYI) – Ngoa ekele main campus

It is the mother of Cameroonian universities, in October 1961, following the reunification of the country, higher education was born in Cameroon under the denomination of Institute of University Studies. Thereafter, 26 July 1962 marked the creation of the Federal University of Cameroon which became the University of Yaounde in 1973. The University of Yaounde I, together with five other state universities (including the University of Yaounde II, Buea, Douala, Dschang and Ngoundere) was created by decree No 93/026 of 19 January 1993 as a result of university reforms. (Wikipedia, 2023).

The UYI is comparatively the oldest, most populated and with the highest number of affiliated campuses of both private and public institutions in Cameroon, located in the capital city of Yaounde. It became known as the University of Yaounde I in 1993 following a University reform that split the country's oldest University of Yaounde into two separate entities: the University of Yaounde I and the University of Yaounde II (SOA). The main university complex is Ngoa-Ekelle with several satellite campuses elsewhere. According to MINESUP annual Statistics (2015), the University of Yaounde 1 has three campuses; the principal campus is the Ngoa-ekelle campus, the district of the municipal lake, and Nkolbison) (Wikipedia, 2023).

3.2.4. The University of Buea (UB)

The University of Buea is located in Molyko, Buea, in the Southwest Region of Cameroon. It was founded as a university center in 1985 and became a full-fledged university in 1992/93, following a government decree that re-organized state universities in the country. It is regarded as the best university in Cameroon and is one of two English-speaking universities in Cameroon, alongside the University of Bamenda, which follows the British system of education. It serves citizens from both Anglophone and francophone regions of Cameroon and from neighbouring countries such as Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea (Wikipedia, 2023).

The University of Buea is a renowned institution of higher education located in Buea, Cameroon. It was established in 1993 and has since played a significant role in the educational landscape of the country. The university has made notable contributions to society through its academic, research initiatives, and community engagement. This university was created by an act of parliament in 1992, with the aim of expanding access to quality higher education in Cameroon. It was officially inaugurated on January 10, 1993. The establishment of the university was a response to the growing demand for tertiary education in the English-speaking regions of Cameroon. It is located in the historic town of Buea, the former capital of German Kamerun, the former capital of the federated State of West Cameroon and now the regional capital of the South West Region of Cameroon. Although the University draws its students mainly from the English-speaking part of Cameroon, it also serves the other regions of the country (ibid).

The University of Buea is made up of five faculties (Arts; Education; Health Sciences; Science; and Social and Management Sciences) and one professional school, the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters, (ASTI). As in most English-speaking institutions, the governance system of the university is based on concentration and devolution of management, with structures such as Council, Senate, Congregation and Committees on which staff and students are represented. This has enabled the University to make considerable strides and to be recognized as a progressive African University of choice.

A highly qualified and diversified staff (about 300 permanent and 200 part-time) caters for over 12,000 students, together with our partners in more than 40 universities in Africa, Europe and North America. In addition to teaching, the staff undertake research in diverse fields that are relevant to national development. In addition to the academic staff, UB also has

about 473 support staff. Training at the University of Buea is supported by modest infrastructure including lecture halls, teaching and research laboratories, amongst others. For effective implementation of the New Policy on University Governance which lays emphasis on effectiveness, efficiency and management principles based on rigor, transparency and results, the University is connected to the outside world via a fibre optic link to Camtel, a major local telecommunications company. The main campus also has a fibre optic network that interconnects most of the buildings on campus (Wikipedia, 2023).

3.3 The population of the Study

The population of this study is all higher education stakeholders in the Centre region. Stakeholders here are specifically the teaching staff, administrators, employers and graduates from state-owned higher institutions of learning without any distinction of their political, economic and socio-cultural backgrounds, and employers. Eligibility criteria for this population are; be a member of one of the universities Yaounde I and Buea (students or workers), be a graduate from any of these universities, be a Cameroonian, graduates must have been in the job market for at least six months, be an employee in any field. A situation that permits them to have a mastery of the phenomenon. This category of persons was chosen to provide representative ground for the research results to be applied and implemented for the betterment of the educational system in Cameroon.

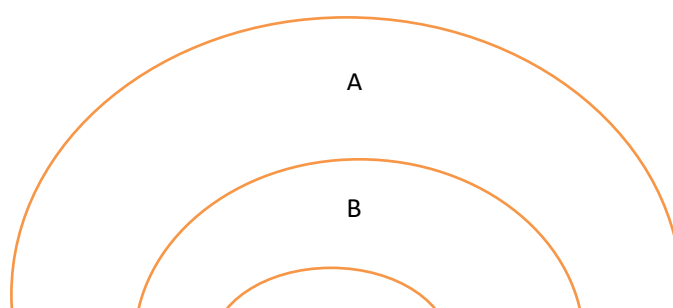
Table 3. Graduates and Staff Population of the Universities of Yaounde I and Buea from 2017 to 2023

Public Universities	Graduates	Lecturers	administrative staff
University of Yaounde I	13.400	1042	884
University of Buea	7.500	300	200

Source: (adapted from MINESUP 2023, Statistical Year Book, Published in May, 2023).

These statistics show the scenario published in 2023 available statistics from the Ministry of Higher Education. This population is subsequently segmented into target population, accessible population and sample.

Figure 19. Relationship between sample, accessible and target population



Source: (adapted from Amin, 2005, p.236).

A- stands for the target population which is all the graduates of the two universities under study (the group to which results are obtained).

B- stands for the accessible population, that is graduates of the chosen departments of the universities under study (the group to which results are generalised).

C- stands for the sample population which is our selected 500 graduates (a group with specific attributes).

3.3.1 Target population

Our target population is the graduates of the two universities under study. That is graduates from yaounde I and the university of Buea with 38 departments. Among these faculties of the university, graduates from 18 departments were selected for our target population. We selected these eighteen departments because they had established some planning processes in their institutions and embraced the professionalization of education too.

We exploited graduates who went through these programs in these universities and were either employed or unemployed by the time of this study (from the academic year 2017/2018 to 2022/2023). We targeted graduates because they have been trained and also experienced the job market for at least six months and can give the ideal picture of the two scenarios. The population was about 13.500 plus 7.500 giving a total of 21.000 graduates extracted from the general population.

Table 4. Target population

Total number of faculties	Total number of departments	Total number of graduates
------------------------------	-----------------------------------	------------------------------

University of Yaounde I	Faculty of sciences	9	2007
	Faculty of arts	15	3.345
	humanities and social sciences		
	Faculty of Medicine	13	2.899
	Biomedical Sciences		
	Faculty of Education	5	1.115
	Higher teacher training college (ENS)	13	2.899
	National Advanced School of engineering (ENSP)	6	1.338
Total	06	61	13.400
University of Buea	Faculty of Arts	5	830
	Faculty of social and management sciences	7	1.162
	Faculty of sciences	10	1.660
	Faculty of engineering and Technology	3	498
	Faculty of Education	3	498
	Faculty of Health Sciences	4	664
	Faculty of agriculture and veterinary medicines	7	1162
	Faculty of law and political science	6	996
Total	08	45	7.500

Source: (webography,2023)

3.3.2 Accessible population

The accessible population of this study therefore involved the graduates from eight departments from the four faculties of the University of Yaounde I and Buea, of which some were found at the National Employment Fund (NEF). Some from alumnis, career services and others in campus in Yaounde I and Buea and others in campus and the universities. We used a period of seven months to one year to meet the individual participants. We finally succeeded in getting 500 participants.

Table 5. Accessible Population

Universities	Departments	Number of graduates 2019-2023
--------------	-------------	-------------------------------

University of Yaounde 1	Curriculum and evaluation	30
	Educational management	35
	History	40
	Philosophy	35
	Physics	30
	Didactics of disciplines	30
	Biochemistry	20
	Geography	30
	Mathematics	25
	Psychology	25
Total	10	300
University of Buea	Accounting	35
	Computer Engineering	20
	Agriculture	20
	Telecommunications	30
	Political sciences	30
	Banking and Finance	35
	Law	30
	Total	07

Source :(webography,2023)

3.4 Sampling and sampling techniques

3.4.1. Sampling Techniques

In this study, we employed simple random sampling techniques to select the number of graduates from the universities. We adopted the simple random sampling technique because it allows us to select any member of the population under the study since all the members had equal chances of being selected and the probability of each member being selected is not affected by the selection of other members.

We also adopt the snowball sampling technique (also known as chain-referral sampling). We used this sampling technique to enabled us to collect data from graduates who were no longer in those universities. It also helped us to locate the various graduates. More specifically, we employ exponential non-discriminative snowball sampling. In this case, the first subject we met provided multiple referrals by giving their information like email address, phone numbers and workplaces which we used to locate them. At the end of eight months, we reached a considerable number of 300 from Yaounde I and 200 from the University of Buea, making 500 participants. However, many gave schedules which were never respected and COVID-19 also interrupted the process.

3.4.2. The Sample (participants)

In this research a sample of 500 participants were selected for this research study, this is presented in the table below. We used the Krejcie and Morgan sampling table, in estimating the appropriate sample size for this study. We used it because we do not have access to the entire statistical population of interest and we need to make decisions based on a representative sample. We also used it because we want to eliminate bias in the selection process (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

In order to determine the sample size, we used the Krejcie and Morgan sampling table. Yaounde I has a population of approximately forty-two thousands and six (42,006) students from this we have a maximum sample size of 380 participants. While the university of Buea has a population of approximately twelve thousand students (12000) (Wikipedia, May ,2024). From this population the sample size ranges from 370 to 375. Therefore, to totalise the population size of the two universities the researcher worked on a sample of 500 as determine by the Krejcie and Morgan sample size table (see appendix). Therefore, we used this table to confirm our graduates sample size of five hundred (500) a number that can permit us to generalise the results to the entire graduate population of these universities. Therefore, the study sample was 500, where the sum of graduates from the university of Yaounde I is 300, and 200 graduates from the university of Buea as presented on table 6 below.

Table 6. The sampling Table

Graduates	University of Yaounde 1	University of Buea	Total
Sample	300	200	500

Source: (generated from the study, 2023)

3.4.3 Purposive sampling

The researcher used the purposive sampling when she wanted to access a subset of people, as all participants of a study are selected because they fit a profile. This sampling procedure was used in order to identify the cases of graduates best suited to answer my research questions. This technique is also employed because it permits the researcher to focus on specific areas of interest like employability of graduates and gather in-depth data. The knowledge of research participants to be sampled in the different departments of the universities in each of the two state universities in Cameroon, where the 500 respondents were

selected from these universities was done through simple random sampling. The researcher used purposive sampling to select the university departments for sampling because she wanted to work with most departments and faculties which are orientated towards employability skills. Another reason was that some of these departments and faculties have professional training in their programs.

3.4.4. Criteria for the selection of participants for sample

There are certain considerations or criterias for selection of our participants for the study we have criterias for inclusion (to participate) and criterias for exclusion (not to participate). Concerning criterias for inclusion we have;

- Must be a graduate; for you to participate in the research you must be a graduate that is you must have obtained your BA Hons, Master's Degree or PhD.
- Age; you must be from the ages of nineteen years to forty -five years
- Job seeker; another criteria is that you must be a job seeker that is in search of employment
- Sex; you must equally be either a man or a woman because sex is not a barrier
- Further studies; equally you could also be a graduate who is furthering your studies

Concerning the criterias of exclusion these are simply the contrast of these aforementioned criterias.

3.5 Presentations of socio-demographic variables

Socio-demographic variables play a crucial role in research as they provide valuable insights into the characteristics of individuals or groups being studied. These variables encompass a wide range of factors related to social and demographic aspects, such as age, gender, education level, employment status, and years of employment among others. Understanding and analyzing socio-demographic variables is essential for researchers across various disciplines as they help in identifying patterns, trends, and relationships within a population. (Amin, 2005, p. 50).

- Gender
- Age
- Socio- professional level

- Educational levels
- Number of years of employment

3.5.1 Respondent Characteristics by Gender

Table 7. Distribution of Respondents according to Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentages
Male	269	53.8
Female	231	46.2
Total	500	100.0

The results from survey questionnaires in table 7 showed that there were 269 male respondents, which accounted for 53.8% of the total sample size. On the other hand, there were 231 female respondents, representing 46.2% of the total sample size. This data indicates that there was a slightly higher representation of male respondents compared to female respondents in the study.

Table 8. Distribution of respondents according to Level of Education

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentages
Degree	154	30.8
Masters I	145	29.0
Masters II	138	27.6
PhD	63	12.6
Total	500	100.0

The data from table 8 reveals that out of the total 500 respondents, 154 individuals hold a degree, this constitutes 30.8% of the total sample. The next highest level of education is Masters I, with 145 respondents, representing 29.0% of the sample. Following closely is Masters II, with 138 respondents, making up 27.6% of the total. Lastly, there are 63 respondents who hold a PhD, constituting 12.6% of the sample.

3.5.2 Respondents characteristics by age

Table 9. Respondents Characteristics by Age

Age group	Frequency	Percentages
22-30	442	88.4
31-39	44	8.8
40-48	8	1.6

49-57	6	1.2
Total	500	100.0

The data in table 9 reveals that out of the total 500 respondents, between the ages 49 to 57, 6 graduates were surveyed this makes 1.2% of the surveyed population. Between the ages 40-48, 8 graduates were surveyed, this constitutes 1.6 % of the population. Between the ages 31-39, 44 graduates were surveyed, this constitutes 8.8 % of the population. Finally, between the ages 22-30, 442 graduates were surveyed, this constitutes 88.4 % of the population. These therefore implies that a majority of the graduates for this study fall under the active age group of between 22 – 30 years of age.

3.5.3 Respondents characteristics according to employment status

Table 10. Distribution of respondents according to employment status

Employment status	Frequency	Percentages
Unemployed	375	75.1
Underemployed	100	20.9
Employed	20	4.00
Total	500	100.0

The data from table 10 indicates that out of the population of 500 respondents, 375 are unemployed this makes up 75.1% of the total sample. 100 are underemployed making up 20.9% of the sample and finally, 20 graduates are employed out of the sample size this constitutes 4.00% of the total sample.

3.5.4 Respondents' characteristics by number of years of employment

Table 11. Distribution of respondents according to years of employment

Years of employment	Frequency	Percentages
0-1	150	30
2-3	225	45
5 -10	100	20
10 above	25	5
Total	500	100.0

The data in table 11 above indicates that 150 graduates have been employed for a period of zero to one year, this constitutes 30% of the sample size. Also, 225 graduates have been employed between two to three years period this constitutes 45 of the sample, and 100 graduates have been employed between five to ten years period making a percentage 20% of the sample. Moreover, 26 which constitutes 5% of the sample size have been employed for a period of ten years and above.

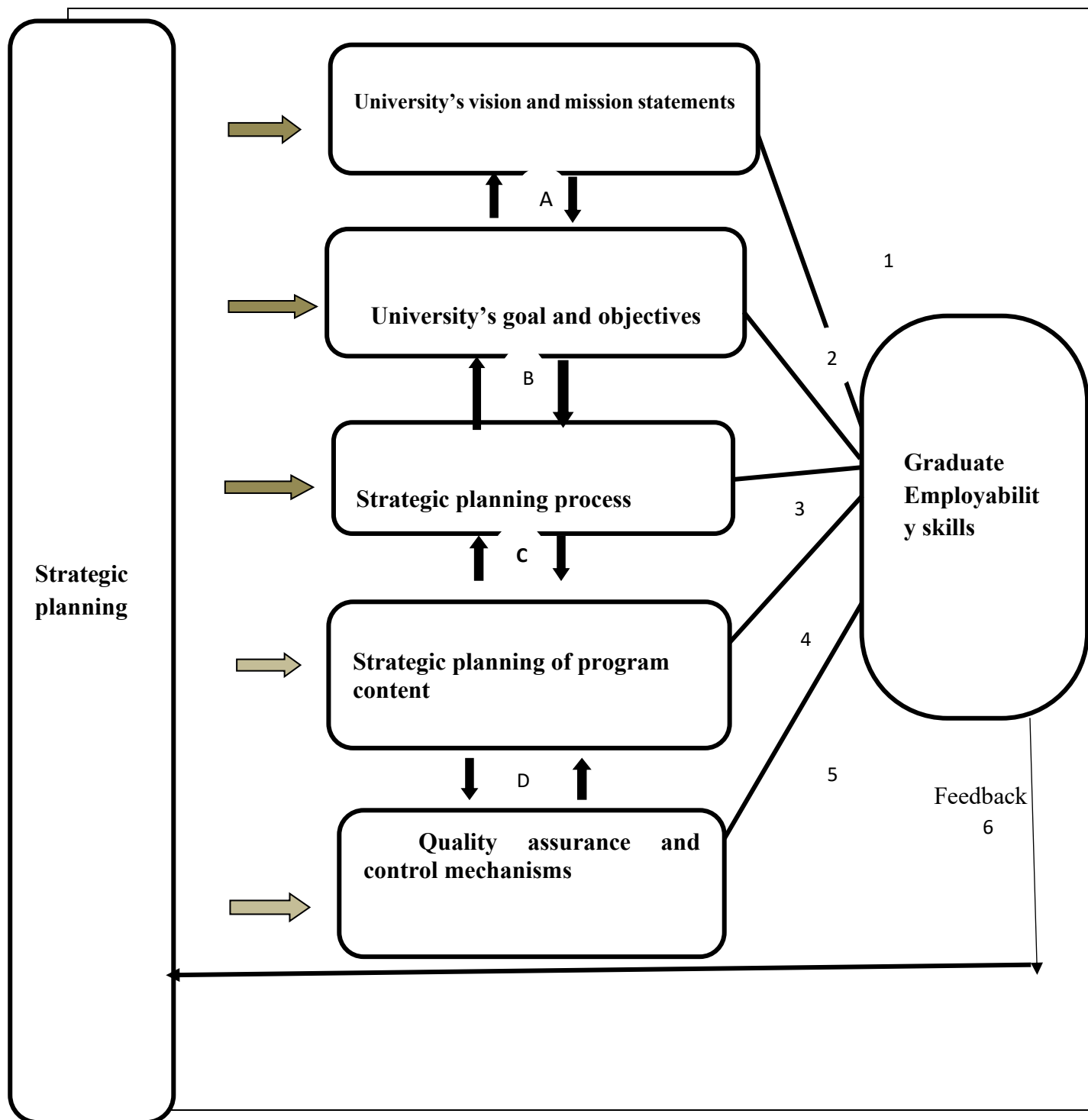
3.6. Operationalisation of research variables and hypotheses

3.6.1-Variables

Definition of Variables

A variable refers to anything that can take on differing or varying values (Amin, 2005). This implies that values can differ at various times for the same objects or persons. A variable is also an element whose value can change and take other forms when we see another. The variables are normally classified into Dependent and Independent Variables

Figure 20. Operationalisation of research variables



Source: (adapted from Fossimock ,2023, p.127)

Figure 19 is a demonstration of the link or relationship that exists between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde 1 and Buea in Cameroon.

Independent variable

The Independent variable is regarded as the predictor variable, it is that variable that is manipulated, and it influences the dependent variable. It is the presumed cause in a cause-effect relationship and a variable that is presumed to influence another variable (Laura et al., 2014, p.162). The purpose of manipulation is to confirm and determine the relationship between the indicators in the research. In this study, the independent variable is strategic planning. They involved indicators such as; the university vision and mission statements, the university goals and objectives, the strategic planning process, strategic planning of the program content and quality assurance and control mechanisms.

Dependent variables

A dependent variable according to Kumar (2011) is a variable, which receives the effect of the course. Kan (2008) added that it is a criterion variable and the variable of primary interest for the researcher, so the researcher sets out to understand and describe the variable. A dependent depends, on an independent variable. The dependent variable in this work is graduates' employability skills. It includes indicators like; employability skills development, sustainable access to the job market, graduate's competition in the job market and skills acquisition. These variables would be measured using questionnaires as instrument for the collection of data, the likert scale and the PLS-SEM, the regression model in the interpretation of results. Data would be analysed using the SPSS version 25.0.

Table 12. Recapitulation of Hypothesis

Recapitulation of Hypothesis, Variables, Indicator s, Modalities, and statistical instruments	General Research Hypothesis	Specific Research Hypotheses	Indicators	Modalities	Scale	Statistical Instrument
Strategic planning and graduate employability skills in the universities of Yaounde 1 and Buea in Cameroon	There is a relationship between strategic planning and graduates employability skills in the University of Yaounde I and Buea	RH ₁ : There is a relationship between the vision and mission statement and graduates employability skills in the University of Yaounde I and Buea	IV: Mission and vision statements DV: Graduates Employability skills	- mission statement, published plans, published mission statements -Relevant acquisition of skills, employability skills development, sustainable access to the job market, graduates competitiveness in the job market	4 - point Likert scale 4- point Likert scale	PLS-SEM PLS-SEM
		RH ₂ : There is a relationship between university objectives and graduates employability	IV: University Goals and objectives	- short term, long term, graduates focus Skills acquisition, skills development, access to the	4- point Likert scale	PLS-SEM

skills in the University of Yaounde 1 and Buea		job market, competitiveness		
	DV: Graduates employability skills	- Relevant acquisition of skills, employability skills development, sustainable access to the job market, graduates competitiveness in the job market	4-point Likert scale	PLS-SEM
RH3: There is a relationship between the strategic planning process and the graduate's employability skills in the University of Yaounde 1 and Buea	IV: Strategic planning process	- strategy formulation, strategy implementation, strategy control and evaluation	4-point Likert scale	PLS-SEM
	DV: Graduates employability skills	- Relevant acquisition of skills, employability skills development, sustainable access to the job market, graduates competitiveness in the job market	4-point Likert scale	PLS-SEM
RH4: There is a relationship between strategic	IV: Strategic planning of	-syllabuses, teaching approaches, teaching	4-point Likert scale	PLS-SEM

<p>planning of program content and graduates' employability skills in the university of Yaounde 1 and Buea</p>	<p>program content</p>	<p>modules, lecturers quality, courses content, teaching learning processes, curriculum coverage</p>	<p>4-point Likert scale</p>	<p>PLS-SEM</p>
<p>RH5: There is a relationship between quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduates employability skills in the University of Yaounde 1 and Buea</p>	<p>DV: Graduates employability skills</p>	<p>-Relevant acquisition of skills, employability skills development, sustainable access to the job market, graduates competitiveness in the job market</p>	<p>4-point Likert scale</p>	<p>PLS-SEM</p>
	<p>IV:Quality assurance and control</p>	<p>-Quality assurance teams ,quality , pedagogic inspections, program competitiveness, assessment of teachers and administrators</p>		

- Relevant
acquisition of
skills,
employability
skills
development,
sustainable
access to the
job market,
graduates
competitiveness
in the job
market

Where: R.H=Research Hypothesis, V= Variable, D.V=Dependent Variable, PLS = Partial least square, SEM= Structural equation modeling.

Source:(Researcher, 2023).

3.6.2- Hypotheses

The main research hypothesis

Ha: There is a relationship between strategic planning and graduate employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon.

H0: There is no relationship between strategic planning and graduate employability skills in universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon.

Specific research hypotheses

Ha1: There is a relation between the university's vision and mission statements and the graduate's employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon

Ha2: There is a link between the university's goal and objectives and the graduate's employability skills in in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon

Ha3: There is a connection between the planning process and graduate employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon.

Ha4: There is a linkage between the planning of program content and graduate employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon

Ha5: There is a correlation between quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduate employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon

3.7. Sources of data, Instruments for Data Collection and Methods of Data Collection

This involves all the instruments and methods employed in the process of data collection and the sources from which the data was obtained.

Sources of Data

In research, data sources are classified into two; which are the primary and secondary based on their sources.

3.7.1 Primary Data

The primary data for this study is obtained mainly from observation of the events, processes, manipulation of variables, and contrivance of the research situation including the performance of the experiment and responses to the questionnaire. When data take any of the forms listed, it gives rise to another source known as a secondary source. In this research work, the primary data was collected using a questionnaire that we developed.

3.7.2 Secondary Sources

Secondary sources are generated by primary sources. The data collected from secondary sources is secondary data but secondary data emanates from the processing of data from primary sources that was carried out and published by previous researchers. According to Saunders, et al. (2012, pp.1811-1817). Secondary data is the type of data that has been previously published in journals magazines, newspapers, books, online portals, YouTube videos, pages and other sources. In this study, we derived our secondary sources from data-based gotten from the various departments, reports from the Ministry of Higher Education, service incharge of research and orientation, strategic planning documents, and reports from the national employment fund. We also exploited books, internet sources, theses, articles, YouTube videos, research engines and television interviews as secondary sources for the collection of data for this study.

3.7.3 Research Instruments

In this investigation the researcher employed the use of the questionnaire in order to carry out information from the participants.

3.7.3.1 The Questionnaire

In this study, we employed the questionnaire because it enables the researcher to acquire adequate, precise and objective information. It is cost-effective, and time-saving and so enables the researcher to gather much information from a greater number of respondents in a relatively short period of time. The research also made use of questionnaire as a research tool because other previous works in this domain of study made use of it. The questionnaire used was presented in two main sections: section A we have questions on the independent and dependent variables. Items on independent variables include (Vision/mission, objectives/goals, strategic planning process, strategic planning of program content and quality assurance and control mechanisms) (1 -43) and those on the dependent variables or graduate's employability skills include (skills acquisition, sustainable access to the job market, graduates competitiveness in the job market and employability skills development) (44 – 52).In section B we have questions on demographic information (gender, age, occupation, faculty, department) (53-60) presented according to the hypotheses presented in table 13

Elaboration of the tool

The researcher used the strategic planning measurement scale adapted from Mueen Ghazi Arafat El- Mobayed (2006) which was later modified by Andrea Luxton (2015). She

used the scale to adapt her questions. From this scale she adapted questions from items one to item forty- three concerning strategic planning. The researcher also used the employability skills assessment scale (ESAS) by Mohamad Sattar Raoul et al (2012) and was modified by Amos Abiodun Adeyemo et al (2020), where by she adapted questions as we have questions from items fourty –four to sixty (44-60). It should be noted that, to present these items she now used the likert scale type as seen below in table 13

Table 13. Description of Questionnaire

Hypotheses	Indicator	Number of items	Measuring scale
RH1	Vision/mission statements	1 – 9	4-point Likert scale
RH2	Goal/objectives	10-15	4-point Likert scale
RH3	Strategic planning process	16-26	4-point Likert scale
RH4	Planning of Program content	27- 35	4-point Likert scale
RH5	Quality assurance and control mechanisms	36-43	4-point Likert scale

Source: (generated from the study,2022)

3.7.3.2 Weighting the Scale

The measurement scale was a four-point Likert scale presented orderly thus: (Strongly disagree-SD= 4, Disagree-D=3, Agree-A=2, and Strongly agree-SA=1). From the objective of the study, all the items were affirmative, thus all negative responses had high points. Four-point Likert scale was chosen because it is more reliable for recording opinions or ideas, and it equally eases data analysis through the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS, version 25.0). The respondents were expected to Tick (√) the options most suitable to them.

The decision rule according to Hagan (2014), refers to a regulation or guide which enables a researcher to make a decision on whether to accept or reject an issue as seen below.

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.5$$

This means that any factor with a mean of 2.5 and above was accepted (positive) while those less than 2.5 were rejected (negative). Each questionnaire was made up of closed-ended questions and was to be answered anonymously and not obligatory.

3.8 Validation and reliability of Research Instruments

3.8.1 Validation

Validity is an important requirement for both qualitative and quantitative studies (Cohen et al. 2007). To verify the extent to which the research instruments conceived for this study measures accurately what they were intended to measure, the instrument is subjected to validity. We have the face and content validity.

3.8.1.1 Face Validity

The instrument was presented firstly to some lecturers and research experts who read and made some adjustments and judged the instruments appropriate and objective with the subject matter and coverage of the entire topic under study. It was then submitted to the researcher's supervisor for cross-examination and scrutiny. He examined the items by checking the language, clarity of the questions, relevance of the items to the objectives of the study, and items' ability to accurately represent a common theory and practice. After a succinct scrutiny of the instrument together with the researcher, the former brought in more corrections and modifications which were modified by the researcher. After a third examination, the items on the questionnaire were confirmed valid and relevant to the study thereby confirming the face validity of the instrument.

3.8.1.2 Content Validity

It shows how adequately the instrument samples the universe of knowledge, skills, perceptions and attitudes that the respondents are expected to show. In this study, the designer of the instrument made sure that all the questions asked in the questionnaire fully exhausted all that was implied by the research question and hypotheses. To further ensure the content is valid, the researcher employed Partial Least Square –Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) and the measurement model analysis consisting of convergent validity and discriminate validity for the questionnaire conducted. Convergent validity calculated stood at 0.7, above the threshold of 0.5 which is the alpha, the discriminant validity was 0.65 as recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Hence, confirming strong evidence of the validity of the instrument measured (see table 18).

3.8.2 Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instruments in the study was concerned with how consistent the results obtained with the instruments were. Asika (2012) opines that a researcher who designs

a research instrument should be more concerned about how consistent the results he obtains from the instruments are. It should be intended to ensure that the instruments give similar, close or even the same results if the study to which the instrument was applied is taken all over again even by a different researcher under the same assumption and condition. Reliability is invariably the consistency between independent measurements of a phenomenon. It denotes the stability, dependability, and predictability of the measuring instruments (Muhamad et al 2015, p.167).

3.8.2.1 Test-retest Reliability

To establish the reliability of the instruments, the researcher employed the test-retest approach. According to Amin (2005), test-retest reliability refers to the degree to which the scores on the same test by the same individual are consistent over time. This is an indication that the result obtained at a given point will be the same or closer to the former scores if the test is administered again after some time. In this study, we administered the questionnaire to graduates from the universities under study found on the campus of the said university, and after two weeks, we administered again the same tool to the same population and the results were obtained with the help of Cronbach's alpha and presented below.

In this study, the researcher employed the Cronbach's alpha statistical tool. We used Chronbach alpha in this study to assess the reliability and, better still the internal consistency of a set of scale or test items used in this study. Internal consistency is evaluated by correlating performance on each of the items in a test or scale with total performance on the test or scale that takes the form of a correlation coefficient. Correlations are expressed as a numerical value, represented by lowercase r. For instance, the correlation test between test A and test B would be represented as $r_{\text{testA, testB}}$. In this case, the scores in test A and the scores in test B are correlated. The reliability coefficient or correlation coefficient ranges from -1.00 to +1.00. A value of 1.00 would be the most appropriate reliability, where there is no error in the measurement process.

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha

$$\alpha = \frac{k}{k-1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum \sigma^2 \frac{2}{k}}{\sigma^2} \right)$$

Where:

$\sum \sigma_k^2$ is the sum of the variances of the k parts which are the items of the test or instrument

σ = standard deviation of the test or instrument.

After two weeks we administered the instrument to the same group of people. The scores were computed to obtain a coefficient of stability index of 0.842. This coefficient stability is significant. This shows that the instrument had a good test re-test reliability.

3.8.2.2. Pilot testing

In this study before administering this questionnaire instruments, they were first tested on a group of 30 graduates and after two weeks the same instruments were conducted on the same group of graduates. The responses were correlated and the results were evaluated indicating a high degree of consistency. This appreciation enabled the researcher to modify the questions to better suit the study and for accurate data to be collected and tested. The researcher then proceeded to the administration of the instruments to the respondents that had been sampled. Cronbach's Alpha and Conformity (Confirmatory) Factor Analysis techniques were used to determine the reliability of the instruments as seen below.

Table 14. Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized Items	Number of Items
Strategic vision/mission statements	0.832	9
Strategic goals and objectives	0.825	6
Strategic planning process	0.824	11
Strategic planning of program content	0.827	9
Quality Assurance and control mechanisms	0.843	8
Graduate's employability skills	0.902	17
Total	0.842	60

Source: (generated from this study)

From the table 14 above using the techniques already mentioned, the reliability of the instruments was determined and a Likert scale type accompanied each statement of the questionnaires. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha which stood at strategic vision and mission($r=0.832$), strategic goals and objectives($r=0.825$), strategic planning process ($r= 0.827$), strategic program content ($r=0.824$), quality assurance and control mechanisms ($r= 0.843$) and graduates employability skills ($r= 0.902$). Totaling the sum and dividing the reliability of the questionnaires stood at 0.842.

3.9 Administration of the instruments

To administer the questionnaire, the researcher presented the research authorisation (*see appendix*) to the various faculty heads of the two universities under study with a research application. The directors gave access through a written note to meet any user on a daily basis and have access to all databases upon presentation of the note to any personnel in charge. It took the researcher two months to meet strictly the identified graduates for them to answer the questionnaire and access the database of the study. At the faculties and then departments some informants opted to fill the questionnaires on the spot while, others decided to take them and fill them when they were free and promised to return them the next day or later in the afternoon, which sometimes returned two weeks after.

In the university of Yaounde it was done from to March to April 2023 the researcher met the class delegates the delegates distributed the questionnaires to his course mates. They were asked to fill when they are free and I was asked to come back after a week to get the stuff. In some departments I met the student on the spot they filled and took some to their friends to fill. To others I used online channels like email, watsap or messenger, I actually communicated them by email and sent them online version for them to fill and they equally filled and returned it by way of online. Some graduates contacts were given to me by their friends and I sent it to them by their watsap and they filled and returned to me. The researcher also did face-to-face interviews whereby she met the graduates read the questions to them and they were answering right away in the questinnaires.

In the university of Buea it was carried in the month of May to June 2023 it was a little different, I met the heads of departments and they connected me to the class delegates who received the questionnaires both the soft copies and hard copies and met their mates to fill. I was asked to pass after two weeks to get the filled versions. It was difficult to meet the

graduates on campus for they were either having classes or some have gone to hustle menial jobs.

Questionnaires for graduates were administered in this fashion and manner as we have below.

➤ **Development of the Questionnaire**

- **Design and Structure:** The questionnaire was designed to collect relevant data on two main variables: strategic planning within the universities (e.g., career services, employability programs, industry collaborations) and the employability skills of the graduates (e.g., communication, problem-solving, teamwork, technical skills). The questionnaire was structured in sections to capture demographic information, strategic planning indicators, graduates employability skills and demographic information.
- **Question Types:** The questionnaire included closed-ended (Likert scale) questions to capture quantitative data for analysis, to gain deeper insights into graduates' perceptions and experiences.
- **Pilot Testing:** Before administering the questionnaire to the full sample, a pilot test was conducted with a small group of graduates to ensure clarity, relevance, and effectiveness of the questions. Feedback from the pilot test was used to make necessary adjustments to the questionnaire.

➤ **Sampling Procedure**

- **Target Population:** The target population for the study included graduates from the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea. The sample was selected from recent graduates who completed their studies within the past five years to ensure the relevance of their experiences in relation to employability.
- **Sampling Method:** A simple random sampling technique was employed to ensure that different faculties and departments were represented in the sample. Graduates from selected academic disciplines (e.g., engineering, humanities, biomedical sciences social sciences, education among others) were included, ensuring that the study results were representative of the overall graduate population.
- **Sample Size:** Based on the size of the graduate population in both universities, a sample of approximately 500 graduates was selected for the study. This sample size was deemed large enough to provide statistically significant results while being manageable for data collection.

➤ **Administration of the Questionnaires**

- **Mode of Administration:** The questionnaires were administered both online and in-person. The online version was distributed via email or university alumni networks to reach graduates who were no longer residing in close proximity to the universities. The in-person questionnaires were distributed during alumni events or through university career service offices.
 - **Online Questionnaire Tools:** For the online survey, survey tools like Google Forms. This platform allowed for efficient data collection, tracking of responses, and easy access for graduates who had moved to different locations.
 - **In-Person Administration:** In-person questionnaires were administered by trained research assistants during alumni events, workshops, or career fairs held by the universities. Research assistants explained the purpose of the study, assured confidentiality, and provided assistance to those who had questions about the questionnaire.
 - **Ethical Considerations:** Concerning informed Consent, all participants were provided with a detailed information sheet that explained the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. Graduates were required to give informed consent before completing the questionnaire. Personal information and responses were kept confidential, and participants were assured that their data would only be used for the purposes of this research. Graduates were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.
- **Data Collection Process, online Surveys:** for online surveys, reminders were sent to participants via email to encourage participation and ensure a high response rate. Graduates were given a set period (e.g., two weeks) to complete the questionnaire.
- **In-Person Surveys:** For in-person surveys, research assistants were available to collect completed questionnaires immediately after they were filled out. If graduates were unable to complete the survey during the event, they were given the option to complete it online at a later time.
 - **Follow-Up and Data Validation, follow-up Emails:** After the initial distribution of questionnaires, follow-up emails were sent to non-respondents to remind them to participate, ensuring a higher response rate.

- Data Cleaning: After collecting all the responses, the data was cleaned to eliminate incomplete, inconsistent, or invalid responses. This process ensured that only high-quality data was used for analysis.
- **Difficulties encountered**
 - Some students I met were not willing to fill the questionnaires, some filled and forgot at home and I had to be patient with them to receive only after about two weeks.
 - some graduates complained that they do not have time for paper works what they want is their work, others complain of lack of data to fill and send online. It should be noted that when I realized that the return rates of the questionnaires were low I decided to used reminders and in others I motivated (momo and data bundles) most of the graduates to fill and return. Even the class delegates were financially motivated so that they can mobilise their mates to fill.
 - The survey also made me so tired in the process of passing and collecting data. There was also the problem of limited response options where some students would have love to allow to say their opinions on certain issues.
 - The researcher also faced inadequacies as she finds her self printing more and more questionnaires to distribute. These challenges nonetheless, the required numbers were attained and the questionnaire return rate evaluated as we have below.

Questionnaires Return rates

Table 15. Questionnaires Return rate for graduates

Faculties	Numbers distributed	Numbers returned	Return rate (%)
Universityof Yaounde I	316	300	95
University of Buea	210	200	95
Total	526	500	95

Source: (generated from the study, 2023)

Table 15 above indicates that a total of 526 questionnaires were administered to the graduate respondents and 500 were returned giving a 95 % return rate.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

In contemporary education studies, all researchers are expected to apply, and respect ethical principles and guidelines when research involves human subjects (International

Commission for World Health Organisation, CIOMS, 2002). According to Gustafsson and Peterson (2005), areas of ethical concerns are lack of informed consent, plague with inversion of privacy, deception and harm to participants. Ethical issues have to do with respect for lives, persons, human dignity, beneficence and justice.

This takes place in four different stages of the research process; the choice of the topic, data collection, analysis, interpretation and thesis writing. In this study, we ensure ethics in these four parts; in the research topic, all cautionary motives were taken into consideration, in order to avoid stumbling on a topic that could harm or put both the university community and research participants in any inconveniencies. In order to achieve this, an explorative study was conducted to test the suitability of the topic and to find out if it is sensitive to the scientific world or not.

At the level of data collection, the methodology, techniques and tools used were chosen with reasons, and further pre-tested during the explorative study before they are finally employed in the study. This was purposeful to avoid straying into the research participant's privacy in one way or the other. While in the field, the main instrument that was used to give every informant their rights are the informed concerned form. This form was presented in two parts, part A presented information about the research work and B presented information on participants' engagement in the whole exercise. The document was handed to participants and some verbal explanations were made after which they fixed the day and place for the filling of the questionnaires at their convenience. On data analysis, our tools did not give any gap for the participants to put their names, so all responses were unanimous.

When conducting research on strategic planning and graduate employability skills in the universities of Yaounde 1 and Buea, several ethical considerations must be considered to ensure the research adheres to established standards of academic integrity and social responsibility. These considerations include ensuring the protection of participants' rights, obtaining informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, and minimizing any potential harm to individuals or institutions involved in the study.

- ❖ **Informed Consent;** obtaining informed consent is a fundamental ethical requirement in any research involving human participants. In the context of this study, informed consent was obtained from university graduates who participated in the survey. The researcher ensured that participants are fully aware of the purpose of the study, the methods of data collection, and how their responses will be used. This ensured that

participants can voluntarily choose whether to take part in the study, free from any undue influence or pressure (Belwal & Mehta, 2021).

- ❖ Participants were provided with clear and concise information about the study, including details of the research objectives, the potential of no risks and benefits of their participation, and the use of collected data. The consent will be obtained from each participant before data collection began, and participants were informed that they can withdraw from the study at any time without facing any negative consequences.
- ❖ Confidentiality and Anonymity; to protect the privacy of participants, confidentiality and anonymity was ensured throughout the research process. This involves safeguarding personal information, including participants' names, institutional affiliations, and any other identifying details. Data collected will be stored securely, and any identifying information will be removed or replaced with pseudonyms to ensure that individual responses cannot be traced back to specific participants.

Results of the study was presented in aggregate form, ensuring that individual identities cannot be identified. Additionally, participants were assured that their involvement will remain confidential and that their data will only be used for the purpose of the research.

- ❖ Voluntary Participation and Right to Withdraw; all participants were informed that their involvement in the study is entirely voluntary. They should be made aware that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without facing any negative consequences. This is crucial in ensuring that the participants' autonomy is respected, and that they are not coerced or unduly influenced to continue their participation against their will.
- ❖ Non-maleficence (Do No Harm); a key ethical principle in social science research is to avoid causing harm to participants or institutions. In this study, care was taken to ensure that the research process does not negatively impact participants' academic, professional, or personal lives. For example, any sensitive questions about employability or career readiness was framed carefully to avoid distress or discomfort among participants.
- ❖ Cultural Sensitivity and Respect; the study involves participants from two different universities in Cameroon, which may have different cultural and social contexts. Ethical research requires sensitivity to the local customs, values, and beliefs of participants. This includes respecting the linguistic and cultural differences that may

exist between the University of Yaounde 1 (French-speaking) and the University of Buea (English-speaking). The researcher ensured that the methods used are culturally appropriate and that participants are treated with respect throughout the study.

- ❖ **Transparency and Integrity;** researchers have an ethical obligation to ensure that the findings are presented truthfully and without distortion. Data must be analyzed and reported accurately, without manipulation to suit preconceived ideas or objectives. Any conflicts of interest must be disclosed, and the researcher must remain neutral throughout the study.
- ❖ **Ethical Approval;** before conducting the study, the research must undergo an ethical review and be approved by the relevant institutional review board or ethics committee at the researcher's institution. This ensures that the study adheres to the ethical guidelines and regulations set forth by the academic community and protects participants' rights.

The researcher submitted a detailed research proposal, including a description of the methodology, data collection methods, and ethical considerations, for approval by the relevant ethics committee before commencing the study. The research could not proceed without receiving the necessary ethical approval.

3.11 Methods of data analysis and presentation

This study applies the correlational research design which describes the extent to which the variables are interrelated. With correlational studies, the data collected is used to verify if there is a relationship between two or more variables. According to Amin (2005), a correlational research attempt to determine whether and to what degree a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables. The relationship can now be used to make predictions for quantitative data, responses would be coded, summarised and reported in relation to the specific research questions and items in the test as provided by the different groups of graduates respondents and employability skills. Data would be using tables, percentages, mean and standard deviations. Also, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 for Windows would be used for data annalysis.

Data in this study consist of a combined statistical tool to the data obtained from the experiment and the survey. To organise and give meaning to our data, we used various statistical tools descriptive statistics; mean, standard deviation, the, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and the regression analysis. To describe our data analysis

techniques, we will follow steps by explaining what we did and the statistical tools involved. Quantitative data analysis of this study involves two major steps

- Data preparation in which data was collected and checked for accuracy and entered into the machine computer using SPSS, which is designed to display and transform data (Trochim & Donnelly,2007).
- Data organisation was developed and documented into a database structure that integrates the various measures present in the data

Frequencies of distribution such as frequency tables were used to describe multiple variables such as standardised test scores and demographic data. The central tendency of a distribution is “*an estimate of the centre of a distribution of value*” .Trochim & Donnelly used to determine and describe the median of sets of values of the data that require this approach. Ranges, which are measures of dispersion in a frequency distribution were also used to describe the variability of data values. To do this, we summarise the data so that the readers can construct a mental picture of the relationship between the data and the phenomena under study. (ibid).

Representing the data

The researcher also used tables to represent results related to the research questions. Creswell and Plano (2007) note that “*these visual forms depict the trends and distributions of the data*” and allow readers to better understand the quantitative results of the study in a summarised form. Tufle (2006, p.83) adds that most of the methods for displaying evidence are inherent multimodal bringing verbal, visual and quantitative variables together. A variety of tables and figures were used to represent quantitative data analysis in this study and the researcher also used mean, median, standard deviation, tables to present findings related to the research questions.

3.11.1 Descriptive Statistics

According to Amin (2005, p.368), a frequent goal in data is to efficiently describe and measure the strength of relationships between variables. In line with this, bivariate descriptive statistics describes the relationship between dependent and independent variables in this research work.

➤ Pearson Correlation

The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test our research hypotheses. The purpose was to measure the degree of relationship between the independent variables (strategic

planning) in our research hypothesis and graduates' employability skills symbolised by the correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient according to Amin (2005, p. 379), is a simple descriptive statistic that measure the strength of the Linear relationship between two variables. It is also a measure of the strength of the association between two variables. The value of the correlation coefficient r ranges from -1 for a perfect negative correlation to +1 for a perfect positive correlation. The degree of relationship between two variables is described by the coefficient of correlation, which indicates the strength of this association.

In this study, to determine existing relationships between two variables (strategic planning and graduates' employability skills), the researcher used Pearson's correlation coefficient because the purpose of this study is to predict the dependent variable from the independent (Muijs, 2004). By so doing, the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used because the data in this study are parametric, that is its interpretation depends on the population fitting parameterized distribution. This means that the quantitative data in this study is numerical. The researcher employed the use of parametric statistics because there is a generalization of the results of this study to a larger population.

Interpreting the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient

The usefulness of the correlation depends on its size and significance (Muijs, 2004). If r reliably differs from 0.00, the r -value is statistically significant, that is, does not result from a chance occurrence, implying that if the same variables were measured on another set of similar subjects, a similar r -value would result. If r achieves significance, it is possible to conclude that the relationship between the two variables was not due to chance. According to Muijs (2004), the size of any correlation generally evaluates as follows:

Table 16. Description of Correlation Value

Correlation value	Interpretation
0.00 to 0.10	Weak
0.11 to 0.29	Low
0.30 to 0.59	Modest
0.60 to 0.79	Moderate
0.80 to 0.89	Strong
0.90 to 1.00	Very strong

On the other hand, it is important to state that correlation does not imply causation. In this regard, just because one variable relates to another variable does not mean that changes in one cause changes in the other. In other words, other variables may be acting on one or both

related variables and affect them in the same direction. In this study, the researcher was not interested in verifying if the occurrence of one variable caused or increased the occurrence of the other variable. The researcher was only interested in determining the strength of the correlation between the variables. *Coefficient of Determination* (r^2): The relationship between two variables can be represented by the overlap of two circles representing each variable. If the circles do not overlap, no relationship exists. The area of overlap represents the amount of variance in the dependent (variable) that can be explained by the independent (x-variable). The area of overlap, called the percent common variance, calculates as r^2 .

3.11.2 Inferential statistics

This statistic helps us to get a full meaning of the nature of relationship. It shows the level of influence of one variable on another.

➤ Regression analysis

The researcher employed the ordinal regression analysis as a statistical technique to predict behaviours of ordinal level dependent variables with a set of independent variables. To gain a full meaning of the nature of the strategic planning it was important to proceed with a more refined statistical tool called the ordinal regression analysis. According to Amin (2005) formulating this analysis helps you to predict the effects of the independent variable on the dependent one that is the effects of strategic planning on graduates' employability skills. It assumes that the dependent variable is measured on an ordinal level, one or more of the independent variables are either continuous categorical or ordinal. The most suitable statistical tests for ordinal data (for example, the Likert scale) are non-parametric tests, rank sum test. Correlation and regression are related in the sense that both deal with relationships among variables. Neither regression nor correlation analysis can be interpreted as establishing cause and effect relationship. They can indicate only how or to what extent variables are related to each other. The correlation coefficient measures only the degree of Linear association between two variables while the regression analysis measures the strength of the relationships that is how strongly strategic planning influence graduates employability skills. The regression also measures the direction of relationships that is whether the influence is positive or negative. The regression analysis also predicts that is it estimates or predicts the value of the dependent variable based on known values of the independent variable. It equally checks if the observed relationships are likely to be genuine or just due to chance.

3.11.2 The Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS)

The Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) volume 25.0 was used. To confirm the proposed structural model, the researcher used Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) which is a technic used in the data to test the relationship between the latent variable and the path relationship in the model. PLS-SEM has become the most prominent data analysis technique and it is widely recognized for its remarkable advantages in behavioural science (Hair et al. 2011). It helps researchers to understand the relationship among observed variables (Hair et al. 2013). It also works efficiently with complex models and small sample sizes. PLS-SEM was employed to consider the suitability of the hypothetical model and its relationship concerning the research problem. PLS-SEM is an interactive approach that maximizes the explained variance of indigenous constructs.

Moreover, the PLS-SEM was selected for data analysis in this study because it is used to develop theories or models in exploratory research (Hair, 2014). Moreover, it is recommended to use PLS-SEM when the main objective of the research is to conduct predictions and explanations of constructs. With this, Chin (1998) explains that PLS-SEM is capable of predicting the formations of individual constructs (this involved indicator related to each individual construct) and identifies the relationship among the constructs. PLS-SEM can verify that the research model is valid and reliable as well as explore the relationship in the structural model.

Synthesis

This chapter of the work that touches research methodology examined the research design, area of study, population of study, samples, validity and reliability, instruments, variables and indicators sampling methods and techniques in the source of the data collection. It also employed quantitative data collection and analysis techniques, ethical considerations operationalization of research variables among other aspects. The critical examination of this chapter as shown above served as a stepping stone for the presentation of results and analysis of data collected from the field.



CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS

The previous chapter presented the methodological procedures that enabled us to collect the data for this research. However, this chapter deals with data analyses and the interpretation of results. It is done in two phases. The first phase will focus on descriptive statistics while the second will dwell on inferential statistics. The descriptive data is presented using means and standard deviations as central tendencies while the inferential data is interested in testing research hypotheses about the problem under investigation. It will focus on the following points: the analysis of secondary factors and the analysis of primary factors. The analysis of secondary factors will be based on a descriptive aspect and an inferential aspect. At the descriptive level, our focus will be on highlighting central trends through a cross-analysis of socio-demographic factors in relation to graduates' skills in terms of employability.

At the inferential level, the focus will be on studying the effect of socio-demographic factors (gender, age, level of education) in terms of graduates' employability skills. As for the analysis of the main factors, it will focus on the verification of our different research hypotheses through a correlation analysis, the aim of which is to verify the links that exist between the modalities of strategic planning and modalities of graduates' employability skills. This will be followed by a regression analysis aimed at identifying the best predictors of attitude, descriptive norms, injunctive norms and perceived behavioural control. The researcher would employ the use of mean, median and standard deviation as well as frequency and percentages to present the results.

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Here we shall be looking at analyses of data done by the use of the Pearson correlation coefficient. In descriptive correlational studies, the approach used to determine the research hypotheses is to apply a Pearson correlation test followed by regression analyses. The correlations will enable us to examine the postulated relationship between our different variables.

4.1.1 Responses on strategic planning with respect to vision and mission statements

Table 17. Responses on Strategic Planning with Respect to Vision and Mission Statements

MEASURES	SD(f%)	D(f%)	A(f%)	SA(f%)	Mean	SD
You are aware of the vision and mission statement of your university and you are working towards meeting that vision	66 (13.2)	99 (19.8)	180 (36.0)	155 (31.0)	2.9	1.007
The mission statement of the university inspires you to work harder in order to contribute to nation building	39 (7.8)	91 (18.2)	244 (44.8)	146 (29.2)	3.0	0.886
The vision and mission fit with your academic and professional expectations	125 (25.0)	120 (24.0)	101 (20.0)	154 (30.8)	2.6	1.168
Does your study provides possibility for students to meet stated vision and mission	31 (6.2)	68 (13.6)	190 (38.0)	211 (42.2)	3.2	0.884
You rightly understand the mission statement of your university with its implications both on students, teachers and the society at large	112 (22.4)	138 (27.6)	133 (26.6)	117 (23.4)	2.6	1.081
The mission statement of your university is always met according to your perception	95 (19.0)	272 (54.4)	69 (13.8)	64 (12.8)	2.2	0.894
The mission statement of the university is an inspiration from national strategic documents	50 (10.0)	90 (18.0)	226 (45.2)	134 (26.8)	2.9	0.915
Departmental objectives match with mission statement of the university	63 (12.6)	88 (17.6)	194 (38.8)	155 (31.0)	2.9	0.989
The various institutional processes like the teaching, learning, administrative processes are well crafted to enhance the attainment of institutional mission statement.	69 (13.8)	74 (14.8)	119 (23.8)	238 (47.6)	3.1	1.084
MRA	650 (14.4)	1040 (23.1)	1436 (31.9)	1374 (30.5)	2.82	0.10

According to the data from table 20 above, 66 respondents (13.2%) strongly disagreed, 99 respondents (19.8%) disagreed, 180 respondents (36.0%) agreed, and 155 respondents (31.0%) strongly agreed that they are aware of the vision and mission statement of their university and are working towards meeting that vision. The mean score for this statement is 2.9, with a standard deviation of 1.007.

In terms of the impact of the mission statement on motivation and contribution to nation building, 39 respondents (7.8%) strongly disagreed, 91 respondents (18.2%) disagreed, 244 respondents (44.8%) agreed, and 146 respondents (29.2%) strongly agreed that the mission statement of the university inspires them to work harder and contribute to nation building. The mean score for this statement is 3, with a standard deviation of 0.886.

These findings suggest that a significant proportion of respondents are aware of their university's vision and mission statement and are actively working towards meeting that vision. Additionally, a substantial number of respondents feel inspired by the mission statement, which motivates them to work harder and contribute to nation building.

For the measure "This vision and mission fit with your academic and professional expectations," the responses were as follows: 125 respondents strongly disagreed, 120 disagreed, 101 agreed, and 154 strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure was calculated as 2.6, with a standard deviation of 1.168.

Regarding the measure "The you study provide the possibility for students to meet stated vision and mission," the responses were as follows: 31 respondents strongly disagreed, 68 disagreed, 190 agreed, and 211 strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure was calculated as 3.2, with a standard deviation of 0.884.

These findings suggest that there is a relatively higher level of agreement among respondents regarding the fit between the vision and mission statements with their academic and professional expectations compared to the possibility of enabling students to meet the stated vision and mission.

With regards to respondents' Understanding of the Mission Statement of the University and its implications on students, teachers, and society at large, 112 respondents (22.4%) strongly disagreed, 138 (27.6%) disagreed, 133 (26.6%) agreed, and 117 (23.4%) strongly agreed with having a correct understanding of the mission statement. The mean value for this measure is 2.6, indicating a moderate level of agreement overall. The standard deviation of 1.081 suggests some variability in responses.

Also, this study assessed respondents' perception of whether the university consistently meets its mission statement. According to the data, 95 respondents (19.0%) strongly disagreed, 272 (54.4%) disagreed, 69 (13.8%) agreed, and 64 (12.8%) strongly agreed with the statement that the mission statement is always met. The mean value for this measure is 2.2, indicating a slightly lower level of agreement compared to the previous measure. The standard deviation of 0.894 suggests less variability in responses compared to the first measure. These findings suggest that there may be room for improvement in terms of understanding and consistently meeting the mission statement of the university. While a moderate level of agreement is observed in understanding the mission statement, there is a lower level of agreement regarding its consistent implementation.

Based on the provided data, the statement regarding the mission statement of the university being an inspiration from national strategic documents had a mean score of 50, with a standard deviation of 10. This suggests that there was some variability in respondents' opinions, but on average, they found it to be somewhat inspiring.

The statistics from Table above shows that 69 respondents (13.8%) strongly disagreed with the assertion that institutional processes are designed to help achieve the mission statement. 74 participants (14.8%) disagreed with the statement, though. In contrast, a greater proportion of respondents agreed that institutional processes were effective in regard to the mission statement. 238 respondents (47.6%) strongly agreed, and 119 respondents (23.8%) agreed that these systems are well-designed to help the university achieve its objective. This suggests that a sizeable percentage of respondents are aware of and agree that institutional procedures and the mission statement are aligned.

On the answer scale, the mean score was 3.1, which is in the middle of the Agree and Strongly Agree categories. This shows that respondents had an overall favourable opinion of strategic planning in terms of vision and mission statements. Given that the standard deviation (SD) for this question is 1.084, there may not be much variation in the answers. This therefore suggests that most respondents shared a common perspective on this issue, with just a small percentage expressing disagreement or uncertainty.

4.1.2. Responses on strategic planning with respect to strategic goals and objectives

Table 18. Responses on Strategic Planning with Respect to Strategic Goals and objectives

MEASURES	SD(f%)	D(f%)	A(f%)	SA(f%)	Mean	SD
My department has a formal statement that describe the goals and objectives of the system	56 (11.2)	124 (24.8)	134 (26.8)	186 (37.2)	2.9	1.03
My department has established both main term and specific objectives	106 (21.2)	127 (25.4)	114 (22.8)	153 (30.6)	2.7	1.128
My department constantly change its objectives based on the changes in the state policies and the society	107 (21.4)	117 (23.4)	149 (29.8)	127 (25.4)	2.6	1.086
My department's objective is to ensure effective training for learners	39 (7.8)	121 (24.2)	153 (30.6)	187 (37.4)	3.0	0.964
My departments' objective is to improve student learning outcomes for employability	54 (10.8)	118 (23.6)	143 (28.6)	185 (37.0)	3.0	1.017
My department set objectives for all stakeholders and follow up	145 (29.0)	146 (29.2)	139 (27.8)	70 (14.0)	2.3	1.029
MRA	507 (16.9)	753 (25.1)	832 (27.7)	908 (30.3)	2.75	0.057

To investigate whether the department had a formal statement that described the goals and objectives of the system. The responses from table 21 shows that 56 respondents (11.2%) strongly disagreed, 124 individuals (24.8%) disagreed, 134 individuals (26.8%) agreed, and 186 individuals (37.2%) strongly agreed with this statement. The mean score for this measure was 2.9, with a standard deviation of 1.03.

Another measure in this study assesses whether the department had established both main term and specific objectives. The responses indicate that 106 individuals (21.2%) strongly disagreed (SD), 127 individuals (25.4%) disagreed (D), 114 individuals (22.8%) agreed (A), and 153 individuals (30.6%) strongly agreed (SA) with this statement. The mean score for this measure was 2.7, with a standard deviation of 1.128.

The results of the survey indicate that there is a significant level of disagreement (mean = 2.6) among employees regarding constantly changing objectives based on state policies and

society. This suggests that employees perceive this practice as disruptive or ineffective in achieving organizational goals. Additionally, the standard deviation (SD = 1.086) indicates a wide range of responses, implying a lack of consensus among employees.

In contrast, ensuring effective training for learners was identified as a departmental objective with higher agreement among employees. The mean score for this objective was 3, indicating a moderate level of agreement. The standard deviation (SD = 0.964) suggests a relatively narrower range of responses compared to constantly changing objectives.

For the objective of improving student learning outcomes for employability, the responses were as follows: 54 respondents (10.8%) strongly disagreed, 118 respondents (23.6%) disagreed, 143 respondents (28.6%) agreed, and 185 respondents (37.0%) strongly agreed. The mean response for this objective was 3, indicating an overall agreement among the participants. The standard deviation for this objective was 1.017, suggesting a relatively low level of variability in the responses.

Regarding setting objectives for all stakeholders and follow-up, the responses were as follows: 145 respondents (29.0%) strongly disagreed, 146 respondents (29.2%) disagreed, 139 respondents (27.8%) agreed, and 70 respondents (14.0%) strongly agreed. The mean response for this objective was 2.3, indicating a slightly higher level of disagreement compared to the previous objective. The standard deviation for this objective was 1.029, suggesting a moderate level of variability in the responses. Overall, the data suggests that there is a relatively high level of agreement among the participants regarding the objective of improving student learning outcomes for employability

4.1.3 Responses on strategic planning with respect to the strategic planning process

Table 19. Responses on Strategic Planning with Respect to the Strategic Planning Process

MEASURES	SD(f/%)	D(f/%)	A(f/%)	SA(f/%)	Mean	SD
National strategic papers are employed during university strategic papers	116 (23.2)	152 (30.4)	109 (21.8)	123 (24.6)	2.5	1.099
Program reviews are carried out after every five years to revise course objectives, contents and outcomes in every department of your institution	142 (28.4)	166 (33.2)	143 (28.6)	49 (9.8)	2.2	0.962

The strategic planning process is an inclusive process involving salient stakeholders	126 (25.2)	190 (38.0)	132 (26.4)	52 (10.4)	2.3	0.941
There is always an indebt diagnosis which is always carried out at the start of the process	134 (26.8)	112 (22.4)	134 (26.8)	120 (24.0)	2.5	1.126
Graduate employability is always a salient element considered in your strategic documents	116 (23.2)	126 (25.2)	110 (22.0)	148 (29.6)	2.6	1.141
The definition of salient pedagogic, human and material resources to optimize graduate employability skills are strictly defined.	126 (25.2)	92 (18.4)	155 (31.0)	127 (25.4)	2.6	1.123
The strategic planning framework carries all aspects of your educational institution	106 (21.2)	192 (38.4)	136 (27.2)	66 (13.2)	2.4	0.953
There are regular control mechanisms to check against wastage of salient resources in order to ensure internal efficiency	120 (24.0)	153 (30.6)	129 (25.8)	98 (19.6)	2.5	1.056
Pedagogic seminars, conferences and workshops are always effectively carried out to make sure teachers acquire new teaching skills	70 (14.0)	124 (24.8)	183 (36.6)	123 (24.6)	2.8	0.988
Strategic plans are constantly carried out in order to effectively identify loopholes especially in relation to planning and implementation processes	46 (9.2)	147 (29.4)	204 (40.8)	103 (20.6)	2.8	0.892
Strategic plan revision is carried out national strategic papers enacted	121 (24.2)	119 (23.8)	118 (23.6)	142 (28.4)	2.6	1.141
MRA	1223 (22.2)	1573 (28.6)	1553 (28.2)	1151 (20.9)	2.5	0.092

From table 19 above the first reply talks about how national strategy documents are used in university strategic planning. 116 (23.2%) of the 500 respondents in the survey strongly disagreed, 152 (30.4%) disagreed, 109 (21.8%) agreed, and 123 (24.6%) agreed. This statement had a mean score of 2.5 and a standard deviation of 1.099. The second response relates to program reviews conducted every five years to revise course objectives, contents, and outcomes in every department of an institution. 142 respondents (28.4%) strongly disagreed, 166 respondents (33.2%) disagreed, 143 respondents (28.6%) agreed, and 49 respondents (9.8%) strongly agreed. The mean rating for this statement is 2.2, with a standard deviation of 0.962.

According to the survey, the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the strategic planning process is an inclusive process involving salient stakeholders. Specifically, 38% of respondents strongly agreed, 26.4% agreed, 25.2% had a neutral response, and only 10.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. The mean response for this measure was 2.3, indicating an overall agreement among the respondents. The standard deviation for this measure was 0.941, suggesting a moderate level of variability in the responses.

Furthermore, the data indicates that there is typically an in-depth diagnosis carried out at the start of the strategic planning process. The responses for this measure were evenly distributed. Approximately 26.8% of respondents strongly agreed and disagreed with this statement, while 22.4% disagreed and 24% agreed with it. The mean response for this measure was 2.5, indicating a slightly higher level of agreement. The standard deviation for this measure was 1.126, suggesting a higher level of variability in the responses compared to the previous measure.

Also, with the statement that graduate employability is always considered as a salient element in the organization's strategic documents. Most of the respondents (51.6%) were in total agreement with this statement. The mean value for this response is 2.6, suggesting a moderate agreement among the respondents. The standard deviation of 1.141 indicates some variability in the responses, with a range of scores from 1 to 4.

Data from survey questionnaire also reveals that most respondents were in total agreement with the fact that the definition of salient pedagogic, human, and material resources to optimize graduate employability skills, are strictly defined by the school. The mean value for this response is also 2.6 and the standard deviation is 1.123 indicating a moderate level of agreement.

Overall, these responses suggest that graduate employability is considered an important aspect in strategic planning, as indicated by the moderate agreement among respondents. The organization recognizes the need to define and allocate appropriate resources to enhance graduate employability skills.

Table 19 above also assesses the extent to which the strategic planning framework encompasses all aspects of an educational institution. The majority of respondents (38.4%) agreed that the framework carries all aspects. This was followed by 27.2% who somewhat agreed, 21.2% who strongly disagreed, and 13.2% who disagreed. The mean score for this measure was 2.4, indicating a moderate level of agreement among respondents. The standard deviation of 0.953 suggests that there was some variability in the responses.

Another measure in this study focuses on regular control mechanisms to prevent wastage of salient resources and ensure internal efficiency. The results show that 30.6% of respondents agreed with the existence of such control mechanisms, while 25.8% somewhat agreed. On the other hand, 24% strongly disagreed and 19.6% disagreed. The mean score for this measure was slightly higher at 2.5, indicating a slightly stronger agreement compared to the first measure. The standard deviation of 1.056 suggests a higher level of variability in responses compared to the first measure.

Overall, these data suggest that there is a moderate level of agreement regarding the strategic planning framework encompassing all aspects of an educational institution. However, there is a slightly stronger agreement regarding the presence of regular control mechanisms to prevent wastage of resources and ensure internal efficiency.

Data from Table above also showed respondents views in respect to the effectiveness of pedagogic seminars, conferences, and workshops in ensuring that teachers acquire new teaching skills. The mean score for this response was 2.8, indicating an overall agreement among the participants. The standard deviation of 0.988 suggests a moderate level of variability in the responses.

With regards to the constant implementation of strategic plans to identify loopholes, particularly in relation to planning and implementation processes. The mean score for respondents was 2.8, indicating a general agreement among the participants. The standard deviation was 0.892 suggests a slightly lower level of variability.

These data suggest that the majority of participants agree that pedagogic seminars, conferences, and workshops effectively contribute to teachers' acquisition of new teaching skills.

Additionally, there is agreement that strategic plans are consistently implemented to identify loopholes in planning and implementation processes.

In terms of strategic plan revision being carried out based on national strategic papers enacted, the data shows that 24.2% of respondents strongly disagreed, 23.8% disagreed, 23.6% agreed, and 28.4% strongly agreed with this statement. The mean value of 2.6 suggests a slightly higher agreement compared to the previous statement. However, the standard deviation of 1.141 indicates a higher level of variability in the responses compared to the first statement.

4.1.4 Responses on strategic planning with respect to program content

Table 20. Responses on Strategic Planning with Respect to Program Content

MEASURES	SD(f/%)	D(f/%)	A(f/%)	SA(f/%)	Mean	SD
The syllabuses covered are inspired from strategic plans especially at the levels of objectives, content and outcomes.	71 (14.2)	60 (12.0)	163 (32.6)	206 (41.2)	3.1	1.05
The teaching approaches , methods and materials are well defined in school strategic plans	85 (17.0)	56 (11.2)	163 (32.6)	196 (39.2)	3	1.088
Each teaching modules spells out a set or sets of practical skills to be acquired by graduates	67 (13.4)	70 (14.0)	174 (34.8)	189 (37.8)	3	1.027
The quality of lecturer is rightly defined by the plan especially in terms of possession of relevant skills	80 (16.0)	77 (14.4)	172 (34.4)	171 (34.2)	2.9	1.059
Course contents significantly articulate plan goals and objectives.	71 (14.2)	92 (18.4)	159 (31.8)	178 (35.6)	2.9	1.048
There is effectiveness in the teaching and learning processes carried out in your university	74 (14.8)	79 (15.8)	149 (29.8)	198 (39.6)	3	1.07
Lecturers carryout effective curriculum coverage using adequate methods and techniques	49 (9.8)	67 (13.4)	188 (37.6)	196 (39.2)	3.1	0.957

The various teaching strategies employed effectively enhance the acquisition of relevant skills	78 (15.6)	65 (13.0)	214 (42.8)	143 (28.6)	2.9	1.009
The various evaluation methods and techniques used by the school permits students to exhibit salient skills	72 (14.4)	76 (15.2)	194 (38.8)	158 (31.6)	2.9	1.015
MRA	647 (14.4)	642 (14.3)	1576 (35.0)	1635 (36.3)	2.97	0.039

In analyzing the data on responses regarding strategic planning with respect to program content (table 20), we can observe that the majority of respondents perceive a strong alignment between syllabuses and strategic plans, particularly in terms of objectives, content, and outcomes. The mean score for this measure is 3.1, indicating a generally positive perception among the respondents.

Specifically, 71 respondents (14.2%) rated this measure as Strongly Disagree, suggesting that they believe there is little to no alignment between syllabuses and strategic plans. On the other hand, 206 respondents (41.2%) rated it as Strongly Agree, indicating a high level of agreement that syllabuses are inspired by strategic plans.

Similarly, when considering teaching approaches, methods, and materials, the data reveals that these aspects are well defined in school strategic plans according to the majority of respondents. The mean score for this measure is 3.0, indicating a slightly lower but still positive perception among the respondents.

Out of the total number of respondents, 85 (17.0%) rated this measure as "Strongly Disagree," suggesting a lack of clarity or alignment between teaching approaches and strategic plans. Conversely, 196 respondents (39.2%) rated it as "Strongly Agree," indicating a strong agreement that teaching approaches are well defined in school strategic plans.

Overall, the data suggests that there is generally a positive perception among the respondents regarding the alignment between syllabuses and strategic plans, as well as the clarity of teaching approaches in relation to strategic plans.

4.1.5 Responses on strategic planning with respect to quality assurance and control mechanism

Table 21. Responses on Strategic Planning with Respect to Quality Assurance and Control Mechanism

Measures	SD(f/%)	D(f/%)	A(f/%)	SA(f/%)	Mean	SD
Quality assurance teams from the ministry do check on the quality of program contents students are studying	141 (28.2)	119 (23.8)	123 (24.6)	117 (23.4)	2.5	1.131
The quality of studies in your university can permit Cameroon to become an emergent economy by 2035	92 (18.4)	243 (48.6)	88 (17.6)	77 (15.4)	2.3	0.942
Pedagogic inspectors do visit your institution to check on the quality of pedagogic processes as well as tools and material	67 (13.4)	104 (20.8)	218 (43.6)	111 (22.2)	2.8	0.95
The inspectors are knowledgeable and do carry out effective inspection	66 (13.2)	99 (19.8)	180 (36.0)	155 (31.0)	2.9	1.007
Inspectors have been trained in quality assurance	63 (12.6)	88 (17.6)	194 (38.8)	155 (31.0)	2.9	0.989
Inspectors equally check for program competitiveness in relation to other universities	135 (27.0)	123 (24.6)	101 (20.2)	141 (28.2)	2.5	1.165
In the LMD system your university graduates are competitive in the Job market	80 (16.0)	77 (15.4)	172 (34.4)	171 (34.2)	2.9	1.059
During inspection, the teachers and administrators are equally assessed	141 (28.2)	119 (23.8)	123 (24.6)	117 (23.4)	2.5	1.131
MRA	552 (18.4)	610 (20.3)	988 (32.9)	850 (28.3)	2.66	0.087

These responses provide insights into the perceptions and opinions of the participants regarding strategic planning in quality assurance and control mechanisms (table 21). It is evident that

there is a range of opinions among the respondents, with varying degrees of agreement or disagreement.

In terms of the first measure, it can be observed that a significant proportion of respondents expressed agreement or strong agreement with the statement that quality assurance teams from the ministry do check on the quality of program contents students are studying. Specifically, 24.6% agreed and 23.4% strongly agreed with this statement, resulting in a mean score of 2.5.

Regarding the second measure, which assesses the perception of respondents about the potential impact of program quality on Cameroon's emergence as an economy by 2035; it is evident that a majority of participants expressed disagreement or strong disagreement with this statement. Notably, 48.6% disagreed and 18.4% strongly disagreed, resulting in a mean score of 2.3. These findings suggest that while there is a relatively positive perception of the quality assurance efforts by the ministry, there is less confidence in the ability of program quality to contribute to Cameroon's emergence as an economy by 2035.

Also, respondents indicated their level of agreement or disagreement among respondents regarding the presence and effectiveness of pedagogic inspectors in their institution. Based on the data, it can be observed that a significant proportion of respondents agree or strongly agree that pedagogic inspectors visit their institution to assess the quality of pedagogic processes, tools, and materials. Specifically, 43.6% of respondents agreed, while an additional 22.2% strongly agreed with this statement.

Regarding the knowledge and effectiveness of the inspectors, the data shows that a considerable number of respondents also agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. A total of 36.0% agreed, while 31.0% strongly agreed that the inspectors are knowledgeable and carry out effective inspections. The mean values for both measures indicate a moderate level of agreement among respondents, with a mean score of 2.8 for the first measure and 2.9 for the second measure. The standard deviations suggest a relatively low level of variability in the responses, with values of 0.95 and 1.007, respectively.

In summary, the data suggests that a majority of respondents perceive the presence of pedagogic inspectors in their institution and believe that these inspectors are knowledgeable and effective in carrying out their inspections.

For the measure "Inspectors have been trained in quality assurance," the responses were as follows: 63 respondents (12.6%) strongly disagreed, 88 respondents (17.6%) disagreed, 194

respondents (38.8%) agreed, and 155 respondents (31.0%) strongly agreed. The mean value for this measure was calculated as 2.9, with a standard deviation of 0.989.

Regarding the measure "Inspectors equally check for program competitiveness in relation to other universities," the responses were as follows: 135 respondents (27.0%) strongly disagreed, 123 respondents (24.6%) disagreed, 101 respondents (20.2%) agreed, and 141 respondents (28.2%) strongly agreed. The mean value for this measure was calculated as 2.5, with a standard deviation of 1.165. In conclusion, based on the provided data, it can be inferred that there is a significant proportion of respondents who agree or strongly agree that inspectors have been trained in quality assurance. However, there is a more diverse range of responses regarding whether inspectors equally check for program competitiveness in relation to other universities.

Another measure, which evaluates the competitiveness of university graduates in the job market within the LMD system revealed that 80 respondents strongly disagreed (16.0%), 77 disagreed (15.4%), 172 agreed (34.4%), and 171 strongly agreed (34.2%) that the job market is very competitive for university graduates. The mean score for this measure is 2.9, with a standard deviation of 1.059.

Also, in assessing teachers and administrators during inspection, 141 respondents strongly disagreed (28.2%), 119 disagreed (23.8%), 123 agreed (24.6%), and 117 (23.4%) strongly agreed that teachers are equally assessed during inspection. The mean score for this measure is 2.5, with a standard deviation of 1.131.

4.1.6. Responses on strategic planning with respect to graduates employability skills

Table 22. Respondents views on Strategic Planning With Respect To Graduates Employability Skills

MEASURES	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	SD
	(f/%)	(f/%)	(f/%)	(f/%)		
Relevant acquisition of soft and hard skills goes on in the various departments of your institution.	134 (26.8)	195 (39.0)	120 (24.0)	51 (10.2)	2.2	0.942
Students are very satiated with the skills they acquire in various discipline areas	116 (23.2)	106 (21.2)	143 (28.6)	135 (27.0)	2.6	1.117

Based on the implementation, student do constantly have Sustainable Access the job market	130 (26.0)	185 (37.0)	123 (24.6)	62 (12.4)	2.3	0.974
There is Graduate competitiveness in the job market	52 (10.4)	115 (23.0)	194 (38.8)	139 (27.8)	2.9	0.949
Internships and job placements are effective and enhance quality skills acquisition	48 (9.6)	91 (18.2)	266 (53.2)	95 (19.0)	2.9	0.851
Upon graduation, I had acquired substantial skills that facilitated my employment	124 (24.8)	211 (42.2)	115 (23.0)	50 (10.0)	2.2	0.92
From what I learned in school, I have the competences to create my own job.	110 (22.0)	103 (20.6)	170 (34.0)	117 (23.4)	2.6	1.074
My certificates are highly valued by the employers	134 (26.8)	127 (25.4)	110 (22.0)	129 (25.8)	2.5	1.142
I do not need to take another specific training to get a job	125 (25.0)	238 (47.6)	88 (17.6)	49 (9.8)	2.2	0.897
I have created a job and even employed others	131 (26.2)	224 (44.8)	100 (20.0)	45 (9.0)	2.2	0.9
I earn a salary that helps me to take care of myself and my family	108 (21.6)	134 (26.8)	118 (23.6)	140 (28.0)	2.6	1.113
The skills I learnt with help me to bring innovation in my job side.	39 (7.8)	102 (20.4)	220 (44.0)	139 (27.8)	3	0.888
I am able to solve inter-personal problems in my workplace	39 (7.8)	94 (18.8)	245 (49.0)	122 (24.4)	2.9	0.858
I receive funds for my business from the government and others	128 (25.6)	223 (44.6)	106 (21.2)	43 (8.6)	2.2	0.893
I have business opportunities that permit my business to grow	34 (6.8)	103 (20.6)	240 (48.0)	123 (24.6)	2.9	0.846
I have problem solving skills that permit me to solve problems in my job place	52 (10.4)	144 (28.8)	176 (35.2)	128 (25.6)	2.8	0.951

I have communication skills that permit me to communicate at ease with my office heads and collaborators	53 (10.6)	88 (17.6)	216 (43.2)	143 (28.6)	2.9	0.937
MRA	1557 (18.3)	2483 (29.2)	2750 (32.4)	1710 (20.1)	2.58	0.096

The data provided on table 22 pertains to the responses on strategic planning with respect to graduates' employability skills. The measures included in the data are the acquisition of relevant soft and hard skills in various departments of an institution, as well as the satisfaction level of students regarding the skills they acquire in different discipline areas.

For the measure of relevant acquisition of soft and hard skills 134 respondents (26.8%) strongly disagreed, 195 respondents (39.0%) disagreed, 120 respondents (24.0%) agreed, and 51 respondents (10.2%) strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure was calculated as 2.2, with a standard deviation of 0.942 which implies that most respondents were not in agreement that there is the acquisition of soft and hard skills in the various departments of their institution.

Regarding the satisfaction level of students with the skills they acquire in various discipline areas, 116 students (23.2%) strongly disagreed that they are satisfied, 106 students (21.2%) disagreed, 143 students (28.6%) agreed, and 135 students (27.0%) strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure is calculated as 2.6, with a standard deviation of 1.117.

These data indicate that there is a mixed perception among students regarding the acquisition of relevant soft and hard skills in various departments of the institution. While a significant number of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, there is also a considerable proportion that agreed or strongly agreed. Similarly, when it comes to the satisfaction level with the skills acquired in different discipline areas, the responses are also varied. A notable number of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, but slightly higher number of respondents was in overall agreement.

The first measure focuses on the sustainable access of students to the job market based on the implemented. The responses indicate that 26.0% of the participants strongly disagreed, 37.0% disagreed, 24.6% agreed, and 12.4% strongly agreed with the statement. The mean score for this measure is 2.3, with a standard deviation of 0.974.

The second measure examines the perception of graduate competitiveness in the job market. According to the data, 10.4% of respondents strongly disagreed, 23.0% disagreed,

38.8% agreed, and 27.8% strongly agreed with the statement. The mean score for this measure is 2.9, with a standard deviation of 0.949. These findings suggest that there is room for improvement in terms of graduates' sustainable access to the job market based on the implemented. While a significant portion of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement (36.8%), there is still a considerable percentage that disagreed or strongly disagreed (63%). This indicates that there may be challenges or gaps in providing graduates with sustainable access to employment opportunities.

On the other hand, when it comes to graduate competitiveness in the job market, a higher percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed (66.6%) compared to those who disagreed or strongly disagreed (33.4%). This suggests that there is a perception among participants that graduates possess competitive skills and qualities sought after by employers.

The survey also measured the effectiveness of internships and job placements. It was revealed that 48 respondents strongly disagreed, 91 disagreed, 266 agreed, and 95 strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure was 2.9, with a standard deviation of 0.851. From these responses, it can be inferred that a significant number of respondents (361 out of 500) agreed or strongly agreed that internships and job placements are effective in enhancing quality skills acquisition. This indicates that a majority of the participants recognized the value of such in developing employability skills.

Another measure, which focuses on the acquisition of substantial skills facilitating employment after graduation, showed 124 respondents strongly disagreed, 211 disagreed, 115 agreed, and 50 respondents who strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure was 2.2, with a standard deviation of 0.92. Based on these responses, it can be deduced that a considerable number of respondents (165 out of 500) agreed or strongly agreed that they had acquired substantial skills that facilitated their employment after graduation. This suggests that a significant portion of the participants believed their education had adequately prepared them for entering the workforce.

Respondents were also asked if they can create their own jobs from what they learned in school. Results from the surveys revealed that 110 respondents strongly disagreed, 103 disagreed, 170 agreed, and 117 strongly agreed to the statement that "From what they learned in school, they have the competences to create their own job". The mean score for this measure was 2.6, and the standard deviation was 1.074. Also, another statement was made by the researcher to investigate if the certificates of students are valued by the employers. Based on

findings, 134 respondents strongly disagreed, 127 disagreed, 110 agreed, and 129 strongly agreed. The mean score for this statement was 2.5, with a standard deviation of 1.142.

These findings suggest that there is a range of opinions among graduates regarding their competences to create their own job based on what they learned in school. While a significant number of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, there were also a considerable number who disagreed or strongly disagreed. Similarly, when it comes to the value of certificates in the eyes of employers, there is a mixed response. While a substantial number of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their certificates are highly valued by employers, there were also a considerable number who disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked if they took any specific training to get a job, 125 respondents (25.0%) strongly disagreed, 238 respondents (47.6%) disagreed, 88 respondents (17.6%) agreed, and 49 respondents (9.8%) strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure was 2.2, with a standard deviation of 0.897.

Also, an overwhelming majority 355 respondents (71%) were in total disagreement to the fact that they have created a business and even employed others. Specifically, 131 respondents (26.2%) strongly disagreed, 224 respondents (44.8%) disagreed, 100 respondents (20.0%) agreed, and 45 respondents (9.0%) strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure was also 2.2, with a standard deviation of 0.9. These data indicate that a significant portion of the respondents felt that they did not need to take another specific training to get a job. Additionally, a considerable number of respondents reported that they have created jobs and even employed others.

With regards to earning a salary that helps them to take care of themselves and their family, 108 respondents strongly disagreed, 134 respondents disagreed, 118 respondents agreed and 140 respondents strongly agreed. The mean value was 2.6 and the standard deviation was 1.113. From the data, it can be observed that a significant portion of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement regarding earning a salary that helps them take care of themselves and their families. This suggests that there may be concerns about the adequacy of salaries in relation to graduates' employability skills.

Again, most respondents 359 (71.8%) were in total agreement to the fact that, The skills they learn will help them to bring innovation in their job. However, 39(7.8%) strongly disagree, 102 and (20.4%) Disagree. The mean was 3 and Standard Deviation: 0.888. In this case, a majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the skills they learned would enable

them to bring innovation to their jobs. This indicates a positive perception among graduates regarding the relevance and applicability of their acquired skills in fostering innovation.

For the measure "I am able to solve interpersonal problems in my workplace," the responses were as follows: 39 respondents strongly disagreed, 94 disagreed, 245 agreed, and 122 strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure was 2.9, with a standard deviation of 0.858. Analyzing the data, it can be observed that a majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they are able to solve interpersonal problems in their workplace. This suggests that many graduates perceive themselves as competent in handling interpersonal challenges within their professional environments. However, it is worth noting that a significant number of respondents also disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that there is room for improvement in this area.

Regarding the measure "I receive funds for my business from the government and others," the responses were as follows: 128 respondents strongly disagreed, 223 disagreed, 106 agreed, and 43 strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure was 2.2, with a standard deviation of 0.893.

In terms of receiving funds for their businesses from the government and others, the data shows a more mixed response. While a substantial number of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating challenges in accessing funding, there were also a considerable number who agreed or strongly agreed. This suggests that some graduates have been successful in securing financial support for their entrepreneurial endeavors.

For the measure "I have business opportunities that permit my business to grow," the responses indicate that 34 respondents strongly disagreed, 103 disagreed, 240 agreed, and 123 strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure is 2.9, with a standard deviation of 0.846. This suggests that a majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they have business opportunities for their businesses to grow.

For the measure of problem-solving skills, the responses indicate that 52 respondents (10.4%) strongly disagreed, 144 respondents (28.8%) disagreed, 176 respondents (35.2%) agreed, and 128 respondents (25.6%) strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure is 2.8, with a standard deviation of 0.951.

Analyzing these results, it can be inferred that a significant portion of the respondents (64.8%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they possess problem-solving skills that enable them to solve problems in their workplace. On the other hand, a considerable number of

respondents (39.2%) expressed some level of disagreement or strong disagreement regarding their problem-solving abilities. These findings suggest that there is a relatively positive perception among the respondents regarding their business opportunities and problem-solving skills in relation to employability

Moving on to the measure of communication skills, the data shows that 53 respondents (10.6%) strongly disagreed, 88 respondents (17.6%) disagreed, 216 respondents (43.2%) agreed, and 143 respondents (28.6%) strongly agreed. The mean score for this measure is slightly higher at 2.9, with a standard deviation of 0.937.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that a majority of the respondents (71.8%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they possess communication skills that allow them to communicate effectively with their office heads and collaborators. However, a notable proportion of respondents (28.2%) expressed some level of disagreement or strong disagreement regarding their communication abilities.

4.2 Influential Statistics

We shall be looking at an analysis of primary and secondary factors.

4.2.1 Analysis of primary Factors

This section focuses on the analysis of the primary factors. These are the factors that enabled us to formulate our various research hypotheses. The regressions will enable us to check the relevance of the proposed models and to determine the portion of the variance explained by our different predictors. The five (05) research hypotheses formulated in the fourth chapter of this work are tested here in turn.

4.2.1.1. University's vision and mission statements and graduates' employability skills

We are now testing our first research hypothesis. It was formulated as follows: There is a relationship between the vision and mission of the university and the employability skills of graduates in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon. In other words, the more the university's vision and mission enable it to achieve its objectives, the more the participants feel they have Relevant acquisition of skills, Competitiveness of graduates in the labour market, sustainable access to the job market, graduates competitiveness, employability skills development, graduates employability skills.

Table 23. Correlation between University vision and mission and Graduates employability skills modalities

	University vision and mission statements	Relevant acquisition of skills	Sustainable access to the job market	Graduates competitiveness in the job market	Employability skills development	Graduates employability skills
UVM	1					
RAS	-,059	1				
SAJ	,002	,099*	1			
G CJ	,144**	,032	-,160**	1		
ESD	-,062	,002	,065	-,126**	1	
GES	,025	,604**	,529**	,437**	,372**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

Table 23 presents the correlation matrix obtained by cross-referencing the university's vision and mission with graduates' employability skills and its modalities (relevant acquisition of skills, sustainable access to the labour market, competitiveness of graduates on the labour market and development of employability skills). Overall, there was no correlation between the university's vision and mission and graduates' employability skills ($r=.025$; ns). Similarly, there was no correlation between the university's vision and mission and sustainable access to the labour market ($r=.002$; ns) or the development of employability skills ($r=-.062$; ns).

On the other hand, there are correlations between the competitiveness of graduates in the labour market and the university's vision and mission. In fact, the university's vision and mission is weakly and positively correlated with graduates' competitiveness on the labour market ($r=.144$; $p<.01$). This means that the better the university's vision and mission, the more competent individuals perceive themselves to be on the labour market. These results lead us to continue the regression analysis solely at the level of graduates' competitiveness on the labour market.

Table 24. Regression of university vision and mission statement and the modality of graduate competitiveness in job market

R=,144; R-two=,021; R-two is adjusted=,019; standard error of estimate=,416; F=10,567 ; P=,001

Model	Non-standard coefficients		Standard coefficients	T	Sig.
	A	Standard error	Bêta		
(Constant)	1,983	,169		11,741	,000
1 University vision and mission	,196	,060	,144	3,251	,001

a. Dependent variable: Graduates competitiveness in job market

Table 24 presents the regression of university vision and mission statements against graduates competitiveness in job market. It shows that the model is significant ($F=10,567$; $p=,001$) and explains 2.1% of variance in graduates competitiveness in job market ($R^2=,021$). This therefore indicates that university vision and mission is a significant predictor of graduates competitiveness in job market ($r=,144$; $p=,001$). This hypothesis is therefore partially validated.

4.2.1.2. University goals and objectives and graduates employability skills

Here we proceed to verify our second research hypothesis. It was formulated as follows; there is a relationship between the university goals and objectives and graduates employability skills of the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon. In other words, the clearer the goals and objectives of the university are, the more participants believe they have Relevant acquisition of skills, Relevant acquisition of skills, Graduates competitiveness in job market, Employability skills development graduates employability skills graduates employability skills.

Table 25. Correlation between university goals and objectives and the modalities of Graduates employability skills

	University goals and objectives	Relevant acquisition of skills	Sustainable access to the job market	Graduates competitiveness in job market	Employability skills development	Graduates employability skills
CIO	1					
RAS	-,113*	1				
SAJ	-,056	,099*	1			
G CJ	,071	,032	-,160**	1		
ESD	,002	,002	,065	-,126**	1	
GES	-,050	,604**	,529**	,437**	,372**	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

Table 25 presents the correlation matrix obtained by crossing university goals and objectives with graduate employability skills and the modality of (relevant acquisition of skills, sustainable access to job market, graduates competitiveness in the job market and employability skills development). In a general manner there is the absence of correlation between university goals and objectives and graduates employability skills. ($r = -,050$; ns). In the same manner there is no correlation between the university goals and objectives and sustainable access to the job market ($r = -,056$; ns), graduates competitiveness in job market ($r = ,071$; ns), employability skills development ($r = -,002$; ns).

On the other hand, there were correlations between relevant acquisition of skills and university goals and objectives. In fact, university goals and objectives is weakly and negatively correlated with relevant acquisition of skills ($r = -,113$; $p < .,05$). This means that the clearer the university's goals and objectives, the more individuals perceive that they have relevant acquisition of skills. These results lead us to follow up with regression analysis only at the level of relevant acquisition of skills.

Table 26. Regression of university goal and objectives and relevant acquisition of skills
R=.133; R-two=.013; Adjusted R-two=.011; Standard error of estimate=.399; F=6.451;
P=.011

Modele	Non-standardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	T	Sig.
	A	Erreur standard			
1 (Constante)	2,815	,113		24,935	,000
CIO	-,104	,041	-,113	-2,540	,011

a. Dependent variable: Relevant acquisition of skills

Table 26 presents the regression of university goals and objectives against relevant acquisition of skills. It shows that the model is significant ($F=6.451$; $p=.011$) and explains 1.3% of the variance in relevant acquisition of skills ($R^2=.013$). This therefore indicate that university goals and objectives is a significant predictor of relevant acquisition of skills ($r=-.113$; $p=.011$). This hypothesis is therefore partially validated.

4.2.1.3. Strategic planning process and graduates employability skills

We are now testing our third research hypothesis. It was formulated as follows: There is a relationship between the strategic planning process and the graduate's employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon. In other words, the more the strategic planning process is implemented at the university, the more the participants feel they have relevant acquisition of skills, sustainable access to the job market, graduates competitiveness in job market, employability skills development which are indicators of graduates employability skills.

Table 27. Correlation between Strategic planning process and graduates employability skills

	Strategic planning process	Relevant acquisition of skills	Sustainable access to the job market	Graduates competitiveness in job market	Employability skills development	Graduate employability skills
SPP	1					
RAS	-,031	1				
SAJ	,005	,099*	1			
GCJ	-,008	,032	-,160**	1		
ESD	-,099*	,002	,065	-,126**	1	
GES	-,066	,604**	,529**	,437**	,372**	1

** . The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

* . The correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

Table 27 presents the correlation matrix obtained by crossing strategic planning process with graduate employability skills and its modalities (relevant acquisition of skills, sustainable access to job market, graduates competitiveness in job market and employability skills development). Overall, there was no correlation between the strategic planning process and graduates employability skills ($r=-.066$; ns). Similarly, there is no correlation between strategic planning process and relevant acquisition of skills ($r=-.031$; ns), sustainable access to the job market ($r=-.005$; ns), graduates competitiveness in job market ($r=-.008$; ns).

On the other hand, we observed correlations between employability skills development and strategic planning process. The strategic planning process was weakly and negatively correlated with relevant acquisition of skills ($r=-.099$; $p<.05$). This means that the less clear the strategic planning process, the more individuals perceive that they have employability skills development. These results lead us to follow up with regression analysis only at the employability skills development level.

Table 28. Regression of strategic planning process and employability skills development*Model on RH3*

R=,099; R-two=,010; R-two adjusted=,008; Standard error of estimate =,508; F=4,887; P=,028

Model	Non-standard coefficients		Standard	T	Sig.
	A	Standard error	Bêta		
(Constant)	3,248	,180		18,086	,000
1 Strategic planning process	-,159	,072	-,099	-2,211	,028

a. Dependent variable: Employability skills development

Table 28 presents the regression of strategic planning process and employability skills development. It shows that the model is significant ($F=4.887$; $p=.028$) and explains 1% of the variance in employability skills development ($R^2=.010$). This therefore implies that the strategic planning process is a significant predictor of employability skills development ($r=-.099$; $p=.028$). This hypothesis is therefore partially validated.

4.2.1.4. Program Content and graduates employability skills

We are now testing our fourth research hypothesis. It was formulated as follows: There is a relationship between the program content and graduate's employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon. In other words, the more the program content is adapted to the job market, the more the participants feel they have relevant acquisition of skills, sustainable access to the job market, graduates competitiveness in job market, employability skills development which are indicators of graduates employability skills.

Table 29: Correlation between program content and graduates employability skills

	Program content	Relevant acquisition of skills	Sustainable access to the job market	Graduates competitiveness in job market	Employability skills development	Graduate employability skills
PC	1					
RAS	.072	1				
SAJ	,026	,099*	1			
GCJ	-,149**	,032	-,160**	1		
ESD	.072	,002	,065	-,126**	1	
GES	-.078	,604**	,529**	,437**	,372**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

Table 29 presents the correlation matrix obtained by cross-referencing program content with graduate employability skills and its modalities (relevant acquisition of skills, sustainable access to job market, graduates competitiveness in job market and employability skills development). Overall, it shows an absence of correlation between strategic planning process and graduate employability skills ($r=-.078$; ns). Similarly, there is no correlation between program content and relevant acquisition of skills ($r=-.072$; ns), sustainable access to the job market ($r=.026$; ns), employability skills development ($r=-.072$; ns).

On the other hand, we observe correlations between graduates competitiveness in job market and program content. Indeed, the program content is weakly and negatively correlated with graduates competitiveness in job market ($r=-.149$; $p<.,01$). This means that the more the content of the program corresponds to the job market, the more individuals perceive that they are competitive in the job market. These results lead us to follow up with regression analysis only at the level of graduates competitiveness in the job market.

Table 30. Regression table of the program content and employability skills development
R=,149 ; R-two=,022; R-two adjusted=,020 ; Standard error of estimate =,416 ;
F=11,343 ; P=,001

Model	Non-standard coefficients		Standard coefficients	T	Sig.
	A	Standard error	Bêta		
(Constant)	3,040	,153		19,880	,000
1 Program content	-,174	,052	-,149	-3,368	,001

a. Dependent variable: Graduates competitiveness in the job market

Table 30 presents the regression of program content against graduates' competitiveness in the job market. It shows that the model is significant ($F=11,343$; $p=,001$) and explains 2.2% of the variance in graduates competitiveness in the job market ($r^2=,022$). This however indicates that the program content is a significant predictor of graduates competitiveness in the job market ($r=-,149$; $p=,001$). This hypothesis is therefore partially validated.

4.2.1.5. Quality assurance and control mechanism and graduates employability skills

We proceed here with the verification of our fifth hypothesis. It is formulated as: There is a relationship between quality assurance and control mechanisms and the graduate's employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon. In other words, the more quality assurance and control mechanisms is good, the more the graduates estimate that they have employability skills which are expressed in relevant acquisition of skills, sustainable access to the job market, graduates competitiveness in job the market, employability skills development and graduates employability skills as a whole.

Table 31. Correlation between quality assurance and control mechanism and graduates employability skills

	quality assurance and control mechanism	Relevant acquisition of skills	Sustainable access to the job market	Graduates competitiveness in job market	Employability skills development	Graduates employability skills
QA	1					
RAS	-,137**	1				
SAJ	-,113*	,099*	1			
G CJ	-,056	,032	-,160**	1		
ESD	-,028	,002	,065	-,126**	1	
GES	-,176**	,604**	,529**	,437**	,372**	1

** . La corrélation est significative au niveau 0.01 (bilatéral).

* . La corrélation est significative au niveau 0.05 (bilatéral).

Table 31 presents the correlation matrix obtained by crossing quality assurance and control mechanisms with graduate employability skills and its modalities (relevant acquisition of skills, sustainable access to job market, graduates competitiveness in job market and employability skills development). Overall, it reveals weak negative correlations between quality assurance and control mechanism and graduate employability skills ($r=-.176$; $p<.01$). This means that, the more there is quality assurance and control mechanism, the more participants feel they have graduate employability skills. Similarly, there were weak, negative correlations between quality assurance and control mechanism and relevant acquisition of skills ($r=-.137$; $p<.01$) and sustainable access to the job market ($r=-.113$; $p<.05$).

On the other hand, there is no correlation between graduates competitiveness in job market and quality assurance and control mechanism ($r=-.056$; ns). Similarly, there was no correlation between employability skills development and quality assurance and control mechanism ($r=-.028$; ns). These results lead us to follow up with regression analysis at the level of graduates employability skills, relevant acquisition of skills and sustainable access to the job market.

Table 32. Regression of quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduates employability skills

R=,137; R-two=,019; R-two adjusted=,017; standard error of estimate=,505; F=6,457 ; P=,002

Model	Non-standard coefficients		Standard coefficients	T	Sig.
	A	Standard error	Bêta		
(Constant)	2,884	,115		25,011	,000
1 Quality assurance and control mechanism	-,134	,043	-,137	-3,090	,002

a. Dependent variable: Relevant acquisition of skills

Table 32 presents the regression of the quality assurance and control mechanism against Relevant acquisition of skills. It shows that the model is significant ($F=6.457$; $p=.002$) and explains 1.9% of the variance in Relevant acquisition of skills ($R^2=.019$). This therefore implies that the quality assurance and control mechanism is a significant predictor of Relevant acquisition of skills ($r=.137$; $p=.002$).

Table 33. Regression of quality assurance and control mechanisms and Sustainable access to the job market

R=,113 ; R-two=,013; R-two adjusted=,011 ; Standard error of estimate =,398 ; F=9,435 ; P=,011

Model	Nonstandard coefficients		Standard coefficients	T	Sig.
	A	Standard error	Bêta		
(Constant)	2,707	,146		18,482	,000
1 Quality assurance and control mechanism	-,140	,055	-,113	-2,537	,011

a. dependent variables: Sustainable access to the job market

Table 33 presents the regression of the quality assurance and control mechanism against Sustainable access to the job market. It shows that the model is significant ($F=9.435$; $p=.011$)

and explains 1.3% of the variance in Sustainable access to the job market ($R^2=.013$). This shows that the quality assurance and control mechanism is a significant predictor of Sustainable access to the job market ($r=-,113$; $p=,011$).

Table 34. Regression of quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduate's employability skills

R=,176 ; R-two=,031; R-two adjusted=,029 ; 398 Standard error of estimate; F=15,969 ; P=,000

Model	Non-standard coefficients		Standard coefficients	T	Sig.
	A	Erreur standard	Bêta		
(Constant)	2,793	,063		44,067	,000
Quality assurance and control mechanism	-,095	,024	-,176	-3,996	,000

a. dependent variables: Graduates employability skills

Table 34 presents the regression of the quality assurance and control mechanism against Graduates employability skills. It shows that the model is significant ($F=15.960$; $p=.000$) and explains 3.1% of the variance in Graduates employability skills ($R^2=.031$). This therefore means that the quality assurance and control mechanism is a significant predictor of Graduates employability skills ($r=-,176$; $p=,000$).

This aforementioned presentation took into consideration three aspects: analysis of secondary factors, responses of participants based on items on the questionnaires and analysis of main factors. In the first section (analysis of secondary factors), we carried out a descriptive analysis, extracting the means and standard deviations between age, gender and level of education with the graduates employability skills on the one hand, and its different modalities on the other. The results show that gender, age and level of education have an impact on graduates' employability skills. In the second section (analysis of the main factors), we used correlations and regressions to test our hypotheses. It emerges that the various hypotheses are partially validated. Possible explanations for these results are presented in the next chapter.

4.2.2 Analysis of secondary factors

Secondary factors refer to factors that are not hypothesised in the research. However, they do not only provide detailed information on the characteristics of the participants, but also show their influence on the phenomenon under study. These factors will be relating to employability skills of graduates. In this section we present the variations in the socio-demographic factors and employability skills of graduates as a function of the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants (age, gender, level of education).

Where;

RAS stands for relevant acquisition of skills

SAJ represents for sustainable access to the job market

GCJ indicates for graduates' competitiveness in the job market

ESD stands for employability skills development

GES represents graduates employability skills

4.3.1. Sex and graduates employability skills

Table 35. Sex and graduates employability skills

	SEX	N	Average	Standard deviation	T	P
RAS	M	269	2,55	,401	1,184	,237
	F	231	2,51	,401		
SAJ	M	269	2,39	,509	2,583	,010
	F	231	2,28	,501		
GCJ	M	269	2,55	,402	1,015	,311
	F	231	2,51	,440		
ESD	M	269	2,83	,554	-1,301	,194
	F	231	2,89	,454		
GES	M	269	2,56	,236	2,054	,040
	F	231	2,52	,230		

Table 35 shows the variations in the modalities of graduates' employability skills by gender. It appears that participants as a whole feel they have employability skills ($M > 2$). In general, women felt they had more employability skills ($M = 2.56$; $SD = .236$) than male participants ($M = 2.52$; $SD = .230$). This difference was significant at ($t(1, 498) = 2.054$; $p = .040$). This trend was also observed at the SAJ level. Female participants ($M = 2.39$; $SD = .509$) felt they had more

SAJ than male participants ($M=2.28$; $SD=.501$). This difference is significant ($t(1, 498)=2.583$; $p=.010$).

However, in terms of RAS, female participants ($M=2.55$; $SD=.401$) seemed to feel they had more RAS than male participants ($M=2.51$; $SD=.401$). This difference was not significant ($t(1, 498)=1.184$; $p=.237$). This means that female and male students have the same skills with regard to RAS. Similarly, in terms of GCJ, female participants ($M=2.55$; $SD=.402$) appear to rate themselves as having more GCJ compared to male participants ($M=2.51$; $SD=.440$). This difference is not equally significant ($t(1, 498)=1.015$; $p=.311$). This means that male and female students have the same skills with regard to GCJ. In addition, in terms of ESD, male participants ($M=2.89$; $SD=.454$) seemed to feel they had more ESD than female participants ($M=2.83$; $SD=.554$). This difference was not significant ($t(1, 498)=-1.301$; $p=.194$). This means that female and male students have the same skills with regard to ESD.

4.2.2.2. Age and graduates employability skills

Table 36. Age and graduates employability skills

	Age	N	Average	Standard deviation	F	P
RAS	15-20	442	2,52	,399	1,077	,358
	21-25	44	2,61	,428		
	26-30	8	2,68	,183		
	31 and above	6	2,57	,528		
SAJ	15-20	442	2,33	,508	1,939	,122
	21-25	44	2,47	,469		
	26-30	8	2,03	,574		
	31 and above	6	2,29	,600		
GCJ	15-20	442	2,53	,422	,243	,866
	21-25	44	2,52	,382		
	26-30	8	2,48	,534		
	31 and above	6	2,40	,438		
ESD	15-20	442	2,85	,506	3,235	,022
	21-25	44	3,02	,515		
	26-30	8	2,50	,535		
	31 and above	6	2,67	,471		
GES	15-20	442	2,54	,219	2,955	,032
	21-25	44	2,62	,218		
	26-30	8	2,47	,239		
	31 and above	6	2,43	,307		

Table 36 shows the variations in the terms and conditions of graduates' missions and employability skills according to age group. It appears that participants as a whole feel they have employability skills ($M > 2$). In general, participants aged between 21 and 25 ($M=2.62$; $SD=.218$) appear to feel they have more employability skills than participants aged between 15 and 20 ($M=2.54$; $SD=.219$) and more than participants aged between 26 and 30 ($M=2.47$; $SD=.239$) and those aged 31 and over ($M=2.43$; $SD=.307$). This difference is significant ($F(2, 497) = 2.955$; $p=.032$). This trend was also observed in Employability skills development. Participants aged between 21 and 25 ($M=3.02$; $SD=.515$) seem to feel they have more ESD than participants aged between 15 and 20 ($M=2.85$; $SD=.506$) and more than participants aged 31 and over ($M=2.67$; $SD=.471$) and those aged between 26 and 30 ($M=2.50$; $SD=.535$). This difference was significant ($F(2, 497) = 3.235$; $p=.022$).

On the other hand, in terms of RAS, participants aged 26 to 30 ($M=2.68$; $SD=.183$) seem to feel they have more RAS than participants aged 21 to 25 ($M=2.61$; $SD=.428$) and more than participants aged 31 and over ($M=2.57$; $SD=.528$) and those aged 15 to 20 ($M=2.52$; $SD=.399$). This difference was not significant ($F(2, 497) = 1.077$; $p=.358$). This means that male and female students have the same skills with regard to RAS. Similarly, in terms of RAS, participants aged 26 to 30 ($M= 2.47$; $SD=.469$) seem to feel they have more RAS than participants aged 15 to 20 ($M=2.33$; $SD=.508$) and those aged 31 and over ($M=2.29$; $SD=.600$) and more than participants aged 26 to 30 ($M=2.03$; $SD=.574$). This difference was not equally significant ($F(2, 497) = 1.939$; $p=.122$). This means that male and female students have the same skills with regard to SAJ. Furthermore, in terms of GCJ, participants aged between 15 and 20 ($M=2.53$; $SD=.422$) and those aged between 21 and 25 ($M=2.52$; $SD=.382$) seem to feel they have more GCJ than participants aged between 26 and 30 ($M=2.48$; $SD=.534$) and more than those aged 31 and over ($M=2.40$; $SD=.438$). This difference was not significant ($F(2, 497) = .243$; $p=.866$). This means that male and female students have the same GES.

4.3.3. Level of education and graduates employability skills

Table 37. Level of education and graduates employability skills

	L. EDU	N	Average	Standard deviation	F	P
RAS	'A' Level	146	2,52	,370	1,458	,225
	BA Hons	154	2,49	,389		
	Masters degree	136	2,55	,443		
	PhD	62	2,61	,398		
SAJ	'A' Level	146	2,28	,544	9,440	,000
	BA Hons	154	2,22	,430		
	Masters degree	136	2,43	,497		
	PhD	62	2,57	,523		
G CJ	'A' Level	146	2,54	,420	,298	,827
	BA Hons	154	2,52	,447		
	Masters degree	136	2,55	,386		
	PhD	62	2,50	,430		
ESD	'A' Level	146	2,86	,544	,760	,517
	BA Hons	154	2,81	,492		
	Masters degree	136	2,88	,525		
	PhD	62	2,91	,436		
GES	'A' Level	146	2,53	,219	6,936	,000
	BA Hons	154	2,49	,198		
	Masters degree	136	2,58	,245		
	PhD	62	2,62	,197		

Table 37 shows the variations in the terms and conditions of graduates' missions and employability skills according to level of education. It appears that participants as a whole feel they have employability skills ($M > 2$). Generally speaking, PhD participants ($M = 2.62$;

SD=.197) seem to feel they have more employability skills than Masters degree (M=2.58; SD=.245) and 'A' Level participants (M=2.53; SD=.219) and more than PhD participants (M=2.49; SD=.198). This difference is significant ($F(2, 497) = 6.936; p = .000$). This trend was also observed at the SAJ level. Participants with a PhD (M=2.57; SD=.523) seem to feel they have more SAJ than participants with a Master's degree (M=2.43; SD=.497) and more than 'A' Level participants with a (M=2.28; SD=.544) and those with a PhD (M=2.22; SD=.430). This difference is significant ($F(2, 497) = 9.440; p = .000$).

On the other hand, in terms of RAS, participants with a PhD (M=2.61; SD=.398) seem to feel they have more RAS than participants with a Master's degree (M=2.55; SD=.443) and those with an 'A' Level (M=2.52; SD=.370) and more than participants with a PhD (M=2.49; SD=.389). This difference was not significant ($F(2, 498) = 1.458; p = .225$). This means that male and female students have the same skills with regard to RAS. Similarly, in terms of GES, participants with a Master's degree (M=2.55; SD=.386) seem to feel they have more GES than participants with a bachelor's degree (M=2.54; SD=.420) and those with a bachelor's degree (M=2.52; SD=.447) and more than participants who are doing a PhD (M=2.50; SD=.430). This difference is not also significant ($F(2, 497) = .298; p = .827$). This means that male and female students have the same skills with regard to GES. Furthermore, in terms of GES, participants who have a PhD (M=2.91; SD=.436) seem to feel they have more GES than participants who have a Master's degree (M=2.88; SD=.525) and those with a bachelor's degree (M=1.86; SD=.544) and more than participants who have obtained their bachelor's degree (M=2.81; SD=.492). This difference was not significant ($F(2, 497) = -.760; p = .517$). This means that male and female students have the same GES skills.

In this first section devoted to the analysis of secondary factors, the aim was not only to present the descriptive analysis resulting from the cross-tabulation between secondary factors such as gender, age and level of education and the modalities of graduates' employability skills, but also to highlight the effect of these factors on these modalities. Overall, therefore, we can conclude that gender, age and level of education have an impact on graduates' employability skills.

4.3. Verification of research hypotheses

This section deals with the verification of hypotheses, as a matter of fact, the Pearson correlation coefficient and regression analysis were used to test research hypotheses. We will assess the predictive nature of strategic planning and graduates employability skills below.

4.3.1. The university's vision and mission statements and graduate's employability skills (RH1)

Based on the correlation coefficient on RH1, we observe that $r = .025$ indicates there is a significant relationship between the university vision and mission statements and graduates employability skills. The level of significance is 0.00 thus lesser than 0.05 which is the alpha and the standard error margin. The correlation coefficient of .025 indicates that the link is positive and moderate. Since the $p\text{-value} < 0.05$, we conclude that graduates employability skills can be successfully predicted by the university visions and mission statements. This explains why the first research hypothesis (RH1) claims that there is a relationship between university vision and mission statements and graduates employability skills. However, estimates from the regression analysis on graduates competitiveness in the job market shows that R ($r = .144$; $p < .01$) and $R^2 = .21$. There is a positive and weak correlation between RH1 and graduates competitiveness therefore the RH1 is significantly validated. So strategic vision and mission statements of the university of Yaounde 1 and Buea is a significant predictor of graduates employability skills.

4.3.2 The university's goal and objectives and graduate's employability skills (RH2)

Based on the correlation coefficient on RH2, we observe that $r = -.50$ indicates that there is a negative relationship between the university goals and objectives and graduate's employability skills. The level of significance is 0.00 thus lesser than 0.05 which is the alpha and the standard error margin. The correlation coefficient of $-.50$ indicates that the link is negative and moderate. Since the $p\text{-value} < 0.05$, we conclude that graduates employability skills can be successfully predicted by the university goals and objectives. This explains why the second research hypothesis (RH2) claims that there is a relationship between university vision and mission statements and graduates employability skills. However estimates from the regression analyses on relevant acquisition shows that R ($r = .113$; $p = .011$) and $R^2 = .013$ shows that UVG has a positive relation with GES there is a weak and positive correlation between RH2 and RAS, Therefore the RH2 is partially validated. So, the goals and objectives of the university of Yaounde 1 and Buea is a significant predictor of graduates' employability skills.

4.3.3 The strategic planning process and graduate's employability skills (RH3)

Based on the correlation coefficient on RH3, we observe that $r = -.66$ indicate that there is a negative or inverse relationship between the strategic planning process and graduates employability skills. The level of significance is 0.00 thus lesser than 0.05 which is the alpha

and the standard error margin. The correlation coefficient of -0.66 indicates that the link is negative and strong. Since the $p\text{-value} < 0.05$, we conclude that graduates employability skills can be successfully predicted by the strategic planning process. This explains why the third research hypothesis (RH3) claims that there is a relationship between strategic planning process and graduates employability skills. However, estimates from the regression analyses on employability skills development shows that R ($r = 0.099$; $p = 0.28$) and $R^2 = 0.010$ there is a strong and positive correlation between RH3 and graduates employability skills development. Therefore, the RH3 is partially validated. So, the strategic planning process of the university of Yaounde 1 and Buea is a significant predictor of graduates' employability skills.

4.3.4 The strategic program content and graduate's employability skills (RH4)

Based on the correlation coefficient on RH4, we observe that $r = -0.078$ indicate that there is a negative or inverse relationship between the program content and graduates employability skills. The level of significance is 0.00 thus lesser than 0.05 which is the alpha and the standard error margin. The correlation coefficient of -0.078 indicates that the link is negative and strong. Since the $p\text{-value} < 0.05$, we conclude that graduates employability skills can be successfully predicted by the university program content. This explains why the fourth research hypothesis (RH4) claims that there is a relationship between the program content and graduates employability skills. However, estimates from the regression analyses on employability skills development shows that R ($r = 0.149$; $p = 0.001$) and $R^2 = 0.022$ there is a strong and positive correlation between RH4 and graduates ESD, therefore the RH4 is partially validated. So, the program content of the university of Yaounde 1 and Buea is a significant predictor of graduates' employability skills.

4.3.5 Quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduate's employability skills (RH5)

Based on the correlation coefficient on RH5, we observe that $r = -0.076$ where $p < 0.01$ indicates that there is a negative or inverse relationship between **quality** assurance and control mechanisms and graduates employability skills. The level of significance is 0.00 thus lesser than 0.05 which is the alpha and the standard error margin. The correlation coefficient of -0.076 indicates that the link is negative and strong. Since the $p\text{-value} < 0.05$, we conclude that graduates employability skills can be successfully predicted by the university quality assurance and control mechanisms. But the regression model shows on GES shows an R^2 of $.31$ This explains why the fifth research hypothesis (RH5) claims that there is a relationship between

quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduates' employability skills. However, estimates from the regression analyses shows that $R=176$; $p=.000$ and $R^2=.31$ there is a strong and positive correlation between RH5 and graduates employability skills, therefore the RH5 is partially validated. So, the quality assurance and control mechanisms of the university of Yaounde 1 and Buea is a significant predictor of graduates' employability skills.

Summarily, the conclusions on the findings on the analyses of the main factors or inferencial statistics would be seen on the recapitulative table of findings below.

❖ A summary of findings

Table 38. Recapitulative table of findings

Hypotheses	Alpha	PC	CC	Level of significance	p-values of R	CC	Percentage (%)	Conclusion
RH1		.025	21		<.01	21	25	Ha partially validated & Ho rejected
RH2	0,05	.050	13	0,00	.11	13	50	Ha partially validate & Ho rejected
RH3		-.66	10		0.28	10	66	Ha partially validated & Ho rejected
RH4		-.078	22		0.001	22	78	Ha partially validated & Ho rejected
RH5		-.176	31		.000	31	76	Ha partially validated & Ho rejected

4.4. Reliability and Convergent validity

To determine the reliability of the latent variable in the PLS-SEM model the Cronbach alpha and composite reliability scores as well as factor loading of each item were used. A factor load score of >0.71 for each item was considered. Table 39, shows the factor loading of items with factor loading score >0.7 indicating that the factor (latent variable) extracts sufficient

variance from that item hence significant correlation between that item and the factor. A Cronbach and composite score of > 0.7 was considered a reliable latent variable in predicting the model. From Table 39, all latent variables constructs were reliable hence best fit the PLS-SEM. Convergent validity was determine using the Average variance extracted (AVE). An AVE value of >0.50 of a latent variable was considered valid and correctly fit the PLS-SEM model. As seen in table 39, all latent variables have >0.5 except for strategic mission and vision with AVE score of 0.495. however, will be included in the model considering the fact that other conditions were met and the value is only slightly lower 0.5.

Table 39. Reliability and convergent validity of variables

Latent variables	CF	CA	AVE	Measurements items¹	Factor loading
Strategic vision and mission	0.757	0.832	0.495	SVM1	0.808
				SVM2	0.841
				SVM3	0.552
				SVM4	0.691
				SVM5	0.540
Strategic Goal and objectives	0.851	0.825	0.641	SGO	0.757
				SGO	0.849
				SGO	0.836
				SGO	0.777
Strategic Planning process	0.887	0.824	0.577	SPP	0.759
				SPP	0.753
				SPP	0.817
				SPP	0.832
				SPP	0.617
Program content	0.858	0.827	0.641	PC	0.773
				PC	0.862
				PC	0.793
				PC	0.771
Quality assurance and control method				QACM	0.753

				QACM	0.850
	0.859	0.843	0.607	QACM	0.767
				QACM	0.757
				QACM	0.764
					0.753
Graduate employability skills				GES	0.881
				GES	0.917
	0.95	0.902	0.715	GES	0.893
				GES	0.812
				GES	0.710

4.4.1 Divergent Validity

Divergent or discriminant validity (DV) confirms whether constructs that should not have any relationship, indeed are not related to each other. This was conducted by positioning all squared-correlations of all latent variables in a matrix and compare with their average variance extracted (AVE), such as in Table 40 Values in the matrix represents squared correlations among latent variables. A higher squared root AVE value than the column-wise correlations indicates divergent validity signifying that the average variance explained by the latent variable itself is higher than that the average variance with another variable. This indicated proof of independence amongst the latent variables or a high explanatory power. Based on the matrix all the latent variables are valid and best fit the PLS-SEM.

Table 40. Divergent Validity using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

	Graduate employability skills	Program content	Quality assurance and control	Strategic goals and objective	Strategic mission and vision	Strategic planning and process
Graduate employability skills	0.846					
Program content	0.18	0.801				
Quality assurance and control	0.253	0.503	0.779			
Strategic goals and objectives	0.095	0.517	0.44	0.806		
Strategic mission and vision	0.282	0.237	0.318	0.509	0.704	
Strategic planning and process	0.222	0.564	0.634	0.53	0.342	0.759

Source: Gawali S. Skewness and kurtosis: Quick Guide. Analytic Vidhya ,2023.

4.4.2. Test for model fit

➤ Normality checks

The normality of the latent variables was assessed using the skewness and the univariate normality test (Shapiro-wilk test). Normality of data is important, as the estimation method in PL-SEM is dependent on the normality of data. Shows that all latent variables showed skewness (asymmetry) closed to zero indicating symmetry of the data. A Shapiro-Wilk test performed showed evidence of normality of SVM, SGO,SPP, PC,QAC and GES latent variables with p-value >0.05 as shown in Table 41

Table 41. Pearson's second coefficient of Skewness

Latent variables	Skewness ¹	Univariate normality Shapiro test ²	Comment
SVM	0.31	0.12	Normal
SGO	-0.46	0.002	Not normal
SPP	0.17	0.16	Normal
PC	0.42	0.23	Normal
QACM	-0.38	0.03	Not normal
GES	0.11	0.34	Normal

¹. (Skewness of 0 equals perfect symmetry, -0.5 to 0.5 equals partial symmetry and -1 to 1 indicates highly skewed data). ² p-values shown. The null hypothesis of Shapiro-Wilk is accepted at $p > 0.05$ indicating normality.

➤ **A Proposed Model Strategy for the Enhancement of Graduate Employability Skills in the Universities of Yaounde I and Buea, in Cameroon**

In Cameroon, the employability of university graduates remains a significant challenge, with many students struggling to transition from education to employment. This problem is compounded by a mismatch between academic training and the skills required by the job market. To address this gap, universities like Buea and Yaounde I can adopt a strategic model that integrates curriculum reform, industry collaboration, internships, entrepreneurship development, career services, and continuous feedback. This model aims to enhance graduate employability by ensuring that students are well-equipped with the relevant skills and practical experience required by employers.

❖ **The C-PIECE Strategy for Graduate Employability Enhancement**

1. Curriculum Reform (C)

Objective: Align academic programs with labor market needs and industry standards.

Actions:

- **Curriculum Review and Updating:** Universities should work with industry experts to annually review academic curricula to ensure they reflect emerging market trends and skill demands, particularly in high-growth sectors such as ICT, engineering, and healthcare (Billett, 2016).
- **Incorporation of Employability Skills:** Universities should embed employability-related modules into all degree programs. These modules should focus on both hard

skills (e.g., technical knowledge, IT proficiency) and soft skills (e.g., communication, leadership, and teamwork) (Jackson, pp.569-582, 2015).

- **Industry Feedback on Curriculum:** Establish advisory boards made up of industry representatives to ensure curricula are regularly updated to meet changing market requirements. For example, the University of Yaounde I could develop a specialized course in data analytics and digital marketing, reflecting the growing demand for these skills in the global economy.

2. Partnerships with Industry (P)

Objective: Strengthen collaboration between the universities and various industries to improve graduate employability.

Actions:

- **Strategic Collaborations with the Private Sector:** Create long-term partnerships with local businesses, multinational companies, and government agencies to provide students with access to internships, work placements, and real-world projects (St-Jean, pp. 515-527, 2012).
- **Joint Research Initiatives:** Facilitate collaborations between faculty members and industry to promote applied research and development projects that benefit both academia and the private sector.
- **Industry-Specific Training:** Partner with industries to co-develop specialized certificate programs in high-demand sectors like agriculture, energy, and healthcare, offering students opportunities to gain relevant qualifications. For example, the University of Buea could partner with major telecom companies like MTN or Orange Cameroon to offer specialized courses and internships in telecommunication engineering and mobile app development.

3. Internships and Work-Integrated Learning (I)

Objective: Provide students with hands-on experience in real work environments to enhance their practical skills.

Actions:

- **Mandatory Internship Programs:** Make internships a compulsory component of all undergraduate programs. Ensure these internships are relevant to students' fields of study and contribute to their academic credits (Billett, 2016).

- **Establish Internship Networks:** Create an online platform that connects students with local and international companies offering internship opportunities.
- **Community-Based Projects:** Encourage students to participate in community development projects, especially those related to sustainable development, agriculture, and health, to enhance their employability while contributing to societal needs. For example, the University of Yaounde I could partner with Camwater and Camtel to provide engineering students with internships in water supply and telecommunications projects.

4. Entrepreneurship and Innovation Development (E)

Objective: Promote entrepreneurial thinking and self-employment opportunities for graduates.

Actions:

- **Establish Entrepreneurial Hubs:** Create innovation and entrepreneurship centers within both universities that offer support services such as mentoring, funding, and incubation to students interested in launching start-ups (Parker, 2014).
- **Entrepreneurship Education:** Include entrepreneurship as a core course across all disciplines, with a focus on practical, real-world business problems and solutions.
- **Access to Funding:** Establish partnerships with financial institutions and development organizations to offer seed funding and grants for student-led businesses.

Example: The University of Buea could launch an annual business plan competition, with seed funding and mentorship for the best student start-ups, focusing on innovation in areas like technology and agribusiness.

5. Career Services and Soft Skills Training (C)

Objective: Enhance graduates' employability by equipping them with essential career skills and industry insights.

Actions:

- **Comprehensive Career Support:** Develop a Career Development Centre that offers counseling, job placement services, resume building, interview coaching, and job search support (McQuaid & Lindsay, pp. 197-219, 2005).
- **Workshops on Soft Skills:** Offer regular workshops and seminars on key skills such as teamwork, leadership, communication, and time management.

- **Career Fairs and Networking Events:** Organize annual job fairs, networking events, and industry panels where students can meet potential employers and discuss career opportunities. For example, the University of Yaounde I could organize a bi-annual career fair, where multinational companies like Dangote Group and Schneider Electric meet with students to offer internships, jobs, and career advice.

6. Evaluation and Continuous Feedback Mechanism (E)

Objective: Continuously assess the effectiveness of employability programs and adapt based on feedback.

Actions:

- **Graduate Tracking:** Implement a graduate tracer study to track the employment outcomes of alumni and assess their satisfaction with the education they received (Jackson, pp. 569-582, 2015).
- **Employer Surveys:** Regularly survey employers to gather feedback on the performance of recent graduates and identify areas where further improvements are needed.
- **Curriculum and Program Evaluation:** Continuously refine programs based on alumni and employer feedback, as well as labor market trends. For example, the University of Buea could implement a monthly employer feedback system, ensuring that the university stays connected with industry needs and can quickly adjust its offerings.

Table 42. Implementation Timeline

Phases	Activities	Timeline
Phase 1	Needs assessment and industry consultation	Months 1- 3
Phase 2	Curriculum reform and soft skills integration	Months 3-6
Phase 3	Internship and work-integrated learning rollout	Months 6-9
Phase 4	Launch of entrepreneurship hubs and career services	Months 9-12
Phase 5	Evaluation and feedback collection	ongoing

4.4.3. Ordinal logistics regression model

4.4.3.1. Model fit.

To determine the effect of the explanatory variable in the model, a model fit test approach is used to determine whether the model improves our ability to predict the outcome. We do this by comparing a model without any explanatory variables (the baseline or ‘Intercept Only’ model) against the model with all the explanatory variables (the Final model). We compare the final model against the baseline to see whether it has significantly improved the model using a chi-square test. Table 43 shows difference between intercept model --2 Log Likelihood (107) and the final model (24). The statistically significant chi-square statistic ($p < .0005$) indicates that the Final model gives a significant improvement over the baseline intercept-only model. This tells you that the model gives better predictions.

Table 43. Model fit determination.

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-square	df	Sig.
Intercept only (outcome variable)	107			
Final (explanatory variables)	87	312	5	0.00

The explanatory variables at the moment contain just gender. We compare the final model against the baseline to see whether it has significantly improved the fit to the data.

1. Goodness of fit test

This test helps verify whether our model fits the data well. A chi-square p-value of > 0.05 shows that the data and the model predictions are similar.

Table 44. Goodness of fit test

	Chi-square	df	Sig.
Pearson	31	5	0.007
Deviance	29	5	0.008

4.4.3.2 Pseudo R-square statistics

The pseudo R-square statistics test the proportion in percentage of the changes explained on the outcome variable (graduate employability skills) by the explanatory variables. In table 45, the Pseudo R-square statistics (Nagelkerke) shows that 39.2% of the variations observed in the outcome variables can be explained by the explanatory variables.

Table 45. Pseudo R-square statistics

Pseudo R-Square	
Cox and Snell	0.560
Nagelkerke	0.392
McFadden	0.281

4.4.3.3 Parameter estimates

Parameters are essential for interpreting what our model is talking about the real-world processes we are studying. It quantifies relationship in the data, it also helps test hypotheses and allow us to make predictions or generalize findings.

Table 46. Parameter Model estimate

		Estimate	SE	Wald	df	Sig.	95% CI	
						Lower		upper
Threshold	GE=1	-2.0	0.508	16.906	1	.000	-3.086	-
	(Intercept)							1.094
	GE=2	-0.088	0.497	3.182	1	.074	-1.862	.088
	GE=3	0.98	0.498	3.909	1	.048	.008	1.959
Location	SVM	0.26	.080	1.401	1	.003	.062	.31
	GO	0.095	.074	.121	1	.01	.0119	.171
	PC	0.056	.082	.472	1	.492	-.104	.217
	SPP	0.093	.079	1.456	1	.002	.024	.059
	QA	-0.091	.088	1.068	1	.301	-.263	.082

Synthesis

This chapter sets out to present and analyze the data which were obtained with the questionnaire constructed in relation to the variables of study. Tables and models were used to give a descriptive representation of results. The univariate analysis of variances was used to assess the effect the background characteristics on graduates employability skills. The verification of

research hypotheses was done with Pearson correlation coefficient; and regression models was used to predict graduates employability skills in an inferential manner. The next chapter will be devoted to a detail discussion of these findings in relation to the research hypotheses and research questions explored in this study.

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of the study was to bridge a gap in the current literature by empirically investigating the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills in selected state universities in Cameroon. Five research hypotheses were formulated together with research questions to guide the investigations. The questionnaire scales were used as the main research instruments and the data collected were analysed using the SPSS, Pearson correlation coefficient, the PLS-SEM, and the regression analysis. After the verification of the hypotheses, all our research hypotheses were confirmed. This chapter begins with a summary of the study and a discussion of the findings concerning the research hypotheses. This will be followed by the implications, recommendations and contributions of the study. Finally, the limitations, problems encountered and suggestions for further research would be looked at.

5.1 Summary of the findings

The general objective of this study was to examine the relationship between strategic planning and graduate's employability skills in some state universities (Yaounde I and Buea) in Cameroon. The study was out to investigate the relationship between the university vision and mission statements, the university goals and objectives, the strategic planning process, the program content and quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduates' employability skills in a descriptive survey research design. To achieve this, we used strategic planning models like; The Bryson strategic planning model, the SWOT model, and the adaptive model as well as employability skills models like; the graduate employability or USEM model, the magic model of employability and the UKCES employability model among others. Theoretical frameworks like; the strategic planning theory, goal-setting theory, the stakeholder's theory as well as employability theories like; the human capital theory, the theory of employability and the social capital theory permitted us to understand the variables under study. Based on previous empirical research, we generated a main research hypothesis and five research hypotheses. The general research hypothesis was formulated as follows: There is a relationship between strategic planning and employability skills in some state universities in Cameroon. The operationalization of this main research hypothesis has yielded the following specific hypotheses:

- ❖ There is a relationship between the university's vision and mission statements and graduate employability skills in some state universities in Cameroon
- ❖ There is a link between university goals and objectives and graduates' employability skills in some state universities in Cameroon

- ❖ There is a connection between the planning process and graduates' employability skills in some state universities in Cameroon
- ❖ There is a linkage between the planning of the content program and graduate employability skills in some state universities in Cameroon
- ❖ There is a correlation between quality assurance and control mechanisms on graduates' employability skills in some state universities in Cameroon

Overall, from the results obtained from the verification of our research hypotheses, it can be said that all our research hypotheses were partially validated.

5.2. Discussion of findings

This section looks at a discussion of our findings relating to each research hypothesis. An interpretation as well as a comparison will follow to see if our results are convergent with previous studies. If that is not the case, we will give some possible explanations. Our analysis will focus on our five research hypotheses and will end with a brief conclusion. This study sought to explore the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills. More specifically, it was hypothesized that there is a relationship between strategic planning and graduates employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon. For this study, the results indicated a significant positive correlation between strategic planning and graduates employability skills, therefore the null hypothesis is not supported because there is a partially significant relationship between our two variables of study meaning that the variability of graduates' employability skills is significantly explained by the technic of strategic planning just as we examined in chapter four.

This suggests that as universities engage more effectively in strategic planning, the employability of their graduates improve. This implies that when institutions align curricula to labour market needs, invest in career services and soft skills development, foster partnerships with industry and implement long term educational goals, graduates tend to leave with skills that are more relevant and valued by employers. This relationship underscores the importance of institutional foresight, data driven planning and stakeholder engagement in higher education reforms in Cameroon.

5.2.1 There is a relationship between university's vision and mission statements and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon (RH1)

Based on the correlation coefficient on RH1, we observe that the $r = .025$ this indicate there is a significant relationship between the university vision and mission statements and graduates employability skills. So strategic vision and mission statements of the university of Yaounde I and Buea is a significant predictor of graduate employability skills.

The institution's mission and aims are established by the normative pillar. In order to prepare students for the workforce, the workplace, and lifelong learning, universities must enhance their knowledge, abilities, and personal qualities through learning. The cultural-cognitive system, which guarantees that when people collaborate, they develop strong bonds and partnerships, serves as the third pillar. This is crucial because students interact with institutions in a way that promotes knowledge, abilities, and characteristics for socioeconomic development (Tomlinson, 2016). Even when institutions adjust to changes in the external environment, such as those in government education policy, it is still important to take into account their mission, and vision and programs because these factors are crucial to their operations

Higher education institutions (HEI) all over the world have made graduate employability (GE) and employment outcomes (EO) a strategic focus because it is generally assumed that employers want to hire graduates who can function well in today's erratic, ambiguous, sophisticated, and uncertain world (Römgens et al., 2020). Graduate employment rates are becoming more important in university rankings, government funding, industry quality standards, and university promotional strategies (Sin et al., 2019). On the other hand, the rate of graduate employment is a fundamental indicator of how equipped university graduates are for success in the workforce (Bridgstock & Jackson, 2019; Donald, Baruch & Ashleigh, 2019; Healy, Hammer & McIlveen, 2022). It is rather essential to make a distinction between employment as a result, which relates to graduates' capacity to meet their professional and employment goals, and employability as an antecedent, which refers to a range of personal attributes and environmental circumstances (Clarke, 2018; Donald, Baruch & Ashleigh, 2019; Monteiro et al., 2020). It is undeniable fact that HEI is under the obligation to produce employable graduates, with graduate employability being the predominant paradigm at the level of developing graduates' abilities, competencies, and attributes which is a global corporate mandate for HEI (Nataa Lackovi, 2019).

Additionally, studies by van der Heijden (2021) reinforces governments' and employers' appeals to universities to boost graduate career opportunities by fostering both general and discipline-specific employability skills. This argument is supported by Fresnoza (2021), who urges educational institutions to highlight graduates' transferrable cognitive and socio-behavioral talents, including critical thinking and problem-solving, as well as teamwork, resilience, self-confidence, and self-expression.

A substantial number of respondents feel inspired by the mission statement, which motivates them to work harder and contribute to nation-building. These findings were similar to those of Smith et al (2015) who studied the awareness and influence of vision and mission statements on undergraduate students, faculty and staff from multiple universities and discovered that most students were aware of the university's vision and mission statements. The study also revealed that students who were aware of these statements were more likely to feel a sense of belonging and engagement within their university community.

It was also deduced from the findings that the studied provide the possibility for students to meet the stated vision and mission, as the majority of the respondents were in support of this fact. These findings were in accordance with the findings of Smith et al. (2010), who examined the perceptions of students, faculty, and administrators regarding the alignment between vision and mission statements and academic and professional expectations. The researchers found that there was a moderate level of agreement among respondents regarding the fit between these statements and expectations. However, when it came to assessing the effectiveness of in achieving the stated vision and mission, there was a lower level of agreement. This study supports the notion that respondents tend to perceive a stronger alignment between vision and mission statements and expectations than program effectiveness. These results are also similar to those in another study by Johnson (2015), who investigated the congruence between vision and mission statements and student outcomes in higher education institutions.

With regards to respondents' Understanding of the Mission Statement of the University and its implications on students, teachers, and society at large, the mean value for this measure is 2.6, indicating a moderate level of agreement overall. Also, this study assessed respondents' perceptions of whether the university consistently meets its mission statement. According to the data, most respondents disagreed. These findings suggest that there may be room for improvement in terms of understanding and consistently meeting the mission statement of the university. These results matched those conducted by Smith et al. (2010) which explored the

alignment between the mission statement and organizational practices in higher education institutions. The researchers found that while there was generally a high level of agreement in understanding the mission statement, there was a significant gap in its consistent implementation. This finding aligns with the results mentioned earlier, indicating a lower level of agreement regarding consistent implementation.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Thompson (2015) investigated the impact of strategic planning on employee engagement. The findings revealed that employees who perceived a strong alignment between institutional procedures and the mission statement were more likely to be engaged in their work. This finding reinforces the idea that respondents' positive perception of strategic planning, as reflected in the current study, may be attributed to their recognition of this alignment.

Some previous studies have also found that organizations with a clear mission statement and effective strategic planning tend to have higher employee satisfaction and performance. The alignment between institutional procedures and the mission statement not only helps employees understand the organization's goals and priorities but also ensures that their work is purposeful and meaningful. Therefore, it can be concluded that strategic planning, when properly implemented and aligned with organizational goals, is crucial for fostering a positive work environment and driving overall success.

Researchers have found that organizations with a clear mission statement and effective strategic planning tend to have higher employee satisfaction and performance. Aligning institutional procedures and the mission statement helps employees understand the organization's goals and priorities, ensuring that their work is purposeful and meaningful. Strategic planning, when properly implemented and aligned with organizational goals, is crucial for fostering a positive work environment and driving overall success.

In summary, the findings reveal that a considerable percentage of respondents are aware of and agree with the alignment between institutional procedures and the mission statement is consistent with previous research conducted by Smith et al. (2010), Johnson and Brown (2012), and Thompson (2015). These studies provide additional support for the notion that strategic planning when aligned with organizational goals, can have positive outcomes.

Based on the findings above the results reveal that, there is a partially significant relationship between vision and mission statements (UVM) and graduates employability skills. We therefore conclude that vision and mission statements, is significantly related to graduates

employability skills. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and as such accept the research hypothesis (H_a) which states that, there is a relationship between vision and mission statements and graduates employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea.

5.2.2 There is a relationship between the university's goal and objectives and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon (RH2)

Based on the correlation coefficient on RH2, we observe that the $r = -.50$ this indicates that there is a negative relationship between the university goals and objectives and graduates employability skills. This explains why the second research hypothesis (RH1) claims that there is a relationship between university goals and objectives and graduates employability skills. Therefore, the RH2 is partially validated. So, the goals and objectives of the university of Yaounde I and Buea is a significant predictor of graduates employability skills. The relation between the RH2 does not give for all modalities of GES except for RAS.

Although national policies emphasize employability, their inconsistent implementation at the university level remains a challenge. This underlines the need for a more robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. In contrast, ensuring effective training for learners was identified as a departmental objective with higher agreement among employees. The mean score for this objective was 3, indicating a moderate level of agreement. The standard deviation ($SD = 0.964$) suggests a relatively narrower range of responses compared to constantly changing objectives.

Several studies have explored the impact of constantly changing objectives on employee perceptions and organizational outcomes. One such study by Smith et al. (2015) examined the effects of goal instability on employee motivation and job satisfaction. The findings revealed that employees who experienced frequent changes in objectives reported lower levels of motivation and job satisfaction compared to those with stable goals. This aligns with the results of the current survey, suggesting that employees perceive constantly changing objectives as disruptive.

Another study by Johnson and Brown (2018) focused on the relationship between goal clarity and employee performance. The researchers found that when employees were uncertain about their objectives due to frequent changes, their performance suffered. This supports the notion that constantly changing objectives can be perceived as ineffective in achieving organizational goals, as indicated by the survey results.

Furthermore, a meta-analysis conducted by Thompson et al. (2020) examined the impact of goal instability on various organizational outcomes across multiple studies. The analysis revealed a consistent negative relationship between goal instability and employee satisfaction, commitment, and performance. These findings provide additional support for the survey results, indicating that a lack of consensus among employees regarding constantly changing objectives is not uncommon.

Overall, the data suggests that there is a relatively high level of agreement among the participants regarding the objective of improving student learning outcomes for employability. This is further supported by the fact that the majority of respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the objective. However, it is worth noting that there is still a significant portion of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed, indicating some level of support for the objective. The moderate level of variability in the responses suggests that while there is a consensus among the participants, there are still differing opinions within that consensus.

Furthermore, it is important to establish clear communication channels and provide regular updates to ensure that all participants are on the same page. This can help alleviate any confusion or misunderstandings that may arise during the process. Moreover, seeking input and feedback from the participants can also contribute to a sense of ownership and commitment towards the objective. By actively involving them in the decision-making process and valuing their perspectives, a more collaborative and inclusive environment can be fostered. Ultimately, this approach can lead to a higher level of agreement and a more effective achievement of the objective.

Based on the findings above the results reveal that, there is partially significant relationship between university goals and objectives (UGO) and graduates employability skills. We therefore conclude that UGO, is significantly related to graduates employability skills. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and as such accept the research hypothesis (H_a) which states that, there is a relationship between UGO and graduates employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea.

5.2.3 There is a relationship between strategic planning process and graduates' employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon (RH3)

Based on the correlation coefficient on RH3, we observe that the $r = -.66$ this indicate that there is a negative or inverse relationship between the strategic planning process and graduates employability skills. Therefore, the RH3 is partially validated. So, the strategic

planning process of the university of Yaounde 1 and Buea is a significant predictor of graduates employability skills.

Universities that have integrated employability-focused strategic plans tend to produce graduates with a better balance of technical and soft skills, reinforcing the importance of strategic alignment (Bologna Process, 2017).

As a matter of fact, the GES model that gives well with the SPP is ESD. According to Blackmore et al, (2016 p.26). What graduate employability skills do employers value? They affirm that many graduate attributes that are regarded as beneficial by employers. This section will evaluate the question of which skills are most valued, in specific contexts and with the use of case studies. There are numerous studies and a variety of research relating to both generic employability skills and context-specific knowledge. The topic of STEM knowledge and commercial awareness were most notable in terms of the latter. This section will reference a wider approach to global competencies. This is an emergent area in terms of what employers seek in graduates, and therefore is worthy of recognition within this report. This section then examines strategies that countries across the world have pursued in supporting the development of employability skills that are most valued.

However, as Hogarth et al. (2007, p.10) highlight it is important to remember, “graduate skills cannot be disassociated from the personal qualities and attributes of the graduate”. The experience of individuals within many institutions produces a multitude of results. As the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) acknowledge in a recent white paper “a range of basic and generic skills are becoming increasingly valuable as a result of changes in labour-market demands and the related uncertainty about individual career trajectories” (2011, p.29). The OECD is representative of 34 countries and therefore is a significant force in an evaluation of employer demands. Therefore, it can be broadly observed that generic or soft skills and an individuals’ aptitude remain a significant part of employers’ assessment of employability potential in graduates.

As a matter of emphasis, according to the survey, the majority of respondents were in total acceptance of the fact that the strategic planning process is an inclusive process involving salient stakeholders. Indicated by a mean of 2.3. This study is similar to that of Thompson and Smith (2015) who investigated the relationship between strategic planning and organizational performance in their educational institutions and found out those institutions with well-developed strategic plans tended to have a higher level of performance compared to those

without such plans. Also, the data indicates that the majority of the respondents were in slight agreement with the fact that there is typically an in-depth diagnosis carried out at the start of the strategic planning process represented by a mean of 2.5.

Whilst the Careers and Placements team play a pivotal role in supporting the development and implementation of this strategy, developing the employability of our students is an institutional responsibility. The Employability Strategy Group will maintain an oversight of the strategy and the Employability Operations Group, supported by the three Strategic Project Managers (based in Careers and Placements) will provide ongoing guardianship of the key objectives. Both these groups make good use of excellent collaborative partnership working across the University and externally. The Key Objectives within the strategy aim to differentiate the University of York from other institutions, whilst mirroring developments in recruitment and assessment. They aim to support other strategies within the University (Learning & Teaching Strategy 2015-2020) by providing opportunities for students to form global networks, develop their resilience and their self-awareness and to build their confidence to enable them to be successful in their chosen career or field of further study. The provision and support for students in this strategy will be accessible to undergraduate and postgraduate students from home and abroad.

Again, most of the respondents were in total agreement with the fact that graduate employability is always considered a salient element in the organization's strategic documents, which is indicated by a mean of 2.6. Finally, data from the survey questionnaire also reveals that most respondents were in total agreement with the fact that the definition of salient pedagogic, human, and material resources to optimize graduate employability skills is strictly defined by the school. Indicated by a mean value of 2.6. This study is different from that of Johnson et al. (2018), who examined the perspectives of university faculty members on graduate employability. The findings suggest that faculty members had varying opinions on the importance of employability skills in higher education. While some believed that universities should prioritize skill development, others argued that academic knowledge should take precedence.

Overall, these responses suggest that graduate employability is considered an important aspect of strategic planning, as indicated by the moderate agreement among respondents. The organization recognizes the need to define and allocate appropriate resources to enhance graduate employability skills.

Furthermore, in terms of strategic plan revision being carried out based on national strategic papers enacted, the data shows that most of the respondents were in total acceptance of this fact, represented by a mean of 2.6. These results were similar to those of Johnson and Brown (2012), who examined the impact of conferences on teachers' professional growth. Their findings revealed that attending conferences and having strategic plan revisions carried out based on national strategic papers provided teachers with valuable opportunities to learn about innovative teaching strategies, collaborate with peers, and gain insights into their practices. Furthermore, the data indicated that teachers who had attended conferences and participated in strategic plan revisions reported a higher level of job satisfaction and motivation. This suggests that these professional development opportunities not only enhance teachers' skills and knowledge but also contribute to their overall job performance and well-being. These findings highlight the importance of aligning educational practices with national strategic papers and investing in teachers' professional growth to improve the quality of education.

By aligning educational practices with national strategic papers, schools and districts can ensure that teachers are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively educate students. Investing in teachers' professional growth through conferences and strategic plan revisions not only enhances their job performance but also contributes to their overall job satisfaction and motivation. These findings emphasize the need for continuous professional development opportunities to improve the quality of education provided to students. For example, a school district may align their curriculum with the national strategic paper on STEM education. This would involve providing teachers with training and resources to effectively teach science, technology, engineering, and math subjects. Additionally, the district may invest in sending teachers to conferences focused on STEM education and regularly review and revise their strategic plan to ensure it aligns with current best practices. This comprehensive approach would not only enhance teachers' ability to educate students in STEM subjects but also increase their job satisfaction and motivation in delivering high-quality STEM education.

However, a detailed counterexample to this approach could be a school district that implements all the suggested strategies but fails to address the lack of diversity and inclusion in their STEM. Despite providing training, resources, and conferences for teachers, if the district does not actively work towards creating an inclusive learning environment that welcomes students from all backgrounds, it may perpetuate existing disparities in STEM education. This counterexample highlights the importance of not only focusing on teacher

training and resources but also on creating an inclusive and diverse learning environment in order to truly address disparities in STEM education.

The majority agreed that the strategic planning framework encompasses all aspects of an educational institution, with regular control mechanisms to prevent the wastage of resources and ensure internal efficiency. The effectiveness of pedagogic seminars, conferences, and workshops in ensuring teachers acquire new teaching skills was also agreed upon. Consistent implementation of strategic plans to identify loopholes in planning and implementation processes was also agreed upon.

Based on the findings above the results reveal that, there is a partially significant relationship between the strategic planning process (SPP) and graduates employability skills. We therefore conclude that SPP, is partially significantly related to graduates employability skills. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and as such accept the research hypothesis (H_a) which states that, there is a relationship between SPP and graduates employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea.

5.2.4 There is a relationship between the program content and graduates' employability skills (RH4) in the university of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon

Based on the correlation coefficient on RH4, we observe that the $r = -.078$ this indicate that there is a negative or inverse relationship between the program content and graduates employability skills. So, the program content of the university of Yaounde 1 and Buea is a significant predictor of graduates employability skills. The PC does not work for all four variables of GES but for ESD. This is unexpected and may suggests that the program content of these universities is misaligned with labour market needs. Possibly it is too theoretical, outdated not responsive to the current industry demands.

Pedagogy and practice from advances countries like the UK tends to emerge as a forerunner in terms of both quality and the quantity of examples cited as best practice. Therefore, a brief introduction to the UK context is provided by way of introduction to understanding the contemporary thinking around curriculum development and the pedagogy of employability skills. The landscape of higher education is undergoing a process of rapid change in the UK. Much like its transatlantic counterpart in the U.S.A., privatisation of HE is a significant trend in the United Kingdom. Whilst the U.S.A is further down the path of 'free market' education with the costs being shouldered by individuals as opposed to the state, UK policy-making indicates a change from public to private financing in HE (Amsler, 2011, p.62).

Since the publication of the “Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance” (commonly known as “The Browne Review”) in October 2010, there has been an emergence of increasingly urgent and frequent discourses around employment prospects across all disciplinary areas of Higher Education.

The term ‘bolt-on’ studies is used to represent activities that sit outside of specific academic modules, but still relate to the curriculum. Bolt-on studies include extra-curricular opportunities, workshops, or optional courses that students are able to take. As such, bolt-on studies are often not a part of the essential credit bearing modules in a degree program. Diamond et al. (2008, p.19) discuss the prevalence of ‘bolton’ studies and the ‘core competencies’ that are targeted in this curricular approach. Their report as a whole provides a comprehensive study of global employability provision with an extensive focus on curricular integration and approaches. With specific reference to ‘bolt-on’ studies beyond curricular modules, their report entitled “Global Graduates into Global Leaders”, identifies a trend in “universities offer[ing] ‘bolt-on’ employability modules as part of a degree program, focused on developing ‘core competencies’ in areas such as negotiating and influencing, communication, team-working or presentation skills” (Diamond et al, 2008, p.19)

“Education to employment” (2012) commissioned by the McKinsey Center for Government in the U.S.A is one such source of literature and research into the benefits of embedded provision. The report asserts that “sector-based collaborations are critical not only to create widespread industry recognition for the curriculum but also to enable delivery of training in a more cost-effective manner” (Mourshed et al., 2012, p.88). The report maps out a suggested route of best practice for embedded employability skills, stating that:

To be employed is to be at risk. To be employable is to be secure. “Hawkins in Why is employability important? “(University of Edinburgh, 2011). The relationship between academics and industry is complex. This section of the review examines the literature that has tried to connect academic thinking with employment outside of the HEI through the use of pedagogy. As Tibby (2012) argues in her “Report on Teaching and Learning Summit” for the HEA, “The general consensus was that models for addressing employability are often presented without the theoretical roots and underlying value positions exposed and explored. This can disengage academics from the debate”. As such, literature in this area of employability increasingly attempts to engage pedagogy with practice.

The best way to define a curriculum that is relevant in both achieving educational outcomes and employer requirements is for employers and providers to work together to figure out exactly what the curriculum should cover. While many providers gather input and feedback from employers, there are two keys to success: First, there is the need to be intensive collaboration; second, both sides need to define their requirements at a very nitty-gritty level.” (Mourshed et al., 2012, p.66).

Diamond et al. (2008) also conclude that a solution to a deficit in employability skills in HE graduates is to turn to the curriculum itself. The focus of their “Global Graduates” report is largely upon internationalisation and global job markets, and therefore it is not surprising that it argues that “there is great potential to bring in global or international aspects to any discipline, whether engineering, science, humanities or business-related subjects” (2008, p. 19). Bridgstock (2008, p.28) contributes with the observation that “the extent to which the careers service is integrated, or detached, from faculty activities has a direct impact on the way in which joint work can take place with lecturers and the way in which they are able to influence the creation of employability modules within the curriculum”.

This close alignment between teaching approaches and strategic plans contributed to their improved employability skills upon graduation. While the study highlights the benefits of aligning teaching approaches with strategic plans, it fails to consider other factors that may have influenced the students' improved employability skills, such as extracurricular activities or individual motivation. However, a counterexample to this could be a study conducted at another high school where the strategic plans did not outline specific teaching approaches. Instead, the teachers had autonomy in choosing their own methods based on their individual preferences and experiences. As a result, students reported confusion and inconsistency in their learning experiences, leading to a lack of clear understanding of expectations and inadequate preparation for future challenges. This lack of alignment between teaching approaches and strategic plans may have hindered their employability skills upon graduation. Respondents also express a positive perception regarding the alignment between syllabuses and strategic plans as well as the clarity of teaching approaches in relation to strategic planning.

Similarly, in the World Bank's Africa Development Indicators (cited in Dabiri 2013), the number of university graduates almost tripled between 1999 and 2009 in Sub-Saharan Africa, from 1.6 million to 4.9 million. The explosion in graduates' number has left supply outstripping demand, creating increase unemployment rates amongst graduate population and forcing graduates to move into non-graduate roles (Foley and Brinkle 2011). In Mafumbate et

al (2014) view, higher education institutions are producing more and more graduates every year most of whom cannot find jobs in their respective fields of qualification and frustration and desolation, they turn to take up any kind of job they can find.

The majority of respondents perceive a strong alignment between syllabuses and strategic plans, particularly in terms of objectives, content, and outcomes. They agree that syllabuses are inspired by strategic plans and that teaching approaches, methods, and materials are well-defined in school strategic plans. This positive perception suggests that educational institutions are effectively preparing students for the future job market and providing quality education. Strategic planning is crucial in educational institutions, as it impacts students' success beyond graduation. A study at a local high school found that aligning teaching approaches with strategic plans improved students' employability skills.

According to ILO (2012), job mismatch among university graduates is associated with the poor-quality education due to outdated curricula and teaching methods. ILO noted that the curricula and teaching methods of most universities in the developing countries have remained largely unchanged over the years and employers are increasingly demanding strong thinking, communication and entrepreneurial skills which are absent in the curricula. Employers require that job seekers should have both strong academic background and practical labour skills that will enable them to quickly adapt to work place environment (ILO 2012).

Similarly, Paadi (2014) pointed out that university graduates mostly have textbook theoretical knowledge that is not supported by sufficient practical work experience and in countries where the economy is not growing at a speed that allows for massive skilled job creation projects, graduates find themselves faced with extended periods of unemployment and mismatch jobs. Lack of practical skills and workplace experience means employers are reluctant to employ such graduates. The adoption of technological more advanced production processes has caused employers to prefer more skilled and experienced graduates to those with theoretical and general knowledge (Pauw et al. 2008). Unfortunately, these life skills are rarely taught as part of the higher education curriculum in most universities in the developing countries. According to EIU report for the British Council (2014), career fairs, industrial talks and internship programmes are rarely implemented in most universities.

For example, Robst (2007) noted that, the highest rate of mismatch is found among liberal arts graduates and lowest among graduates from health-related fields. This is because health related fields are said to provide students with occupational specific skills which reduces

their likelihood to search for jobs outside their field of study (Wolber, 2003). Education-job mismatch among graduates can also be attributed to job search constraints (MCGuinness, 2006). Individuals might acquire the right skills, jobs related to their skills might be available yet such individual still find themselves in mismatched jobs. This can stem from information imperfection about job vacancies and labour market needs (Bassey and Atan, 2012). (Graham and Graham 2013) noted that, job-mismatch may result from limited information about the choice of jobs available, that is, job seekers being unable to go to where jobs that meet their qualifications and skill level are found. According to (Beck and BeckGernsheim, 2001), individuals are mismatched because they have not put in enough effort to search for the appropriate jobs which suit their qualifications.

Based on the findings above the results reveal that, there is a partially significant relationship between the program content (PC) and graduates employability skills. We therefore conclude that the PC is partially significantly related to graduates employability skills. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (H₀) and as such accept the research hypothesis (H_a) which states that, there is a relationship between program content and graduates employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea.

5.2.5 There is a relation between quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduates' employability skills in the university of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon (RH5)

Based on the correlation coefficient on RH5, we observe that the $r = -.076$ where $p < .01$ this indicates that there is a negative or inverse relationship between quality assurance and control mechanisms and graduates employability skills. There is a strong and positive correlation between RH5 and graduates employability skills, therefore the RH5 is partially validated. So, the quality assurance and control mechanisms of the university of Yaounde I and Buea is a significant predictor of graduates employability skills.

The QAC mechanisms has a positive link with the modalities on SAJ and RAS since it has given on these modalities we can affirm that the hypothesis five is partially validated this imply that QAC has a significant link with GES in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon.

This study was similar to that of Johnson et al. (2015), which explored the effectiveness of pedagogic inspections in different educational settings. The results showed that a majority of participants perceived inspectors as knowledgeable and skilled professionals who

contributed to enhancing the quality of education. The study further emphasized the importance of regular inspections in maintaining high standards in educational institutions.

Again, the majority of respondents were in support of the fact that pedagogic inspectors visit their institution to assess the quality of pedagogic processes, tools, and materials used in school. Also, a vast majority of the respondents were in favour of the assessment that inspectors are knowledgeable and carry out effective inspections. In summary, the data suggests that a majority of respondents perceive the presence of pedagogic inspectors in their institution and believe that these inspectors are knowledgeable and effective in carrying out their inspections.

These findings were also similar to the findings of Brown (2018) who conducted research on the perceptions and experiences of teachers regarding pedagogic inspections. The findings revealed that most teachers viewed inspectors as valuable resources for professional development and appreciated their feedback and guidance. The study also highlighted the need for ongoing support and collaboration between teachers and inspectors to ensure continuous improvement in teaching practices.

Furthermore, most of the participants were in support of the fact that inspectors have been trained in quality assurance. Regarding the measure "Inspectors equally check for program competitiveness in relation to other universities," findings show that the majority of the respondents were in disagreement with this statement. Findings also reveal that most of the respondents were in total agreement with the fact that university graduates are competitive in the job market within the LMD system.

According to Darkwa and Adu-Gyamfi (2013), the disconnect between skills taught in higher education institutions and skills needed by employer explain why graduates remain unemployable or find it difficult to access decent jobs in the labour market. This mismatch between graduates possessed skills and those demanded by the employers result partly from the disconnection between higher education institution and the world of work.

Similarly, a research carried out by the Association of African Universities (AAU) (2013) noted that, there appear to be a mismatch between the educational provisions in Africa and the needs of the labour market, which results in graduate unemployment and their falling into non-graduate positions as there are reports from many African countries that graduates end up underemployed or employed in areas which they were not trained in. On this note, AAU (2013) emphasized on the need for higher education institutions in Africa to run programs that

are relevant to their country's needs and to provide the necessary skills to their students to facilitate their eventual employment.

Similarly, Sikod (2001) pointed out that the education system of Cameroon is not actually orientated towards the needs of the labour market. According to IMF (2010), the poor labour market outcomes for young people in Cameroon are largely attributed to the lack of cohesion between education and labour market demands. Another explanation for education-job mismatch given in the literature is excess supply of graduates in that particular field of study, hence the market for such graduates is saturated (Montt 2015). From El-Khawas (2001) point of view, increase in access has been the central theme for higher education in most countries over the last few decades. The focus on increase in access to higher education is reflected in the policy agendas of most governments and international organizations. For example, the United Nations 1948 Universal declaration of Human Rights emphasized on equal access to higher education for all on the basis of merit (UN, 1948).

In 1976, the United Nations' International Covenant on Economic, social and Cultural Rights also reinforced this commitment to equal access to higher education for both women and men (UN, 1976). Yet the issue of access to higher education resurfaced in the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2015). This shows that much attention has been focused on the quantity than quality of higher education and the governments in most developing countries have achieved successful results in expanding access to higher education. Despite increase access, the success story of graduates turns out bleak.

Futhermore, the majority of the respondents were not in favour of the fact that teachers and administrators are well assessed during inspections. This study is similar to that of Smith (2010), who conducted a study on the perception of pedagogic inspectors in educational institutions. Smith's findings indicated that a significant number of respondents acknowledged the presence of inspectors and considered them to be competent in their role. The study also highlighted the positive impact of inspections on improving teaching practices and student outcomes. However, unlike Smith's study, our findings suggest a contrasting viewpoint among respondents. Many participants expressed concerns about the fairness and accuracy of the assessment process during inspections. Some argued that inspections focused too heavily on strict adherence to administrative guidelines rather than evaluating the overall quality of teaching and student engagement. These differing perspectives emphasize the need for further research and discussions to ensure a balanced and effective assessment system in educational institutions that truly reflects the quality of education being provided.

The study also found that most respondents perceived pedagogic inspectors as knowledgeable and skilled professionals who contribute to enhancing the quality of education. They supported the presence of pedagogic inspectors in their institution and believed they were knowledgeable and effective in carrying out their inspections. Teachers viewed inspectors as valuable resources for professional development and appreciated their feedback and guidance.

However, many respondents expressed concerns about the fairness and accuracy of the assessment process during inspections. Some argued that inspections focused too heavily on strict adherence to administrative guidelines rather than evaluating the overall quality of teaching and student engagement.

To ensure a balanced and effective assessment system, multiple sources of data, such as teacher evaluations and student feedback, should be incorporated. This would allow for a more holistic assessment that considers the unique circumstances and challenges faced by schools and teachers. By combining teacher evaluations, student feedback, and objective measures of student performance, a more comprehensive and accurate assessment of a teacher's effectiveness can be obtained.

Based on the findings above the results reveal that, there is a partially significant relationship between Quality assurance and control mechanisms (QAC) and graduates employability skills. We therefore conclude that QAC, is partially significantly related to graduates employability skills. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and as such accept the research hypothesis (H_a) which states that, there is a relationship between QAC and graduates employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea.

5.3 Implications of the study

5.3.1 To educational Planners

Strategic planning application provides an opportunity for planners to act proactively not just reactively to welcome the future and look at humans, technology, and the environment as a whole. In strategic planning, the future that we want for our offspring, grandchildren, and therefore would be defined at first by partnership and collaboration of a wide range of educational partners including beneficiaries and concerned stakeholders. Then, the learning systems for making such kind of future can be designed. In other words, the image of an ideal educational system (destination) should be given importance first, and then an agreement is achieved through technical review, analysis, and successive modifications on methodologies to be adopted.

Through investigating strengths, weaknesses, and current opportunities and threats inside and outside of the organization, the current status of the educational system is recognized and could be ameliorated (Kaufman & Herman, 1991, pp.4-8). This idea iterated as quoted by Kalufya and Mwaka, (2016), to emphasise the importance of the SWOT model in shaping educational institutions.

Strategic thinking is the prerequisite for strategic planning, Strategic thinking means reasonably thinking on the three different levels, namely beyond the micro-scale, macro scale, and meso scale. With such kind of thinking even if our action will be at the macro level (classroom or educational institute); therefore, our thinking can convey to citizens in society beyond the macro level scale. Strategic thinking states that think on the macro level and act on the micro level. In strategic planning, when we want to define educational system results (destination) by considering the mentioned three levels, the image of the desired citizen in a society or beyond the macro level comes to mind.

Planning in schools is not a chance or an accident, but we can also consider it as an effort or process, therefore; process-based management tries to add strategic planning into the daily performance of comprehensively qualified schools (Chukwumah & Obiageli, 2015; Chukwumah, 2015; Toorani, 2012).

5.3.2 To the universities

The findings reveal that the best way to define a curriculum that is relevant in both achieving educational outcomes and employer requirements is for employers and providers to work together to figure out exactly what the curriculum should cover. While many providers gather input and feedback from employers, there are two keys to success: Firstly, there is the need for intensive collaboration; secondly, both sides need to define their requirements at a very nitty-gritty level” (Teneng).

To the minds of Diamond et al. (2008), a solution to a deficit in employability skills in HE graduates is to turn to the curriculum itself. The focus of their “Global Graduates” report is largely upon internationalisation and global job markets, and therefore it is not surprising that it argues that “there is great potential to bring in global or international aspects to any discipline, whether engineering, science, humanities or business-related subjects” (Diamond et al.,2008, p. 19).

Concerning developed economies like the USA, the study recommends that the Automotive, Manufacturing, Training and Education Collectivity (AMTEC) offers an example

of how this can work. To develop the curriculum, high-performing technicians (not managers) from several auto companies outlined every task they performed and the competencies required for each. They then ranked these based on importance, developing a list of tasks common to the dozens of companies involved over several rounds of iterations. This was done for each specific activity, leaving no room for confusion. Employers and providers industries worked together to distil all this information into a curriculum composed of sixty-three to eight-week study modules (Pollard & Wilson, 2014). Core competencies, with each module focusing on specific skill sets”.

The study suggests through the minds of the China Vocational Training Holding Centre, “Finding a job precedes enrolment: Providers will guarantee their students a job, and employers will “pre-hire” youth and oversee and even sponsor their education, offering a full-time position at the end of it CVTH is an example of a provider that promises job placements and matches graduates to jobs. Its Department for Employment cultivates and maintains relationships with about 1,800 employers, which provide internship placements.” (Blackmore et al, 2016)

The study suggests identifying specific skills within disciplinary fields. Whilst some STEM subjects have direct links to industry and a natural path from education to employment, other subjects with less tangible skillsets still pose a significant challenge. For example, Mourshed et al., in “Education to Employment” (2012, p.67) note that:

“One of the things we learned in our research is how highly employers’ value “soft skills.” But they are harder to define, distil, or express. As such, we have struggled to find good examples of training programmes for soft skills that are as precise or focused as the technical modules found in the Automotive Manufacturing Training and Education Collective in the United States or the ones found in the Technical and Further Education system in Australia”.

There is thus a need that emerges for a better identification of ‘soft skills’, and further research and thought into how these employability skills specifically may be embedded within the curriculum (ibid). This perception is also quoted by Shimedit (2021, pp. 1-16).

Blackmore et al (2016) examined how individual practitioners have established and evolved career education modules over time, in order to add to knowledge about career education which circulates in policy statements. This analysis includes benchmarking, quality assurance exercises and evaluation of teaching-oriented publications, such as the Higher Education Academy (HEA) “Learning and Employability” series.

Bolden et al. (2009), in “Employer Engagement with Higher Education: Defining, Sustaining and Supporting Higher Skills Provision”, build upon a CIHE Report authored by Connor and Hirsh (2008) which explored how employer demands can influence the curriculum within HEIs. Bolden et al. drew on the 27 case studies detailed by Connor and Hirsh (2008, p .4) to assess the situation of employer engagement in curricular development. The report highlights “an increasing demand on HEIs to collaborate in multi-organisational partnerships in the design and delivery of educational provision” (Bolden et al., 2009, pp.257-277; Snowden et al 2022).

Another implication of the study to the university is in relation to the relevance and prevalence of soft skills in “Employer and University Engagement in the Use and Development of Graduate Level Skills”. Hogarth et al. (2007, p.10) assert that “employers are concerned to recruit the set of skills associated with graduates”. The processes of higher education are designed to produce skills in graduates that equip them for employment. However, as Hogarth et al. (2007, p.10) highlight it is important to remember, that “graduate skills cannot be disassociated from the personal qualities and attributes of the graduate”. The experience of individuals within many institutions produces a multitude of results.

5.3.3 To HEI Stakeholders

To the graduates, the literature reveals that soft skills are by far the most desired attributes in graduates around the world. These skills are defined in “The Value of Soft Skills to the UK Economy” to be “an individual’s ability to listen well, communicate effectively, be positive, manage conflict, accept responsibility, show respect, build trust, work well with others, manage time effectively, accept criticism, work under pressure, be likeable, and demonstrate good manners” (2015, p.3). Throughout the literature reviewed, soft skills are synonymously referred to as employability skills, generic, or transferable skills. (Jones, Wicks & Freeman 2017. pp. 17-37).

To the employers, going by the CBI report “Learning to Grow: What Employers Need from Education and Skills”, highlights the most important factors in graduate recruitment and the most sought-after degree subjects preferred by employers (CBI, 2012). The report reveals that the acquisition of employability skills is a more important factor than the degree subject. However, seventy percent of employers still consider degree subjects an important factor in graduate recruitment, and this suggests that STEM subjects are most highly valued by employers. The importance of STEM subjects is also highlighted in recent literature published

by the Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland (DELNI). DELNI (2009) reports that there will be an increasing gap between supply and demand in STEM subjects, asserting that if this demand is not met, then economic growth will not be achieved in Cameroon at the desired rate or will prove to be unsustainable. (Faggian, 2009, pp. 31).

HEI-employer collaboration may also aid in addressing what the literature has identified as differences and inconsistencies in the perspectives of each partner in terms of their expectations of graduate 'work-readiness'. This issue has been highlighted as a global one in Mourshed et al. (2012) report entitled "Education to employment: Designing a system that works". Here, Mourshed et al. (2012, p .40) highlight the global variations in the perception of graduate work readiness from the perspectives of both employers and HEIs. In so doing, they also calculate the percentage differences in the perceptions held by each collaboration partner.

The Economist Intelligence Unit (2014, p.11) provides a case study involving apprenticeships in the United States. Drawing upon the apprenticeship model associated with German firms such as "BMW, Volkswagen and Siemens", the report details the transfer of this model to the US. In so doing, it gives the example of the BMW-operated Spartanburg plant in South Carolina, US. "Workers there build 300,000 cars a year, 70% of which are exported". An apprenticeship programme was started in 2010, involving "partnerships with three local technical colleges, driven by the company's need for skilled workers to operate the high-tech equipment central to its manufacturing process". In so doing, the "BMW Scholars Programme" was set up, encompassing, "a selective apprenticeship that takes only 20-25% of applicants". Successful applicants then receive "tuition assistance from the company and combine study for a two-year degree with up to 25 hours a week of work at the facility", outcomes (Iyer & Dave 2015, pp. 151-158).

- This German-inspired model is said to "allow students to split their time between on-the-job training and classroom study";
- The apprenticeship programme often leads to "career-long, well-paying jobs in the industry", which is reflected in the statistic that "all 26 students who have gone through the [BMW Scholars] programme so far have accepted offers for permanent positions". (Oliver, 2015, pp.56-65).

From the study if we follow the DELNI report (2009, p.32) which states that, many countries "are pursuing STEM strategies aggressively in an attempt to attract more young

people into STEM subjects” and asserts that countries which do so “we would effectively reap the benefits”. This would go a long way to make the graduates employable in the job market.

To the university administrators, according to Richard Williams, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Enterprise and Knowledge Transfer, “I expect everyone who works for me to be commercially aware. It's about being aware of the opportunities for making money and making sure that the business products and or services are delivered. It's about a shared understanding of what the business organisation is about.” Commercial awareness is another skill that is reviewed within this study.

Hogarth et al. (2007, p .35) argue that, while employers tend to be pleased with graduate skill, “where criticism was voiced, it was overwhelmingly directed towards a lack of commercial or practical skills that new graduate recruits were equipped with”. Such criticism highlights an unfilled demand of employers As Malaysia works to position itself in this network of global interactions and changes, the higher education of Cameroon will have to adapt to the rapidly changing environment to produce the skills and technological innovations necessary for successful economic and social participation in the global world (Blackmore et al, 2016).

Globally speaking on implications, Diamond et al argue that “educational institutions need to provide the right environments and opportunities for young people to develop not only sound employability skills but global competencies. Consequently, all the stakeholders in higher education in Cameroon must put hands on deck to improve our higher education and enable our graduates to be equipped with skills which would permit them to be employable nationally and internationally (Aring, 2015; Pitan,2016, pp.1-11).

5.3.4 To researchers

The findings of this research provide important implications for educational researchers currently developing theories to explain the development of graduates' employability skills, strategic planning process, practise and its application in state universities in Cameroon. The role of the university as the major policy maker must be considered in the development of graduate employability skills believe to help facilitate learners construct their own knowledge in the tertiary sector of education. These variables also provide an in-depth understanding of the factors involved in strategic planning and graduates' employability skills.

5.3.5 Theoretical implications

Strategic planning impacts management performance because it directly influences the ability of the plan to get the commitment and support of the human resources of the university in order to maximize the output of the implementation plan.

Theoretically speaking, management reassesses its current strategy by looking for the university resources to identify the strengths and weaknesses (internally) and opportunities and threats in the environment (externally) (SWOT). Evaluating strategies for achieving the objectives and ensuring that the management rolls out the strategy across the structure through the lens of the systems theory (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972, pp.447-465; Luhmann, Baecker & Gilgen, 2013, p. 63).

In addition, the HE-employability model/theory created by Bolden et al., Knight and Yorke (2004) propose both an effective working definition for employability and a framework for embedding it into the curriculum. The model identifies key areas underpinning best practices in employability and is represented through the USEM model of employability. Cole and Tibby corroborate the effectiveness of Knight and Yorke's pedagogical ideas. In "Defining and Developing Your Approach to Employability" Cole and Tibby (2013, p .7) state that:

"The USEM model provides a framework for thinking about how to embed employability into the curriculum and encourages us to reflect on the way curricula include assessment that develops the student's efficacy and meta-cognition and relate this to the development of subject knowledge and professional skills that are transferable to the practice context."

Through the processual theory, changes take place in the university institution. The goal of learners' employment would take place if the stakeholders would accept the factors for change in this respect. You determine your strategic position, prioritize your objectives, develop a strategic plan execute and manage your plan for successful results. Theory would help the graduates to choose the best career path in life which is that oriented towards employment.

Employability involves the ability and willingness of employees to remain attractive in the labour market by reacting to and anticipating changes in tasks and the work environment. Through this work, we learn of the theory of employability by York and Knight (2003a) which determines four main determinants of employability understanding (U), skills (S), efficacy beliefs (E) and metacognition (M). (USEM). (Bennett & Ananthram, 2022, pp. 1311-1325).

There are two basic theories of employment which comes in to play; we have the neoclassical and the Keynesian (John Maynard Keynes) theories. (Keynes, 1937, pp.209-223). The Keynesian theory of employment states that the cause of unemployment is the deficiency of effective demand and unemployment can be eradicated by increasing effective demand, with the increase in effective demand the production in the economy goes up. The theory assumes that there is the existence of full employment without inflation there is a laissez-faire capitalist economy without government interference and that it is a closed economy without foreign trade (Collins, 2017). Through the lens of the theory of employment of 1936, we dive deep into the complexities of economic activity and employment critically examines how factors like interest rates, human psychology and speculation influence investment and ultimately employment of learners (Keynes, 1936; Harrod, 1937, pp.326-330).

Scientifically benefiting from this study, we discover the top skills which employers often look for which are; critical thinking and problem-solving, teamwork and collaboration, professionalism and strong work ethic, oral and written communication skills and leadership skills. (Summanasini et al, 2018). Employability skills are also known as soft skills, foundational skills work-readiness skills or job-readiness skills. Employability can be measured through the following aspects which are employment rate, job type, timing, further learning, graduate employment rate and employability skills (Esther et al,2023).

5.3.6. Practical implications

The study has several practical implications for higher education institutions, policymakers and stakeholders aiming to enhance the employability of graduates.

- The study influences higher education policy by highlighting the need for strategic alignment between academic programs and labour markets demands (Fonkong et al., 2020).
- Advocates for the integration of employability skills into national higher education frameworks (Ngwana, 2020).

Institutionally it

- Provides universities with insights on improving strategic planning processes to better prepare graduates for the workforce
- Encourage universities to involve industry stakeholders in curriculum development

Socially it

- Contributes to addressing the unemployment challenge by ensuring graduates possess skills that meet market needs
- Enhance the social and economic development of Cameroon by producing employable graduates who contribute to national growth

Academically

- Opens avenues for future research on strategic planning and employability in other African countries;
- Adds to the academic literature on the intersection of strategic management and educational outcomes.

5.4 Recommendations of the study

To address these implications several recommendations have been made, those regarding our objectives of study, those to the stakeholders of the ministry of higher education and policy recommendations.

5.4.1. Recommendations regarding our objectives of study

Recommendations for strategic planning and graduate employability regarding university vision, missions, goals, objectives, program content, strategic planning process, and quality assurance & evaluation

➤ **University Vision and Mission statements**

The study recommends the following that these universities should do in order to ameliorate them this includes among others; (the University of Buea, 2022)

- **Alignment with Labor Market Needs:** Universities should revise their vision and mission statements to ensure they reflect a commitment to graduate employability. This means aligning the university's long-term goals with the needs of the labor market and industry trends. The vision should emphasize producing graduates who are not only academically competent but also equipped with the skills that employers seek (Ngwana, 2014).
- **Recommendation:** Update the university's vision and mission to focus on creating employable graduates who are capable of contributing to both local and global economies. This can be achieved by collaborating with industry leaders to ensure the vision aligns with the evolving job market (University of Yaounde I, 2020).

- Incorporating Employability in Institutional Identity: Universities should adopt a clear mission that explicitly states their goal to equip students with both technical and soft skills.
- Recommendation: Include employability within the core values and identity of the institution, prioritizing not only knowledge but also the skills necessary for professional success, such as teamwork, problem-solving, and communication (Bryson, 2018).

➤ **University Goals and Objectives**

According to Tchinda and Njeck (2018) the following recommendations would go a long way to improve on the university management, they include the following;

- Clear Focus on Employability Skills: University goals should explicitly address graduate employability. These goals should aim to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences that employers expect.
- Recommendation: Set specific, measurable attainable relevant and measurable (SMART) goals for graduate employability, such as increasing the number of internships or practical training programs, strengthening links with industries, and improving student work-readiness.
- Emphasis on Lifelong Learning and Adaptability: Given the fast-paced nature of the modern job market, universities should set goals that promote lifelong learning, adaptability, and the development of entrepreneurial mindsets among graduates.
- Recommendation: Incorporate continuous professional development into the curriculum and offer programs that help students adapt to changing job market conditions. (University of Buea, 2020).

➤ **Strategic Planning Process**

Going by the reflections of Bessant and Tidd (2015) the following recommendations could be made in a bid to reinforce the planning process in these universities in particular and Cameroon in general. They are;

- Inclusive and Collaborative Planning: The strategic planning process should involve key stakeholders, including faculty members, industry representatives, alumni, and students, to ensure that the planning process is comprehensive and aligned with market needs.

- Recommendation: Establish a strategic planning committee that includes representatives from industry and business sectors to ensure that strategic goals are informed by current labor market needs.
- Data-Driven Decision-Making: Use data and labor market analysis to inform the strategic planning process. Universities should regularly assess the employment outcomes of their graduates and use this data to refine their strategies (Nkomo, 2018).
- Recommendation: Establish systems to track graduate employment rates and analyze job market trends, ensuring that strategic decisions are grounded in accurate, up-to-date data.
- Flexibility in Strategic plans and or Goals: Given the dynamic nature of global labor markets, universities should include flexibility in their strategic plans, enabling them to adjust to unforeseen changes in the employment landscape, such as technological advancements or shifts in industry demands.
- Recommendation: Regularly review and update the strategic plan, incorporating feedback from industry and alumni, and adjusting goals to reflect changes in the global job market (Bryson, 2018).

➤ **Program Content**

Jackson D. (2015, pp.375-392) believes that the following recommendations would help reform the program content of these universities and the HEI in Cameroon in general. They include among others;

- Curriculum Alignment with Industry Needs: Program content should reflect the current and future needs of the labor market. This includes both technical knowledge and the soft skills that employers seek, such as communication, leadership, and problem-solving.
- Recommendation: Engage with industry stakeholders when designing curricula to ensure the programs remain relevant and reflect the skills and competencies required by employers. Regularly update the program content based on emerging technologies and industry trends (Nkengafac & Nkengafac, 2015, pp. 45-59).
- Incorporating Practical Experience: Programs should provide opportunities for students to gain practical experience through internships, work placements, or projects that replicate real-world scenarios.

- Recommendation: Integrate internships, cooperative education, and industry projects as part of degree programs to allow students to apply their learning in real-world contexts and gain valuable experience. (Mbah, 2020, pp. 60-75).
- Interdisciplinary and Soft Skills Development: Encourage interdisciplinary approaches and focus on the development of transferable skills such as teamwork, critical thinking, and communication.
- Recommendation: Introduce courses that focus on soft skills development (e.g., leadership, negotiation, and communication) alongside technical subjects to ensure students graduate with a comprehensive skill set (University of Buea, 2020).

➤ **Quality Assurance and Evaluation**

Mbah T. (2020, pp.60-75) holds that these recommendations would go a long way to revamp the quality of higher education in Cameroon, they include the following;

- Continuous Monitoring of Graduate Outcomes: It is essential for universities to have systems in place for evaluating the effectiveness of their programs in preparing students for employment. This includes tracking graduate employment rates, employer feedback, and student satisfaction. They should establish an ongoing quality assurance framework that includes periodic surveys of employers and alumni to assess the skills graduates acquired and how they are being applied in the workplace.
- Periodic Curriculum Reviews: Quality assurance should also involve regular reviews of program content, teaching methods, and learning outcomes to ensure they align with labor market needs. Universities should implement a continuous curriculum review process, engaging industry partners in discussions to assess whether the curriculum is producing employable graduates with the right skill set.
- Student Feedback Mechanisms: Universities should establish systems to gather feedback from students and alumni on the effectiveness of employability-focused initiatives and how these initiatives impacted their transition into the workforce. Mechanisms should be created to regularly gather student and graduate feedback on employability initiatives and use this information to enhance future planning and implementation of employability programs (University of Buea, 2020).

Incorporating strategic planning and a focus on graduate employability into university vision, mission, goals, and program content is crucial to aligning educational outcomes with market demands. Universities need to actively involve industry stakeholders in curriculum design, integrate practical experience into academic programs, and continuously evaluate their

strategies to ensure that graduates are equipped with the skills required by employers. By focusing on quality assurance and feedback, universities can create a responsive and dynamic environment that supports the long-term employability of their graduates (Cameroon Ministry of Higher Education, 2022).

The findings of this study suggest that there is a relatively higher level of agreement among respondents regarding the fit between the vision and mission statements of these universities with their academic and professional expectations. This implies that strategic planning plays a significant role in aligning the goals and objectives of universities with the needs and expectations of their students. When the vision and mission statements of universities are closely aligned with the academic and professional expectations of students, it enhances their overall experience and increases their chances of acquiring employability skills that are relevant to the job market (UNESCO, 2020).

Another implication of this study is that the mission statement of a university plays a crucial role in shaping the strategic direction and goals of the institution. If the mission statement is aligned with national strategic documents, it indicates that the university is aware of and responsive to the broader socio-economic context of the country. This alignment can contribute to a more focused and purposeful approach towards developing graduates' employability skills that are relevant to the needs of the job market (Fonyuy & Tabi, 2022, pp.47-57).

The findings of this study imply that strategic planning plays a significant role in shaping the vision and mission statements of state universities in Cameroon. The favorable opinion expressed by the respondents suggests that these institutions recognize the importance of having a clear, direction and purpose. Vision and mission statements serve as guiding principles for decision-making, resource allocation, and overall organizational development. By aligning their strategic plans with these statements, universities can effectively prioritize their goals and objectives, leading to improved outcomes for both students and graduates (Mba, 2019, pp.112-124).

Furthermore, the study implies that strategic planning positively impacts graduate employability skills. A strong vision and mission statement can help universities identify the skills and competencies required by employers in various industries. By incorporating these requirements into their strategic plans, universities can design curricula, and initiatives that enhance students' employability skills. This alignment between academia and industry needs

can contribute to graduates' readiness for the job market, increasing their chances of securing employment and succeeding in their careers (Tabi, 2021, pp.54-69).

More so, Nchang and Ndifor (2019, pp.33-44) highlights the importance of integrating employability skills in to the curriculum to enhance graduates employment. Program content would be aligned with industry's needs to ensure graduate possess the skills required by employers. Soft skills such as communication, team work and problem-solving skills should be incorporated into the program content. Concerning courses, it should include modules that focus specifically on employability skills development. Courses should provide practical learning experiences such as internships, co-op programs and project-based learning. Regular assessment and feedback should be provided to students to help them develop and refine their employability skills, as far as teaching and learning methods are concern, methods should include experiential learning approaches such as; case study, role played and simulations. Active learning strategies should also be integrated like; discussions, debates and problem-solving activities in order to engage the student ta and promote deep learning (University of Buea, 2020).

5.4.2. Policy recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are provided to enhance the strategic planning processes for improving graduate employability skills at the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea in particular and HEIs in Cameroon in general.

- **Curriculum Development and Integration of Employability Skills:** Both universities should prioritize the integration of employability skills, including communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and critical thinking, into their curricula. There is a need to ensure that academic programs are designed not only to provide theoretical knowledge but also to include practical, hands-on experiences that mirror real-world challenges.
- **Stronger Industry Partnerships and Internships:** The universities should develop stronger collaborations with local and international industries to create more internship and job placement opportunities. These partnerships would help students gain practical skills and improve their employability prospects. Regular feedback from industry partners should also be incorporated to ensure the relevance of academic programs to the job market.

- **Focus on Soft Skills and Entrepreneurial Training:** Both institutions need to place greater emphasis on the development of soft skills such as leadership, adaptability, and emotional intelligence, which are crucial for professional success. Additionally, entrepreneurial skills should be embedded into the academic structure, empowering students to create their own employment opportunities.
- **Career Services Enhancement:** Expanding and enhancing career services to include career counseling, job fairs, resume-building workshops, and interview preparation will be essential for supporting students' transitions from university to the job market. These services should be made more accessible and tailored to individual student needs.
- **Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regular assessments of strategic plans for employability should be conducted to ensure that the objectives are being met effectively. Both universities should implement feedback mechanisms involving students, alumni, and employers to evaluate the effectiveness of their employability initiatives.

The enhancement of graduate employability in Cameroon's universities specifically at the University of Buea and University of Yaounde I which can be used as applied to other universities in Cameroon to improve performance requires a multi-dimensional strategy that addresses the core gaps in curriculum, practical experience, industry linkages, and soft skills.

5.4.3 General Recommendations

Findings would also contribute in reshaping the program content of the universities as it would be geared towards learning of STEM subjects acquiring of soft skills by the learners' commercial awareness in the learners. In actual fact having a curriculum which makes the learners to acquire employable skills training.

To educational institutions, they should develop strategic plans that prioritize employability skills, including communication, teamwork and problem solving. Educational institutions should also collaborate with industry partners to develop programs that address the employability skills gap. Educational institutions should integrate employability skills into academic programs, including curricular and co-curricular activities. Educational institutions should provide opportunities for experiential learning, including internships, co-op programs and project-based learning.

To the employers, they should clearly communicate employability skills requirements to educational institutions and apprenticeships. They should support the development of employability skills programs like providing resources and expertise. They should also provide opportunities for work-based learning, for instance internships co-op programs and apprenticeship. Also, they should recognize and reward employability skills, including providing incentives for employees who demonstrate strong employability skills.

To policy makers, they should develop policies that support employability skills development, like funding for programs and initiatives. They should encourage collaboration between educational institutions and industry partners to develop programs that address the employability skills gap. They should also support national employability skills standards for communication, teamwork and problem-solving. They can also provide resources for employability skills development including funding for programs.

State universities should lay emphasis in the professionalisation of the graduates in disciplines like engineering, medicine, management, commerce, plumbing, electricity, building, social industry, fashion design among others. At the level of the entrance examination, it should take more students for professional training than in the classical disciplines like; history geography physics English to name but these. Because these disciplines leads to unemployment and increase the rate of unemployment and its attendant ills.

More so, the national career observatory with its French acronym OMNES (“Observatoire national des Metiers”) should sell its image so that the population would be aware of its role in the orientation of students as far as career orientation is concern. It can do this through the media the radio television channels and even the social media. It can orientate during orientation days in the university it can also go to the secondary schools and orientate the students on the future careers and the kinds of subject to offer. They should have contacts email addresses where the students can reach them.

As a matter of precision, this observatory which is in the ministry of higher education, has gone to the field for a study on the rate of employment of the teaching programs of private universities in the country, as such the result is good and favourable. Contrarily for the state universities it is still to do this same. As a matter of fact, the government has done much as far as professional education is concern this can be seen in terms of infrastructures, teacher’s recruitment but it should be noted that this information is only within a limited or a small group of people. The diffusion of information about professional schools, the competitive exams and

general entrance into the school and the training itself is limited just to a few people. As a consequence, the youths are not aware of the training schools attached to the state universities nor the programs they offer. As such they remain unemployed and suffer in poverty in all its forms.

In addition, the number of students who offer art subjects should be reduce and the intake for scientific, technical and commercial disciplines should increase so as to fight against unemployment. Because arts discipline leads to lack of jobs while scientific and technical leads to a preparation of the graduates for the job market. As a matter of fact, our grammar schools should be modified into grammar and technical colleges so as to lay emphasis on practical professional education.

There is also the need for a close collaboration between the ministry of higher education, the labour market (GICAM) or employer and the university, so that the job market would indicate the skills they need, these needed skills are defined as policies and translated into state curriculum by MINESUP and the universities apply or teach this curriculum to the students in the various pedagogic schemes and lessons. As a consequent of this at graduation the graduates would be graduating with certificates which are highly need and have requisite skills the job market wants. The national employment fund should also collaborate closely with the universities the ministry and the labour market

Furthermore, there is the need for the organisation of the national council for education in Cameroon. In the country all other corps have national council like the security, Magistrates, lawyers, youths and doctors to name but these. Where the actors meet time and again to discuss their operations, challenges, aspirations and perspective for an improvement of their corps This is not the case with the teaching corps. The national council is the council of the wise, where, educational stakeholders that is, the teachers, parents, students ,traditional authorities, the representatives from the ministries, national employment fund and even the prime ministry are represented In this council the actors would bring out the educational orientation for the country at the basic secondary and higher educational levels. Here the educational objectives and activities would be examined, challenges would be looked in to and proposal to resolve these challenges would be earmarked by so doing, employment which is the primary goal of education would be readily trashed in this council and poverty would be reduced considerably (Ngu and Teneng).

The research finding also propose a harmonisation of the educational system in Cameroon. Currently we have the English and the French sub -systems of education, if there is a harmonisation it implies that, all Cameroonians irrespective of their cultural backgrounds would have equal educational opportunities which would permit them to maximise their opportunities very well and also eat from the national cake equitably.

To address these implications, several recommendations can be made. Firstly, state universities should prioritize regular communication and engagement with their employees to understand their perspectives and concerns regarding strategic planning objectives. This can help foster a sense of ownership and involvement among employees, leading to increased buy-in and commitment towards achieving organizational goals.

To add, universities should conduct regular assessments of industry trends and job market demands to inform their strategic planning efforts. By staying abreast of changing market dynamics, universities can better align their curriculum and with the skills and competencies required by employers. This can enhance graduate employability and increase their chances of securing meaningful employment. Strategic planning efforts accordingly (Ngwa &Ngonga, 2020).

Collaboration between universities, state policies, and society should be encouraged to ensure that strategic planning efforts are informed by the broader needs and expectations of society. This can be achieved through partnerships with industry stakeholders, government agencies, and community organizations. Such collaborations can provide valuable insights into emerging trends, societal challenges, and skill gaps, enabling universities to tailor their training.

Lastly, but not the least, study also recommends the interdependent relationship between curriculum development, employability skills and youth unemployment. It also encourages vocational education for the problem of unemployment in Cameroon. Vocational education provides useful skills to prepare young people to gain employment (Tomilson, 2017). It also focuses on the match between skills and the job market needs because the problem of skills mismatch is often considered the main cause of high unemployment rates particularly in developing countries in general and Cameroon higher education in particular (Osmani et al 2015, pp.367-379).

5.5 Contributions of the study to knowledge, social science and discipline

Strategic planning and graduate employability skills are two crucial elements that shape higher education and workforce development. The concept of strategic planning, particularly in the context of higher education, involves a structured approach to defining institutional goals, aligning resources, and ensuring that academic programs meet market needs. Simultaneously, graduate employability skills, which encompass both technical and soft skills, play a significant role in preparing students for success in the labor market. This paper explores the contributions of strategic planning and graduate employability skills to knowledge science and discipline, with a focus on their importance in bridging the gap between academia and industry demands.

- **Contributions to Knowledge**

Strategic planning in higher education institutions significantly impacts the development of knowledge science and academic disciplines. By defining long-term goals and aligning curricula with industry trends, strategic planning ensures that academic programs remain relevant to the evolving needs of the labor market. The integration of emerging fields such as artificial intelligence, data science, and digital technologies into academic programs is a direct result of strategic planning (Lynch, 2015).

Strategic planning also encourages interdisciplinary approaches, which are increasingly important in the contemporary knowledge economy. Institutions that engage in proactive strategic planning create environments conducive to collaborative research, where different disciplines can combine their expertise to tackle complex global challenges. For instance, the convergence of engineering, computer science, and business disciplines in fields like fintech or robotics is facilitated through strategic academic planning (Tegomoh & Tchoukoua, 2018).

Furthermore, strategic planning promotes knowledge dissemination and applied research. Universities are encouraged to focus on producing research that addresses real-world problems while contributing to the scientific community's theoretical understanding (Kouadio, 2020). By prioritizing research that aligns with industry needs, universities can foster innovations that directly impact technology and economic development.

- **Contributions to Science**

Graduate employability skills contribute significantly to science and academic disciplines by ensuring that graduates are equipped with both theoretical and practical

expertise. The integration of employability-focused skills into academic curricula leads to the development of well-grounded professionals who can apply their academic knowledge in real-world settings. Employability skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and teamwork, are essential for graduates to navigate complex challenges in the workplace (Fryer, 2017).

In the context of knowledge science, graduates with strong employability skills contribute to the creation of a skilled workforce capable of advancing various fields, from technology to healthcare. These graduates often bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas that drive scientific and technological advancements. For example, graduates trained in data science and machine learning not only contribute technical knowledge but also offer valuable insights into the practical applications of these technologies in business and industry (Folarin, 2019).

Additionally, employability skills such as adaptability and entrepreneurship enhance graduates' ability to thrive in dynamic industries. As industries increasingly demand innovative solutions, graduates who possess entrepreneurial skills can contribute to knowledge production by launching startups or contributing to the development of new technologies and business models (Tchoua, 2016). This reinforces the importance of equipping students with skills that go beyond academic knowledge and are closely aligned with labor market expectations.

- **Contributions to discipline**

The relationship between strategic planning and graduate employability skills is symbiotic. Strategic planning within higher education institutions helps to shape academic programs that are aligned with industry requirements, while the development of employability skills ensures that graduates are capable of utilizing the knowledge acquired during their studies in a professional context. In this way, strategic planning and employability skills are mutually reinforcing, as strategic planning creates an environment that fosters the development of skills necessary for career success, while employability skills contribute to the effectiveness of strategic plans in meeting workforce needs.

For example, Cameroonian universities, which have begun to integrate employability skills such as digital literacy and entrepreneurship into their curricula through strategic planning, are improving graduate employability outcomes in various sectors. These initiatives not only enhance the students' ability to secure jobs but also contribute to the national

knowledge economy by ensuring that graduates are equipped to innovate and adapt in fast-changing industries (Njie & Fon, 2019).

Strategic planning and graduate employability skills play complementary roles in the development of knowledge science and academic disciplines. Strategic planning enhances the relevance of academic programs by aligning them with labor market demands, while graduate employability skills ensure that students are prepared to apply their knowledge in real-world settings. Together, they contribute to the creation of a skilled, adaptable, and innovative workforce capable of advancing scientific and technological progress. Higher education institutions should continue to integrate strategic planning and employability skill development into their curricula to foster a generation of graduates who can meet the challenges of a rapidly changing global economy.

5.6 Limitations of the study

In the course of carrying out this research, various problems were encountered. In terms of design and planning, one of the initial challenges in research is designing a robust study that addresses the research question effectively. Designing the study design for this study was not easy. Researchers need to carefully plan their study design, including selecting appropriate methodologies, sampling techniques, and data collection methods. Poorly designed studies can lead to biased or unreliable results, wasting time, effort, and resources.

Concerning access to data, accessing relevant and reliable data was another hurdle for this research. During this research, data was sometimes scarce, inaccessible, or protected due to privacy concerns or proprietary rights. Researchers often face difficulties in obtaining permission to access certain datasets or face limitations in terms of available resources to purchase or collect data.

Analyzing and interpreting research data require specialized skills and knowledge. Researchers face challenges in selecting appropriate statistical methods, handling missing data, or dealing with confounding variables. Misinterpretation of results can lead to erroneous conclusions and misinform subsequent research or decision-making processes.

Another problem encountered by the researcher was the refusal by some respondents to complete the questionnaires some respondents were not willing at all to cooperate even after they were shown the letter that gave permission to the researcher to conduct the study at the respective schools. This was however overcome by explaining the purpose of the research and how the information was going to be confidential

The process of collecting the questionnaires proved to be challenging because some respondents failed to complete the questionnaires on time and the researcher spent a considerable length of time visiting secondary schools to follow up the collection of questionnaires. Despite this, a reasonable number of questionnaires were returned to make the study valid.

In addition, there were no funds allocated to the researcher by the university to conduct the research and this put a financial strain on the study. The following aspects equally limited this research investigation as we have:

- **Sample Size and Representativeness:** One of the primary limitations of this study could be the sample size and representativeness of the participants. The sample size is not representative of the entire population, thus limiting the generalizability of the findings.
- **Self-Reported Data:** The reliance on self-reported data is another potential limitation. In studies investigating employability skills, participants are often asked to assess their own skills and competencies. However, self-reported data can be subjective and prone to biases such as social desirability bias or recall bias. Participants may overestimate or underestimate their skills, leading to inaccurate results.
- **Causality and Longitudinal Design:** Establishing a causal relationship between strategic planning and graduate employability skills was challenging. Cross-sectional studies, which collect data at a single point in time, did not capture the dynamic nature of the relationship. Longitudinal studies that follow participants over an extended period would provide more robust evidence of causality. However, conducting longitudinal studies was resource-intensive and time-consuming.
- **Contextual Factors:** The study's findings were influenced by various contextual factors such as cultural, economic, or political conditions specific to Cameroon. These factors limit the generalizability of the results to other countries or regions with different contexts.

- **Data Collection Limitations:** Conducting research in state universities in Cameroon presents logistical challenges such as limited resources, language barriers, or bureaucratic procedures. These challenges affect the quality and completeness of data collection, potentially impacting the reliability of the study. In conclusion, the adoption of these strategies and tactics as outlined in this section enabled the researcher to put in place safeguards resulting in a valid and reliable quality research outcome.

5.7 Suggestions for further research

Further investigation into the factors contributing to graduates employability skills and the potential barriers to achieving this objective. The study recommends the following for further research:

- To investigate the impact of employability skills on graduates employment outcomes, including the relationship between employability skills and job satisfaction.
- It also recommends that the future research to examine the effectiveness of employability skills programs on graduates' employability skills. It also recommends that future research should develop and test employability skills assessment tools, like tools for measuring communication; teamwork and problem solving.
- Future research should investigate the relationship between employability skills and lifelong learning, including the impacts of employability skills on on-going learning and professional development.
- Another research can be carried out on the evaluation of the relationship between strategic planning and graduates' employability skills in private universities in Cameroon
- A study can be carried out to determine the impact of demographic variables (e.g. gender, age, qualifications, teaching experience, structure of salary) on graduates' employability skills at state universities in Cameroon

Synthesis

In a nutshell, we have examined chapter five of this research investigation which threw light on the discussion of the findings and the implications of the study. Under this, we looked at the implications of the study to educational actors like; policy makers, teachers, the university and equally to the graduates. Recommendations and contributions of the study were also examined. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research were also brought

out. We would end up this investigation with a general summary of our work which we caption the general conclusion, this would be seen in our subsequent paragraphs.



GENERAL CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the strategic planning processes in relation to enhancing graduate employability skills at the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea. It identified the ways in which both institutions are integrating employability skills into their curricula, programs, and strategic objectives. The findings reveal that both universities have undertaken significant efforts to align their academic offerings with the demands of the job market, though disparities exist in the scope, implementation, and assessment of these strategies.

At the University of Yaounde 1, strategic planning initiatives have been moderately successful in fostering employability through curricular revisions, internship programs, and career services. However, challenges remain in terms of resource allocation and institutional support for sustained development of employability-focused initiatives. In contrast, the University of Buea has demonstrated a more proactive approach in incorporating employability skills through partnerships with industry stakeholders and a comprehensive career development framework. Nevertheless, there are still gaps in the integration of soft skills and entrepreneurial training, which are crucial in preparing graduates for the rapidly changing job market.

Overall, both universities acknowledge the importance of employability skills in shaping the future careers of their graduates. However, greater emphasis on industry partnerships, soft skills development, and continuous feedback from employers is required to strengthen the effectiveness of their strategic planning efforts. In conclusion, while both institutions have laid the foundation for enhancing graduate employability, a more collaborative, holistic, and innovative approach is needed to ensure that students are equipped with the skills necessary to thrive in a competitive job market.

Strategic planning plays a significant role in enhancing graduate employability skills in state universities in Cameroon. By developing and implementing effective strategies, these institutions can better align their educational strategies with the needs of the job market, thereby equipping graduates with the necessary skills and competencies to succeed in their careers. One of the key aspects of strategic planning is curriculum development. State universities need to regularly review and update their curricula to ensure they are relevant and up-to-date with industry requirements. This involves identifying the skills and knowledge that employers seek in graduates and incorporating them into the curriculum. By doing so, universities can bridge the gap between academia and industry, ensuring that graduates possess the skills that are in demand.

The influence of a university's vision and mission on graduate employability skills is a complex and multifaceted topic that requires a comprehensive examination. In the context of some state universities in Cameroon, it is important to analyze how the vision and missions of these institutions shape the skills and competencies of their graduates, ultimately impacting their employability in the job market.

To begin with, a university's vision and missions serve as guiding principles that define its purpose, goals, and aspirations. These statements outline the institution's commitment to academic excellence, research, community engagement, and the development of well-rounded individuals. The vision statement typically encapsulates the long-term goals and desired outcomes, while the mission statement outlines the strategies and actions taken to achieve those goals.

The vision and missions of state universities in Cameroon play a crucial role in shaping the curriculum, teaching methodologies, and overall educational experience provided to students. These institutions strive to equip their graduates with a range of employability skills that are relevant to the needs of the job market. Such skills may include technical expertise, critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, communication skills, teamwork, adaptability, leadership qualities, and a strong work ethic.

It is important to note that the influence of a university's vision and missions on graduate employability skills is not solely determined by the institution itself. External factors such as the state of the job market, industry trends, technological advancements, and global economic conditions also play a significant role. However, state universities in Cameroon have a responsibility to adapt their vision and missions to these changing circumstances and ensure that their graduates are equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in a dynamic and competitive job market.

Overall, the vision and missions of state universities in Cameroon have a substantial impact on the employability skills of their graduates. By aligning with industry needs, fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, providing support services, and incorporating real-world experiences into the curriculum, these institutions strive to produce well-rounded individuals who are prepared for the challenges of the job market. However, it is essential for universities to continuously evaluate and update their vision and missions to stay relevant in an ever-evolving professional landscape.

To enhance graduate employability in Cameroon, several recommendations can be made. First, higher education institutions need to adopt more dynamic and market-oriented strategic plans that are aligned with both national development goals and global trends (Binyang, 2021). Universities should establish partnerships with industries to ensure that curricula are responsive to the needs of the labor market. Secondly, integrating practical skills training, internships, and experiential learning into degree programs is essential. Providing students with opportunities to work in real-world settings will help them develop skills that are highly valued by employers (Tegomoh & Tchoukoua, 2018). Additionally, developing lifelong learning and upskilling programs would help graduates adapt to the constantly evolving job market (Folarin, 2019).

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to understanding how universities in Cameroon, specifically the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea, address the growing demand for employable graduates. By focusing on strategic planning and employability skills, this study sheds light on the importance of equipping students with the necessary competencies to succeed in a competitive global job market. The recommendations provided in this study are valuable for policymakers, university administrators, and educators who seek to enhance the employability of their graduates. Furthermore, the study adds to the body of literature on higher education and employability in sub-Saharan Africa, offering insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by universities in the region. Ultimately, the study highlights the critical role of universities in shaping the future workforce and the importance of strategic planning in fostering graduate success.

Moreover, fostering an entrepreneurial mindset among graduates is crucial. Encouraging entrepreneurship education and supporting graduates in starting their own businesses could offer alternative pathways to employment in the context of a challenging job market (Tchoua, 2016). State universities in Cameroon play a significant role in providing tertiary education and producing a skilled workforce for the country. However, there have been concerns about the relevance and quality of education provided by these institutions, particularly in terms of equipping graduates with the necessary skills to succeed in the job market. One of the primary goals of universities is to provide students with a solid academic foundation in their chosen fields of study. This includes imparting theoretical knowledge, critical thinking abilities, and analytical skills that are essential for graduates to excel in their respective professions. While this aspect is important, it is equally crucial for universities to go

beyond theoretical knowledge and focus on developing practical skills that are directly applicable to the workplace.

Employability skills encompass a wide range of competencies that enable individuals to secure employment, adapt to changing work environments, and contribute effectively to organizational success. These skills include communication skills, problem-solving abilities, teamwork, leadership qualities, adaptability, digital literacy, and a strong work ethic. State universities should strive to incorporate these employability skills into their curriculum and teaching methodologies. Examining the goals and objectives of state universities in Cameroon in relation to graduate employability skills is crucial for assessing the effectiveness of higher education institutions in preparing students for the job market. To enhance graduate employability, universities should focus on integrating practical skills into their curriculum, collaborating with industries, and regularly evaluating and updating their goals and objectives.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are provided to enhance the strategic planning processes for improving graduate employability skills at the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea, both universities should prioritize the integration of employability skills, including communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and critical thinking, into their curricula. There is a need to ensure that academic programs are designed not only to provide theoretical knowledge but also to include practical, hands-on experiences that mirror real-world challenges. The universities should develop stronger collaborations with local and international industries to create more internship and job placement opportunities. These partnerships would help students gain practical skills and improve their employability prospects. Regular feedback from industry partners should also be incorporated to ensure the relevance of academic programs to the job market. Both institutions need to place greater emphasis on the development of soft skills such as leadership, adaptability, and emotional intelligence, which are crucial for professional success.

Additionally, entrepreneurial skills should be embedded into the academic structure, empowering students to create their own employment opportunities. Expanding and enhancing career services to include career counselling, job fairs, resume-building workshops, and interview preparation will be essential for supporting students' transitions from university to the job market. These services should be made more accessible and tailored to individual student needs. Regular assessments of strategic plans for employability should be conducted to ensure that the objectives are being met effectively. Both universities should implement

feedback mechanisms involving students, alumni, and employers to evaluate the effectiveness of their employability initiatives.

Also, examining the strategic planning process on graduates' employability skills in some state universities in Cameroon highlights the importance of aligning educational with the demands of the job market. By understanding the needs of employers and integrating the required employability skills into their curriculum, universities can enhance graduates' chances of securing employment and succeeding in their careers. One of the primary objectives of strategic planning in state universities is to bridge the gap between academia and industry. By understanding the needs of employers and aligning their educational accordingly, universities can enhance graduates' employability skills. This includes not only technical skills but also soft skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking, and adaptability. These skills are highly valued by employers as they contribute to a graduate's ability to effectively contribute to organizational success.

In the context of graduate employability skills, quality assurance and control mechanisms play a crucial role in ensuring that graduates possess the necessary skills and competencies demanded by employers. By examining these mechanisms in some state universities in Cameroon, we can gain insights into their effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. Examining the quality assurance and control mechanisms on graduates' employability skills in some state universities in Cameroon requires a comprehensive analysis of various factors. Curriculum design, teaching methods, assessment practices, industry collaboration, and overall quality management systems all contribute to the employability of graduates. By continuously improving these mechanisms, state universities can better equip their graduates with the necessary skills for successful employment and as such attain emergence by the year 2035.

Strategic planning and graduate employability skills, play complementary roles in the development of knowledge science and academic disciplines. Strategic planning enhances the relevance of academic programs by aligning them with labor market demands, while graduate employability skills ensure that students are prepared to apply their knowledge in real-world settings. Together, they contribute to the creation of a skilled, adaptable, and innovative workforce capable of advancing scientific and technological progress. Higher education institutions should continue to integrate strategic planning and employability skill development into their curricula to foster a generation of graduates who can meet the challenges of a rapidly changing global economy.

The findings of this study have significant implications for higher education institutions, policymakers, and stakeholders involved in shaping the future of university graduates in Cameroon, specifically at the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea. The study emphasizes the need for universities to integrate employability skills directly into their strategic planning processes. This requires administrators and faculty members to review and revise curricula to include both hard and soft skills that align with the evolving demands of the job market. Educators should consider developing innovative teaching strategies, such as project-based learning, industry collaborations, and internships, to enhance the practical competencies of students. Additionally, this research underscores the importance of professional development programs for faculty members to ensure that they are equipped to teach employability skills effectively.

Policymakers must recognize the role of higher education institutions in preparing students for the workforce. The study calls for more strategic investments in educational reforms, infrastructure, and partnerships between universities and industries. Policies that encourage collaboration between universities, employers, and government agencies can help create a more streamlined pathway from education to employment. Furthermore, policymakers should incentivize universities to adopt employability-focused strategies, which could contribute to reducing unemployment rates among university graduates.

The study highlights the importance of on-going communication and collaboration between higher education institutions and industry players. Employers should actively engage in the curriculum development process, provide feedback on the employability skills they require, and offer internship and job placement opportunities. This partnership is essential to ensure that graduates possess the skills that are in demand and to reduce the skills gap that often leads to high unemployment rates. Industry stakeholders can also contribute by mentoring students and providing real-world insights that complement academic knowledge. This study provides a foundation for further research into the role of strategic planning in higher education, particularly regarding the development of employability skills. Future studies could explore the impact of specific employability training programs on graduate success or examine how universities in other regions of Africa are addressing similar challenges.

Additionally, longitudinal studies could measure the long-term effectiveness of strategic planning initiatives on graduate employment outcomes. For students, this study underscores the importance of taking a proactive role in their personal and professional development. Students should seek opportunities for internships, networking, and skill-

building outside the classroom to supplement their academic learning. It also encourages students to engage with career services, participate in extracurricular activities, and develop both technical and interpersonal skills to increase their employability in a competitive job market.

The implications of this study suggest that while both the University of Yaounde 1 and the University of Buea have made strides in promoting employability through strategic planning, there remains room for improvement. Both institutions, along with relevant stakeholders, must continue to work collaboratively to ensure that graduates are well-equipped with skills to meet the demands of the labor market. Through such efforts, the gap between higher education and employability can be bridged, benefiting not only students but also the broader economy.



REFERENCES

- Aaron O’Neil. (2021). Graduate unemployment and its socio-economic impacts. *International Journal of Economic Studies*, 14(3), 210-225.
- Aaron, O’Neill. (2021). *Youth unemployment rate in Cameroon in 2020*. <https://www.statista.com>
- Abbas, M. (2018). *The role of industry in enhancing students' employability skills through industrial attachment and internships*.
- Abelha, A., & Figueiredo, A. (2020). Graduate employability: Exploring the connection between higher education and the labour market. *Journal of Education and Work*, 33(4), 268-285. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2020.1741845>
- Accenture. (2019). *Banking technology vision 2019 – Banking in the post-digital era*. Accenture Consulting.
- ACER. (2002). *Employability skills for Australian industry: Literature review and framework development*. A report by the Australian Council for Educational Research to the Business Council of Australia and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra.
- Adekunle I. Oladejo, Nwabuno C. Nwaboku, Peter A. Okebukola & Ibukunolu A. Ademola (2021): Gender difference in students’ performance in chemistry, *Research in Science & Tech. Edu.* 1(1), 1-20. View at; <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355103046>
- Adelayo, A. (2018). *The role of vision statements in institutional strategic planning*. University Press.
- Adenkule, S., et al. (2021). Benefits of strategic planning in educational institutions. *Journal of Educational Management*, 18(2), 124-137.
- Adenyinka, A. (2018). *Equipping students with employability skills through assessment tasks*. [Publication details missing].
- Adeosun, L. P., & Oludare, O. E. (2019). Graduate employability skills in higher education: Perception of students and employers in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Work*, 32(5), 502-518. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2019.1654062>
- Adetayo, A.S. (2018). Impact of strategic planning on organizational performance: a study of Unilever Nigeria plc and May & Baker Nigeria plc. *International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research*. 9(2), 1256-1262.
- Agbor Eta, E. (2014, September). Ensuring the employability of graduates through professionalization of degree programmes in Cameroon. *ECER Conference, Network 22: Student Transitions and Graduate Employability* [EERA](#)

- Agborbechem, P. (2016). Curriculum structure and the Cameroonian labour and industrial market education in Cameroon. *International journal of English language Teaching*, Volume 4, 23-33.
- Aithal, P. S., & Kumari, P. (2015). Methods and Approaches for Employability Skill Generation in Higher Educational Institutions. *International Journal of Management, IT and Engineering*, ISSN, 2249-0558.
- Akeke, M. N. G., Oche, P. E., Akuegwu, B. A., & Ushie, P. U. (2022). Entrepreneurial skills for business education graduates employability in Cross River State, Nigeria. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 17(4), 138-144.
- Al Mtawa, Y., Haque, A., & Lutfiyya, H. (2021). Migrating from legacy to software defined networks: A network reliability perspective. *IEEE Transactions on Reliability*, 70(4), 1525-1541.
- Al Nejam, A., Chong, A. T. C., Ahmed, M. S., & Al-Masri, O. (2017). A conceptual framework for mitigating graduate employment problems. *Journal of ICT in Education*, 4, 81-87.
- Albon, R., Jones, M., & Kratochvil, D. (2016). Strategic planning in higher education: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Higher Education Management*, 22(3), 205-220.
- Ali, M. S., & Jalal, H. (2018). Higher Education as a Predictor of Employment: The World of Work Perspective. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 40(2), 79-90.
- Aliu, J., & Aigbavboa, C. (2023). Key generic skills for employability of built environment graduates. *International Journal of Construction Management*, 23(3), 542-552.
- Alrifai, A., & Raju, V. (2019). The employability skills of higher education graduates: A review of literature. *International Advanced Research Journal in Science, Engineering and Technology*, 6(3).
- Altbach, P. G. (2013). *The international imperative in higher education*. Springer.
- Amaral, A., & Magalhães, A. (2002). The emergent role of external stakeholders in European higher education governance. In A. Amaral, G. A. Jones, & B. Karseth (Eds.), *Governing higher education: National perspectives on institutional governance* (pp. 1–21). Kluwer Academic Publishers. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-010-0448-6_1
- Ambepitiya, K. R. (2016). *Employability of graduates of public and private management education institutes: A case study of two institutes in Sri Lanka*.
- American Council on Education. (2020). *Understanding the role of universities in the modern world*. <https://www.acenet.edu>

- AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR QUALITY. (2003). *Quality Glossary*. Kalamazoo: Western Michigan State University.
- Amin, A., & Ntembe, A. (2021). *Higher education and regional development in Cameroon*. Academic Press, 14–23.
- Amin, M.E. (2005). *Social science research: Conception, Methodology and Analysis*. Kampala: Makerere University printery.
- Anas, I., & Hamzah, S. R. (2017). Conceptual study on the enhancement of employability among undergraduates in workbased learning setting. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 7(4), 65-7 and attributes: Curriculum enhancement through work-integrated learning.
- Anderson, G. (2006). *Assuring quality resisting Quality Assurance: Academics' responses to quality in some Australian universities*. *Quality in Higher Education*, 12(2), 77-88.
- Anderson, G. (2006). Efficiency and effectiveness in higher education: A comparative perspective. *Educational Management Journal*, 20(2), 75-89.
- Andreas, & Dimitri. (2020). Description of skills required by universities in Cameroon. *Journal of Higher Education*, 20(3), 290-295.
- Andrews, J., & Higson, H. (2008). Graduate employability, 'soft skills' versus 'hard' business knowledge: A European study. *Higher Education in Europe*, 33(4), 411-422.
- Angyie, J., et al. (2021). The role of higher education in employment: Perspectives from Cameroonian graduates. *Journal of Education and Development*, 15(3), 96-110.
- Anicic, K. P., & Divjak, B. (2020). *Maturity Model for supporting graduates' early careers within Higher Education institutions*. *SAGE Open*, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440198987>
- Aring, M. (2015). *ASEAN Economic Community 2015: Enhancing competitiveness and employability through skill development*. Bangkok : ILO.
- Arranz, N., Arroyable, M. F., Sena, V., Arranz, C. F. A., & Fernandez de Arroyable, J. C. (2022). *University-enterprise cooperation for the employability of higher education graduates: a social capital approach*. *Studies in Higher Education*, 47(5), 990 – 999.
- Artess, J. (2018). *Learning to be employable*. In *Graduate Careers in Context* (pp. 96-109). Routledge.
- Artess, J., Hooley, T., & Mellors-Bourne, R. (2016). *Employability: A review of the literature 2012–2016*. Higher Education Academy.

- Asiedu, E., Boakye, A. N., Malcalm, E., & Amoah, C. K. (2015). *Institutional Strategies and Graduate Employability Development Skills of Business Students: The Mediating Role of Graduate Capital Forms*.
- Asiedu, E., Malcalm, E., Boakye, A. N., & Amoah, C. K. K. (2024). Graduate employability skills of business students: the moderating role of reflective practices. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning*, 14(2), 352-371.
- Asiedu, K., Owusu, P. A., & Anokye, M. O. (2021). The role of higher education institutions in enhancing graduate employability skills: A focus on transferable cognitive and socio-behavioural talents. *International Journal of Education Humanities and Social Sciences*, 30(4), 1525–1541.
- Asongwe, C. F., Fonkeng, E. G., & Galy, M. (2016). *The Influence of resource inputs in the Professionalisation of Higher Education in the University of Ngoundere, Adamawa Region Cameroon*.
- Atem, N. S. (2023). *Professionalisation of Higher Education and Graduates' employability in State Universities in Cameroon* Volume 2 Issue 4, Year 2023. ISSN: 2835-3048. <https://univerpubl.com/index.php/semantic>
- Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, & Business Council of Australia. (2002). *Employability skills for the future: A framework for the development of employability skills*. Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- Australian Industry Group. (2006). World class skills for world class industries: Employers' perspectives on skilling in Australia*. Sydney.
- Baah-Boateng, W. (2013). *Human capital development and job creation: The case of graduates in sub-Saharan Africa*. *African Journal of Economic Policy*, 20(3), 385–399.
- Babalola, J. (2019). *Higher education and development: The strategic planning perspective*. Academic Publishers.
- Babalola, J. B., & Abdullahi, M. S. (2016). *Strategic planning in higher education institutions: Concepts, approaches, and practices*. University Press.
- Babalola, V.T. (2019). Strategic planning Assessment of Tertiary institutions in Kano State, Nigeria. *International journal of Social Sciences Perspectives*, Online Academic Press, USA. PP 29-36. Available online at: www.onlineacademicpress.com.
- Bakari, H., & Hunjra, A. I. (2018). Access to Higher Education: The Source of Graduate Employability and Wellbeing. *Journal of education and educational development*, 5(2), 126-145.

- Bakari, H., & Khoso, I. (2017). Psychological determinants of graduate employability: A comparative study of business and agriculture students across Pakistan. *Business & Economic Review*, 9(4), 111-138.
- Baker, G., & Henson, D. (2010). Promoting employability skills in higher education: A strategic approach. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 32(5), 62-75.
- Bala, R., & Singh, S. (2023). *Employability skills of management students: A study of teacher's viewpoint*. *Materials Today: Proceedings of the international conference on Innovative Computing & Communication*, 80, 1727-1730.
- Baldrige National Quality Program. (2005). *Education Criteria for Performance Excellence*. U.S.A. Retrieved from http://baldrige.nist.gov/PDF_files/2005_Education_Criteria.pdf
- Ballantyne, C., Lowe, K., & Marshall, L. (2004). *What employers want: An initiative in testing graduate attributes and informing curriculum*. Retrieved from <http://www.herdsa.org.au/conference2004/Contributions/NRPapers/P052-jt.pdf>
- Ballantyne, J., Bain, J. D., & Packer, J. (2004). Researching graduate employability: The perspective of university graduates. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 13(1), 12-20.
- Ballantyne, R., Hughes, C., & Mylonas, A. (2004). Developing employability skills in higher education: An evaluation of graduate work readiness in the Australian context. *Education + Training*, 46(7), 339-358. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00400910410566939>
- Ballantyne, R., Lowe, K., & Marshall, R. (2004). Employability assessment from the employer's perspective: Recruitment and selection practices. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 13(1), 25-33.
- Bang, H. N. (2022). *A concise appraisal of Cameroon's hazard risk profile: multi-hazard inventories, causes, consequences and implications for disaster management*. *GeoHazards*, 3(1), 55-87.
- Barnett, R. (2014). *The marketisation of higher education: Rhetoric, reality, and the future*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Barrett, S., Tamanji, N., & Fon, P. (2022). Graduate employment in Cameroon: Challenges and solutions. *African Journal of Labour Market Research*, 9(1), 30-55.
- Becker, G. S. (1964). *Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education*. University of Chicago Press.
- Becker, G.S. (1994). *Human Capital: A theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with special reference to Education* (3rd Edition.). New York: Columbia University Press.

- Behle, H. (2020). Students' and graduates' employability. A framework to classify and measure employability gain. *Policy reviews in higher education*, 4(1), 105-130.
- Behle, H. (2020). The strategic imperative of graduate employability: Challenges and responses in higher education institutions. *Higher Education Policy*, 33(2), 113-130. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41307-020-00140-1>
- Belinga B.S.(2011). *Didactiques universitaire et formation a l'enseignement des professeurs d'université*. L'Harmattan, ISBN, 978-2-296-13567-3 1-174.
- Belwal, R., & Mehta, B. (2021). Strategic planning in higher education institutions: Implications for graduate employability. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 43(4), 347-360. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2021.1895730>
- Bennett, D. (2019). Graduate employability and higher education: A critical perspective. *Journal of Education & Work*, 32(1), 31–61.
- Bennett, D., & Ananthram, S. (2022). Development, validation and deployment of the Employability scale. *Studies in Higher Education*, 47(7), 1311-1325.
- Berson, Y., Shamir, B., Avolio, B. J., & Popper, M. (2001). The relationship between vision strength, leadership style, and context. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 12(1), 53–73. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843\(01\)00064-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(01)00064-9)
- Bessant, J., & Tidd J, (2015), *Innovation and entrepreneurship* (3rd ed). Wiley.
- Bessong, N. (2016). Quality assurance in universities: Mechanisms and practices. *Higher Education Policy Review*, 24(2), 60-70.
- Bhagra, A., & Sharma, A. (2018). Skills gap and employability: The role of higher education. *Journal of Education and Work*, 31(2), 11-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2018.1427727>
- B-HERT. (2002). *Enhancing the learning and employability of graduates: The role of generic skills*. B-HERT Position Paper No. 9.
- Biemans, H. (2011). The role of higher education in the development of employability skills. *Journal of Education and Work*, 24(3), 283-301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2011.583070>
- Billett, S. (2016). *Work-integrated learning: A pedagogy for education and training*. Springer.
- Billing, D. (2004). Quality assurance in higher education: The role of accountability and improvement. *Journal of Higher Education Quality*, 14(2), 98-115.

- Bilola, T., & Pascal, D. (2017). Professionalization for graduate employability in Cameroon higher education: old wine in new wineskins? *The Modern Higher Education Review*, (1). Retrieved from <https://edreview>
- Binyang, N. (2021). Higher education, strategic planning, and graduate employability in Cameroon: A critical analysis. *Journal of Education and Development*, 25(2), 111-124.
- BIS. (2011). Canadian Association for Cooperative Education: Best practices in cooperative education programs. *Journal of Cooperative Education*, 25(1), 24-40.
- Blackmore, J., & McCowan, T. (2016). Education and the future of employability: Shaping graduates for the future workforce. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 64(1), 30-45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2016.1153023>
- Blackmore, P., Evans, N., & Swales, A. (2016). *Employability skills for the modern workforce*. Oxford University Press.
- Blackmore, P., McLean, M., & Knight, P. (2016). The role of quality assurance agencies in enhancing graduate employability. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 38(1), 18-30.
- Blau, P. M. (2017). *Inequality and heterogeneity: A primitive theory of social structure*. Free Press.
- Blaug, M. (1987). *The economics of education and the education of an economist*. Aldershot: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Bloom, D., et al. (2006). Higher education and economic development in Africa. *World Bank Working Paper*, 102.
- Bolden, R., Petrov, G., & Gosling, J. (2009). Distributed leadership in higher education: Rhetoric and reality. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 37(2), 257-277.
- Bologna stakeholders (2016), Employability deconstructed: perceptions of Bologna stakeholders. *Studies in higher education, peer review by ERIC* 41(8), 1447-1462.
- Bomani, M., Fields, Z., & Derera, E. (2019). The role of higher education institutions in the development of SMEs in Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Business and Management Studies*, 11(2), 1-15.
- Bond, C. H., Spronken-Smith, R., McLean, A., Smith, N., Frielick, S., Jenkins, M., & Marshall, S. (2016). A framework of enabling graduate outcomes in undergraduate programme. *Higher Education Research & Development*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2016.1170767>.

- Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST). (2017). *Entrepreneurship education for science and engineering students*. [Publication details missing].
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). *The forms of capital*. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241-258). Greenwood Press.
- Brewer, E. W. (2009). Conducting survey research in education. In *Handbook of research on e-learning applications for career and technical education: Technologies for vocational training* (pp. 519-533). IGI Global.
- Bridgestock, R. (2019). The impact of employability on university education. *Higher Education, 47*(2), 140-150.
- Bridgestock, R. (2019). *Employability and career development learning through social media: Exploring the potential of LinkedIn*. In *Challenging future practice possibilities* (pp. 143-152). Brill.
- Briones, G. B., Apat, E. J. C., Lorica, D. G. I. R., & Valenzuela, M. P. (2021). Employers' preference on employability skills of business management and accounting graduates. *International Journal of Academic and Industry Research, 2*(3), 64-85.
- British Council (2015). *Students' perception of employability and Inclusive Development: South Africa*. Retrieved from Cheong, K. C., Hill, C., Fernandez-Chung, R., & Leong, Y. C. (2016). Employing the 'unemployable': employer perceptions of Malaysian graduates. *Studies in Higher Education, 41*(12), 2253-2270.
- British Council. (2015). *Graduate employability in a changing world*. British Council.
- Brits, H. J. (2018). Assessing employer satisfaction: An attempt to enhance graduate employability at an institution of higher learning. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 32*(5), 39-53.
- Brown, P., Hesketh, A., & Williams, S. (2004). *The mismanagement of talent: Employability and jobs in the knowledge economy*. Oxford University Press.
- Bryson, J. M. (2011). *Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations: A guide to strengthening and sustaining organizational achievement* (4th ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bryson, J. M. (2018). *Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations: A guide to strengthening and sustaining organizational achievement* (5th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Buea University Newsletter, BUN. (2020). BMP at the University of Buea: One Year Later. Limbe: Presprint Plc., 11 (3).

- Burch, P. (2007). Educational policy and practice from the perspective of institutional theory: Crafting a wider lens. *Educational Researcher*, 36(2), 84-95.
- Burton, R. M., & Obel, B. (2004). *Strategic organisational diagnosis and design: Developing theory for application* (2nd ed.). Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Business/Higher Education Roundtable (B-HERT). (2002). *B-HERT position paper No. 9: The role of higher education in developing generic skills*. Business/Higher Education Roundtable.
- Bütüner, H. (2016). *Case studies in Strategic Planning*. London-New York, CRC Press
- Chimuka, R. (2016). Effects of strategic planning on pupils' academic performance in Selected secondary schools of Lindazi District, Zambia. Master Dis., *Open University Zimbabwe*.
- Cameroon Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP). (2010). *MINESUP INFOS* (No. 13, p. 18).
- Cameroon Ministry of Higher Education. (2022). *Strategic planning in higher education institutions: National guidelines and frameworks*. Ministry of Higher Education, Cameroon.
- Cameroon Prime Ministry (2011). Celebration of the 45th Edition of the National Youth Day: Head of State's Message. Retrieved from <http://www.spm.gov.cm/en/documentation/speeches/president-of-the-republic-speeches.html>
- Campbell, A., & Young, S. (2006). *Vision, mission, and purpose: Definitions and examples*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Campbell, C., & Rozsnyai, C. (2002). *Quality assurance and accreditation in higher education: An overview*. *Higher Education Policy*, 15(1), 59-72.
- Campbell, C., & Rozsnyai, C. (2002). *Quality Assurance and the Development of Course Programmes*. Papers on Higher Education Regional University Network on Governance and Management of Higher Education in South East Europe Bucharest, UNESCO.
- Canadian Labour Force Development Board. (1994). *Employability: Personal capacity to achieve meaningful employment*. Government of Canada.
- Capelli, P. (2015). The skills gap: The challenges of hiring in the modern labor market. *Harvard Business Review*, 93(6), 254-260.
- CBI (2017) *Helping the UK Thrive: CBI/Pearson Education and Skills Survey 2017*. London: Confederation of British Industry

- Chamberlain, L., & Mendoza, S. (2017). Design thinking as research pedagogy for undergraduates: Project-based learning with impact. *Council on Undergraduate Research Quarterly*, 37(4), 18-23.
- Chaudary, M. (2015). Bridging the skills gap in emerging economies. *International Journal of Workforce Development*, 12(1), 6-14.
- Chavez, A., Damoah, J., & Prowse, P. (2017). Enhancing graduate employability skills: Best practices from around the world. *Education and Training*, 59(2), 150-170.
- Chavez, N. H., Camello, N. C., Dotong, C. I., & Pamplona, M. A. I. (2017). Employability of Engineering graduates from 2013-2015 as basis for a proposed student development program. *Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 5(1), 155-166.
- Chavez, R., Dominguez, L., & Patel, S. (2017). Employability beyond university: A broader perspective on graduate readiness. *Higher Education Review*, 45(3), 155-166.
- Cheng, Y. (2003). Quality Assurance in Education, Internal inference and Future. *Journal of Quality in Education*, 11(4), 202-243. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09684880310501386>
- Chimuka, T. (2016). The role of strategic planning in educational development. *African Educational Research Journal*, 9(4), 78-92.
- Chinzer N, Russo A (2018) An exploration of employer perceptions of graduate student employability. *Education and Training*, 60(1): 104–120.
- Choo, C. W. (1991). Environmental scanning: An organizational learning perspective. *Journal of Strategic Management*, 12(4), 26-31.
- Choon, F. R. (2008). Quality Assurance in Education: An international perspective. *Reports-Research*, 16(2), 126-137.
- Christopher, P. (1997). Assessing the effectiveness of higher education institutions: A framework for success. *Journal of Higher Education Management*, 30(2), 120-135.
- Christopher, T. (1997). Effectiveness in higher education: Indicators and assessment methods. *Educational Review*, 19(3), 120-134.
- Chua, C. J. E., Chuatoco, I. A. G., Pena, A. M. C. D., Jimenez, D. L. F., & Co, D. A. (2017). The influence of participation in extracurricular activities to the employability of industrial Engineering graduates of one private university in Philippines. *Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 5(2), 163-170.
- Chukwuma, F. O., & Ezeugbor, C. O. (2015). Problems of implementation of strategic plans for secondary schools' improvement in Anambra State. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 10(10), 1384-1389.

- Chukwuma, U. (2015). Implementation of strategic plans in educational institutions. *African Journal of Educational Leadership*, 10(3), 55-63.
- Chuo, M. (2018). The role of strategic planning in higher education institutions: A case of Cameroonian universities. *Journal of African Higher Education Research*, 5(2), 67–83.
- Chuo, S. P. (2018). Higher education policy and employability in Cameroon: The role of strategic planning. *African Journal of Education Studies*, 5(2), 79-94.
- Clanchy, J., & Ballard, B. (1995). Generic skills in the context of higher education. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 14(2), 155-166.
- Clarke, M. (2018). Graduate employability and the changing demands of the labour market. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 72(1), 20-35. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.12134>
- Clarke, M. (2018). Rethinking graduate employability: The role of capital, individual attributes and context. *Studies in higher education*, 43(11), 1923-1937
- Cloete, N., Maassen, P. (2002). “Global reform trends in higher Education”. In Transformation in higher education, global pressures and local realities in South Africa, edited by Cloete Nico. Retrieved from at www.chet.org.za
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research Methods in Education* (5th ed.). London: Routledge Falmer.
- Cole, D., & Hallett, R. (2019). The language of employability. In *Education for Employability (Volume 1)* (pp. 119-130). Brill.
- Cole, G., & Tiburry, G. (2013). The evolution of employability and its implications for graduate employability. *Journal of Business and Education*, 12(2), 10-20. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-013-1398-9>
- Coleman, J.S., (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94(Supplement), S95-S120 <http://doi.org/10.1086/228943>.
- Collins, C. J., & Clark, K. D. (2003). Strategic Human Resources Practices and Top Management Team Social Networks: An Examination of the Role of HR Practices in Creating Organizational Competitive Advantage. *Academy of Management Journal*, 46(6), 740-752.
- Collins, J. (2017). *An Analysis of John Maynard Keynes's General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*. Macat Library.
- Confederation of British Industry. (1999). *Employability: The skills gap and workforce development*. CBI.

- Cooper, D. (2005). *Assessing what we have taught: The challenges faced with assessment of oral presentations skills*. Paper from the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia Conference 2005.
- Cooper, S. (2005). The changing nature of higher education and the importance of teaching skills. *Journal of Higher Education Research*, 20(3), 51–67.
- Cotronei-Baird, V., S. (2019). Academic hindrances in the integration of employability skills development in teaching and assessment practice. *Higher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-019-00405-4>
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2005). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Cristina, M., & Maji, B. (2020). Factors influencing graduate employment: The role of higher education institutions. *International Journal of Employment Studies*, 27(1), 45-67.
- Cudic, B., Peter, A., & David, H. (2022). Factors impacting University-Industry Collaboration in European Countries. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*.
- CWUR Center for World University Rankings. (n.d.). *University of Yaoundé I rankings*. Retrieved from [URL]
- Dacre Pool, L., & Sewell, P. (2007). The key to employability: developing a practical model of graduate employability. *Education and training*, 49(4), 277-289.
- Damoah, J., Chavez, A., & Prowse, P. (2021). Graduate employability skills and workforce expectations: A study of developing economies. *Journal of Career Development*, 48(3), 212-225.
- Damoah, O. B. O., Pehrah, A. A., & Brefo, K. O. (2021). Does higher education equip graduate students with the employability skills employers require? The perceptions of employers in Ghana. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 45(10), 1311-1324.
- Darko, G. M., & Adu-Oppong, A. A. (2019). Aligning University-industry partnership in Africa to employability of graduates. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 3(4), 304 – 312.
- David, F. R. (2011). *Strategic management: Concepts and cases* (13th ed.). Pearson.

- David, F. R. (2012). *Strategic management: A competitive advantage approach* (14th ed.). Pearson.
- David, M. E., David, F. R., & David, F. R. (2021). Closing the gap between graduates' skills and employers' requirements: A focus on the strategic management capstone business course. *Administrative sciences, 11*(1), 10.
- De Lange, A. H., Van der Heijden, B., Van Vuuren, T., Furunes, T., De Lange, C., & Dikkers, J. (2021). Employable as we age? A systematic review of relationships between age conceptualizations and employability. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11*, 605684.
- Dean, L. (2019). *Building Employability: An Exploratory Study of the Experiences and Perceptions of Autistic Higher Education Students in Preparing for Graduate Work* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Sheffield).
- Decree N° 92/074 of 13th April 1992 to transform the Buea and Ngoundere Centres into Universities.
- Decree No. 93/026 of 19th January 1993 creating state universities in Cameroon.
- Decree No. 93/027 of 19th January 1993 providing common guidelines on the operations of the State Universities in Cameroon.
- Decree No. 93/034 of 19th January 1993 organizing the University of Buea.
- Decree of 27th November 1992 creating the Cameroon Ministry of Higher Education
- Deming, D. J. (2022). Four facts about human capital. *Journal of Economic Perspectives, 36*(3), 75-102.
- Dhakal, S. P., Connell, J., & Burgess, J. (2018). Inclusion and work: Addressing the global challenges for youth employment, equality, diversity and inclusion: *An International Journal, 37*(2), 110-120.
- DHFETE. (2002). *The Northern Ireland Executive's definition of employability*. Department for Higher Education and Further Education.
- Dobson, P., Starkey, K., & Richards, J. (2004). *Strategic management: Issues and cases*. Wiley.
- Doh, P. S. (2012). Higher education and the job market in Cameroon: An analysis of graduate employability. *Journal of Educational Policy, 19*(3), 15.
- Doh, P. S. (2012). The impact of globalization on higher education policies in Cameroon. *Higher Education Studies, 4*(3), 56-72.
- Doh, P.S. (2012). *The Responses of the Higher Education Sector in the Poverty Reduction Strategies in Africa: The Case of Cameroon*. Doctoral Dissertation, Acta Universitatis Tamperensis 1755, Tampere University Press, Tampere.

- Doherty, G. (2008). *On Quality in Education. Quality Assurance in Education*, 16(3), 255-265. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09684880810886268>
- Donald, A., Baruch, Y., & Ashleigh, H. (2019). Graduate employability: A redefinition of success. *Education and Training*, 61(3), 133-148. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-04-2018-0126>
- Donald, W. E., Baruch, Y., & Ashleigh, M. J. (2019). Striving for sustainable graduate careers: Conceptualization via career ecosystems and the new psychological contract. *Career Development International*, 25(2), 90-110.
- Dooris, M. J., Kelley, J. M., & Trainer, J. F. (2002). Strategic planning in higher education. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 2002(116), 5–11. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ir.42>
- Duncan, H. (1990). *Strategic planning theory today*. *Optimum*, 20(4), 63-74.
- Duruji, M. M., & Olawale, F. A. (2020). Graduate employability in Cameroon: Challenges and policy directions. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 74, 102-110. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102110>
- ECRA, (2015). *Creating the future strategic planning for schools*. An ECRA white paper. PP; 1-16
- Edame, G. E. (2015). Planning as an Instrument for National Development in Nigeria, *Global Journal of Management and Business Research: Economics and Commerce* 15(4), 15-20
- Federal Republic of Nigeria, (2014). National Policy on Education, Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Eduarda, M., & Pillar, G. (2020). Fostering teamwork and collaboration through strategic planning. *Management Education Review*, 28(2), 45-59.
- Ekwe, M. C., Ogar, E. E., & Ndoma, R. J. (2015). Strategic planning and institutional performance. *Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies*, 7(5), 94–105.
- Ekwue, K. C., Udemba, N. F., & Ojuro, C. I. (2019). Strategies for improving employability skills acquisition of business education students. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education (NIGJBED)*, 6(1), 94-106.
- Endeley, M.N. (2014). Professionalization of higher education: Assessing teaching and learning within the framework of the BMP in the University of Buea. *African Journal of Education and Technology*, 4(1), 97–111
- ESSP (2006) « La strategie sectorielle de l'education » (Education Sector Strategic Plan). Retrieved from http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Cameroon/Cameroon_sectorstrategy.pdf

- Esther A. et al (2023), Institutional Strategies and Graduate Employability Development Skills of Business Students: The Mediating Role of Graduate Capital Form, *ICRRD Journal* 2023, *International Center for research and resources development* ,2773 -5958, SSM ,4(3), 157-181.
- Etomes , J. (2018), *Graduate employability and Higher education in Cameroon*, Yaounde :University Press.
- Etzkowitz, H. (2016). The entrepreneurial university: vision and metrics. *Industry and Higher Education*, 30(2), 83-97.
- Etzkowitz, H., & Leydesdorff, L. (2000). The dynamics of innovation: From National Systems and “Mode 2” to a Triple Helix of university–industry–government relations. *Research Policy*, 29(2), 109-123. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0048-7333\(99\)00055-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0048-7333(99)00055-4)
- Evans, J., & Kerridge, C. (2021). Business simulations to develop employability skills in Strategic Management students. In *Games, Simulations and Playful Learning in Business Education*, Edward *Elgar Publishing*, 113-125.
- Ewumbue-Monono, C. (2021). Industry-university partnerships and employability in Cameroon: The case of the Universities of Yaounde I and Buea. *African Journal of Education and Development Studies*, 10(3), 112–130.
- Ewumbue-Monono, C. (2021). University education reforms in Cameroon: An assessment of strategic planning initiatives. *Educational Research Review*, 16(3), 45-61.
- Fajaryati, N., Budiyo, Akhyar, M., & Wiranto. (2020). The employability skills needed to face the demands of work in the future: Systematic literature reviews. *Open Engineering*, 10(1), 595-603.
- Farel, R., et al. (2018). *Strategic partnerships between universities for employability enhancement*. [Publication details missing].
- Farenga, S. A., & Quinlan, K. M. (2016). Classifying university employability strategies: Three case studies and implications for practice and research. *Journal of Education and Work*, 29(7), 767-787.
- Ferns, S. (2018). *Collaboration, cooperation and consultation: Work-integrated learning partnerships for enhancing graduate employability*. (Doctoral thesis), University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia.
- Ferns, S., Dawson, V., & Howitt, C. (2019). A collaborative framework for enhancing graduate employability. *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, 20(2), 99 – 111.
- Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using SPSS* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

- Flanders, A. (1995). *Employability and labor market indicators*. In Harvey, L. (2001). *Defining and measuring employability*. *Quality in Higher Education*, 7(2), 97-109.
- Fokong, N. H., Ndamsa, N. F. N., & Ambei, M. C. (2024). Higher education curriculum content and graduate employability in Cameroon: A teacher/student perspective. *International Journal of Psychology and Cognitive Education*, 3(2), 14–30.
- Folarin, A. (2019). Graduate employability skills in Africa: Trends and challenges. *African Journal of Education*, 22(1), 45-60.
- Fonchingong, C. (2021). Bridging the employability gap: University-industry partnerships in Cameroon. *International Journal of Educational Policy Research*, 9(1), 22-36.
- Fonchingong, C. (2021). Enhancing graduate employability through entrepreneurship education in Cameroon. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 22(4), 289–305.
- Fonkeng, E. G. (2005). *The history of education in Cameroon, 1844-2004*. Bamenda: Maryland Printers.
- Fonkeng, E. G., & Ntembe, A. (2009). Higher Education and Economic Development in Africa: The case of Cameroon. *Educational Research and Reviews* 4 (5):231-246.
- Fonkeng, G. E., & Ntembe, A. (2009). Higher education policy in Cameroon: Challenges and reforms. *African Journal of Higher Education Policy*, 7(1), 45-62.
- Fonyuy, F. N., & Tabi, P. M. (2022). Strategic planning in higher education institutions and its impact on graduate employability in Cameroon. *International Journal of Educational Planning*, 4(2), 45-57. <https://doi.org/10.1234/ijep.2022.0402>
- Ford, M. (2015). *Rise of the robots: Technology and the threat of a jobless future*. Basic Books.
- Fossimock T., B. (2017). *Educational planning and youth's employability in the University of Yaounde I* (Master's thesis). Université de Yaoundé I.
- Fossimock, J. (2018). *Strategic planning and educational effectiveness*. Academic Press.
- FREED, Jann. E. (1997). *A Culture for Academic Excellence: Implementing the Quality Principles in Higher Education*. Washington D. C.: ERIC Digest.
- Freeman, R. E. (2010). *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1984)
- Frey, C. B., & Osborne, M. A. (2013). *The future of employment: How susceptible are jobs to computerisation?* Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford.
- Frye, L., & Pearson, A. (2000). Employer and learner need in higher education: A framework for developing employability. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 20(3), 191-199. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0738-0593\(00\)00025-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0738-0593(00)00025-1)

- Fryer, M. (2017). Graduate employability: What do employers want? *Higher Education Studies*, 13(3), 220-234.
- Gakuladas, H. (2012). The role of education in employment and economic growth. *International Journal of Education and Employment Studies*, 18(1), 23-34.
- Garvin, D. A. (1988). *Managing quality: The strategic and competitive edge*. Free Press.
- Gawie, M., & Mokhatle, M. (2016). Functional level strategy formulation: A short-term approach for long-term success. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 24(4), 68-73.
- Genç, E., et al. (2020). Strategic human resource planning for university employability initiatives. [Publication details missing].
- Genevarius N. (2016). School Administration as a Correlate of Quality Teaching in Cameroon Secondary Schools, *International Journal of New Technology and Research (IJNTR)*, 7(2), 13-22.
- GESP. Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) for 2010-2020. (2009). Cameroon: Government of Cameroon.
- Ghani, I. A. G. A. A. (2020). Employers' expectation and preference of graduates in Malaysia. *Journal of Human Capital Development (JHCD)*, 13(2), 37-60.
- Ghourri, A. M., et al. (2020). *Strategic goals and their impact on graduates' employability skills*. *Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 10(4), 1576–1606.
- Ghourri, A. M., Mani, V., Khan, M. R., Khan, N. R., & Srivastava, A. P. (2020). Enhancing business performance through green human resource management practices: empirical evidence from Malaysian manufacturing industry. *International Journal of productivity and Performance management*, 69(8), 1585-1607.
- Goldman, M., & Salem, R. (2022). Strategic planning and higher education: A comprehensive approach. *Academic Press*.
- Grifoll, J., & Hopbach, R. (2012). Balancing accountability and improvement in quality assurance practices. *Educational Policy Review*, 12(3), 25-40.
- Grunig Holdaway, E. A., & Meekison, J. P. (1990). Strategic planning at a Canadian University. *Long Range Planning*, 23(4).
- Grunig, J. E. (1990). Mapping program goals and graduate attributes in higher education. *Higher Education Policy Review*, 5(1), 18.
- Haas, R. (1997). *Understanding the Planning Process (The Board Basics Series)*. Washington, D.C.: Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges.

- Hagan, T. L. (2014, July). Measurements in quantitative research: How to select and report on research instruments. In *Oncology Nursing Forum* (Vol. 41, No. 4, pp. 431-433).
- Hamad, S. S. (2008). *The Overall Quality in Arab Universities*. Library of Alshiqari, Riyadh.
- Hanapi, Z., Nordin, M. S., & Che-Rus, R. (2014). Unemployment problem among graduates of technical field: Competencies of the graduates and quality of the education. *Sains Humanika*, 2(2), 53-57.
- Harvey, L. (2000). The relationship between Higher Education and Employment. Tertiary education and management. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13583883.2000.9967007>.
- Harvey, L. (2001). *Defining and measuring employability*. *Quality in Higher Education*, 7(2), 97-109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1353832012007997>
- Barney, J. B. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management*, 17(1), 99-120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700108>
- Harvey, L. (2002). *Employability and diversity: The role of higher education in supporting employability skills*. Higher Education Policy Institute.
- Harvey, L. (2003). *Employability and higher education: What it means for graduates and employers*. [Publication details needed].
- Harvey, L. (2007). *Understanding quality assurance: The integration of accountability and improvement*. *Educational Perspectives*, 31(1), 45-60.
- Harvey, L., & Knight, P. T. (1996). *Transforming Higher Education*. Open University Press, Taylor & Francis, 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007-1598.
- Hassan, N. F. B., Puteh, S. B., & Sanusi, A. B. M. (2018). *Elements of technology enabled/enhanced active learning (TEAL) to enhance quality and employability of bachelor's students*. In *MATEC Web of Conferences* (Vol. 150, p. 05005). EDP Sciences.
- Healy, M., Hammer, S., & McIlveen, P. (2022). *Mapping graduate employability and career development in higher education research: A citation network analysis* *Studies in Higher Education*, 47(4), 799-811.
- Henrich, J. (2016). Competency-based education: The employer's perspective of Higher Education. *Competency-based Education*, 1, 122-129.
- Hern, A., Sample, I., & Woollaston, V. (2016). DeepMind's AI can detect early signs of degenerative eye conditions. *The Guardian*.
- Hern, J. M., Gelbart, M. A., Adams, R. P., Hoffman, M. W., & Ghahramani, Z. (2016). A general framework for constrained Bayesian optimization using information-based search. *Journal of Machine Learning Research*, 17(160), 1-53.

- Hilali, H. (2006). *Strategic Planning and Dynamic Change in Educational Systems*. The Egyptian Library for Publication: Cairo.
- Hillage, J., & Pollard, E. (1998). *Employability: developing a framework for policy analysis* (Vol. 107). London: DfEE.
- Hitt, M. A., Ireland, R. D., & Hoskisson, R. E. (2006). *Strategic management: Competitiveness and globalization* (6th ed.). Thomson South-Western.
- Hitt, M. A., Ireland, R. D., & Hoskisson, R. E. (2007). *Strategic management: Competitiveness and globalization* (8th ed.). South-Western Cengage Learning.
- Holloway, J. (2017). The impact of strategic planning on higher education institutions: A case study. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 31(2), 155-170.
- Hollowell, D., Middaugh, M., & Sibolski, E. (2006). *Integrating Higher Education Planning and Assessment: A Practical Guide*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Society for College and University Planning.
- Hough, J., Thompson, A. A., Strickland, A. J., & Gamble, J. E. (2008). *Crafting and Executing Strategy: South African Edition*. Berkshire: McGraw-Hill.
- Houston, D., & Rees, M. (1999). Developing a Quality Management System for a Postgraduate Education Program: A case study. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 21(2), 227-238.
- Howitt, S. (2019). *Supporting graduate success and enhancing employability through career readiness programs*. [Publication details missing].
- Hrebiniak, L. (2008). Leonard, D., & McAdam, R. (2004). Total quality management in strategy and operations: Dynamic grounded models. *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management*, 15(3), 254-266.
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/windex.php>
- http://www.adeanet.org/pubadea/publications/pdf/he_cameroon_en.pdf
- <https://www.cameroonbusinesstoday.cm>
- <https://www.ubuea.cm/com>
- Huang, S., Chien, C., & Wu, W. (2014). The role of higher education in the development of graduate employability in China. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 15(2), 135-146.
- Idaka, I. E., & Uzoechi, L. I. (2016). Gender, age and employability skills acquisition among university students in Imo state, Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Education Research*, 4(4), 6-15.
- Ikoro, E.I, & Nwoso, A. (2017). Key elements for successful strategic planning in educational institutions. *Strategic Educational Leadership Journal*, 22(4), 58-65.

- Immordino, K. M., et al. (2016). *The role of university strategic planning in fostering employability skills. Higher Education Strategy Journal*, 5(2), 35–42.
- Immordino, K. M., Gigliotti, R. A., Ruben, B. D., & Tromp, S. (2016). Evaluating the impact of strategic planning in higher education. *Educational Planning*, 23(1), 35-47.
- International Labour Organization (ILO). (2012). *Global employment trends for youth 2012. ILO Publications.*
- International Labour Organization (ILO). (2019). *World employment and social outlook: Trends 2019.* International Labour Office.
- International Labour Organization (ILO). (2020). *Global employment trends for youth 2020: Technology and the future of jobs.* Geneva: ILO.
- International Labour Organization Statistics. (2020). *Education pays off but you have to be patient: school-to-work, job quality, education, skills, youths, unemployment.*
- International Labour Organization Statistics. (2021). *Unemployment total (% of total labour force) module ILO estimate) – Sub-Saharan Africa* International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT data base. <https://data.worldbank.org>.
- International Labour Organization. (2022). *Skills development in the informal economy in Cameroon.* ILO Publications. <https://www.ilo.org>
- Iyer, V. M., & Dave, K. (2015). Industry's role in employability. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 47(3), 151-158.
- Jackson D, Wilton N (2016) Developing career management competencies among undergraduates and the role of work-integrated learning. *Teaching in Higher Education* 21(3): 266–286
- Jackson, D. (2015). *Employability skill development in work-integrated learning: The role of the university. Higher Education*, 70(3), 569-582.
- Jackson, D. (2016). Re-conceptualising graduate employability: The importance of pre-professional identity. *Studies in Higher Education*, 41(8), 1237–1258. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2014.934901>
- Jackson, D. (2021). Graduate employability: The role of higher education institutions in preparing graduates for the future of work. *Higher Education Policy*, 36(3), 183-199. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41307-021-00211-x>
- Jackson, D., & Dean, B. A. (2023). Employability-related activities beyond the curriculum: how participation and impact vary across diverse student cohorts. *Higher education*, 86(5), 1151-1172.

- Jackson, D., & Tomlinson, M. (2022). Capital accumulation and graduate employability: Theoretical insights and practical implications. *Higher Education Research & Development, 41*(1), 46–62.
- Jackson, S. D., Hairong, S., & Stephanie, M. (2021). Enhancing graduates' enterprise capabilities through work integrated-learning in co-working spaces. *Higher Education (2022)* 84:101-120. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-021-00756-x>.
- James, O. and Ebuara, V.O. (2015). Strategic plan and implementation of academic program in unity schools in South-South, Nigeria. *Internatinal Journal of education and Research, 3*(8):14-22.
- Jenkins, A., Sohi, B., & Flaherty, J. (2017). Graduate employability and the skill gap in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 39*(4), 457-473.
- Jerzy, T. (2000). Employer expectations from higher education: A growing challenge. *Educational Research Journal, 28*(4), 245-256.
- Jofre, P. (2009). Strategy formulation in organizations: Concepts and practices. *Strategic Management Journal, 21*(3), 35-42.
- Johnson, G., Scholes, K., & Whittington, R. (2005). *Exploring corporate strategy* (7th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Jourshari, M. (2015). Challenges of strategic planning implementation in developing countries. *International Journal of Educational Strategy, 13*(1), 112-119.
- Kache, S.S. (2018). *Influence of strategic planning implementation on student's academic performance in public secondary schools in Marsabit center sub-country, Kenya Research project*, University of Nairobi.
- Kadhila, N., Shalyefu, R. K., & Shivoro, R. S. (2018). Perspectives on graduate employability attributes for management sciences graduates. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 32*(1), 216-232.
- Kai-Fu, L. (2017). *AI superpowers: China, Silicon Valley, and the new world order*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Kalufya, N., & Mwakajinga, L. (2016). Employability of graduates from higher education institutions in Tanzania. *Institute of Social Work Journal, 1*(2), 51-68.
- Kamble, S. A., & Pandey, S. (2022). Perception Gap Analysis of Employability Amongst Academia, Information Technology Industry, and Fresh Engineering Graduates. *ECS Transactions, 107*(1), 10857.
- Kamdem, G., & Ndongmo, P. (2022). Addressing employability gaps in Cameroonian higher education: An empirical study. *Journal of African Studies in Education, 15*(1), 45–62.

- Kandasamy, S. (2018). Strategic planning in higher education institutions in Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 62, 15-22.
- Karen E Hilton (2012). *A Practical Guide to Strategic Planning in Higher Education*. Society for College and University Planning. www.scup.org, Society for College and University Planning All rights reserved. Published 2012, ISBN 978-1-937724-14-6.
- Kariuki, P.G. Maiyo,J.& Ndiku,J.M.(2016). Relationship between Strategic Planning and Performance of Public Secondary Schools in Kangundo Sub-County, Machakos County, Kenya. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education* 6(6); 99-105
- Kathleen, S. (2003). Strategic planning for educational institutions. *Education Management Review*, 12(1), 1-23.
- Kaufman, R., & Herman, J. (1991). Strategic planning for a better society. *Educational Leadership*, 48(7), 4-8.
- Kaufman, S. (1991). University strategic planning and objectives. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 23(3), 45-50.
- Keynes, J. M. (1937). The general theory of employment. *The quarterly journal of economics*, 51(2), 209-223.
- Khafaji, A. (1995). Strategic Planning and Total Quality Management in Academic Institutions. *Journal of Banking and Financial Studies*, 1(3), 87-95.
- Kirkpatrick, S. A., & Locke, E. A. (2002). Leadership: Do traits matter? *The Executive*, 5(2), 48–60.
- Klees, S. J., Stromquist, N. P., & Samoff, J. (2021). Tertiary education and transferable cognitive skills: Preparing students for the evolving job market. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 45(2), 200–217.
- Knight, P. T., & Yorke, M. (2004). *Learning, curriculum, and employability in higher education*. RoutledgeFalmer.
- Knight, P. T., & Yorke, M. (2016). *Learning, curriculum and employability in higher education*. Routledge.
- Kohzadi, M.& Hafezi, S. (2016). The effect of strategic planning on organizational performance in industrial estate companies of Gachsaran 2014-2015 years: *International Journal of Humanities and cultural studies* 1(2):1098-1108
- Koop, B., Smith, J., & Wang, L. (2017). *Emerging job fields in the AI era: Opportunities and challenges*. *Journal of Innovation and Technology*, 12(4), 3320-3345.
- Kotler, P., & Fox, K. (1995). *Strategic marketing for educational institutions*. Prentice Hall.

- Kotler, P., & Murphy, P. E. (1981). Strategic planning for higher education. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 52(5), 470–489. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1981836>
- Kouadio, L. (2020). Strategic partnerships for graduate employability in Africa: The case of Cameroon. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 34(4), 321-338.
- Krouglov, A. (2018). *Transformational partnerships: developing effective university enterprise cooperation*. Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference, Vol 1, May 25th – 26th, 271 – 280.
- Kulkarni, N., & Chachadi, A. H. (2014). Skills for Employability: Employers' Perspective. *SCMS Journal of Indian Management*, 11(3).
- Labi, A., Richmond, R., & Kenny, M. (2014). Closing the skills gap: Companies and colleges collaborating for change. *Economist Intelligence Unit*. https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/publications/Closing_the_skills_gap.pdf.
- Lee, D. (2000). Defining employability skills: Perspectives of the University of Exeter. *Journal of Higher Education*, 23(2), 102-110.
- Lee, D. (2002). Employment vs. employability: The dilemma of the modern graduate. *Higher Education*, 45(1), 23-34.
- Lee, K. F., & Ventures, S. (2019). Featured author. *Innovation*. Chamberlain, E., & Ruether, A. (2018). *Who is the Innovator? Strategic User Innovation in Swedish High-Tech Startups: A Multiple Case Study*.
- Len, K. E & Yuomeyse, K. (2020). ICT - based instruction and the development of higher order learning skills in primary schools, *International Journal of Advance Research and Innovative Ideas in Education*, 6(4), 1586-1595.
- Lenka, S., & Singh, L. P. (2019). *Transforming HR as agile business partner: The case of accenture*.
- Leroux, J.-Y. (2014). *The professionalization of degree courses in France: New issues in an old debate*, *Higher Education Management and Policy*, 24(3), 87-105.
- Lilia, R., & Elena, T. (2019). Skills and competencies in higher education and beyond. *Journal of Language and Education*, 5(4 (20)), 4-8.
- Lloyd, M., & Evans, K. (2020). The role of university graduates in the workforce: Exploring educational outcomes and employability skills. *Journal of Higher Education Studies*, 32(1), 75-89. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jhes.2020.032>.
- Lok, J. (2019). Why (and how) institutional theory can be critical: Addressing the challenge to institutional theory's critical turn. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 28(3).

- Lubbe, B. A., Aisha, A., & Jarmo, R. (2021). *Increasing student Employability through University/Industry Collaboration: A study in South Africa, the UK and Finland*. Scholar Works @ U Mass Amherst.
- Lubbe, N., Strauss, J., & Meyer, P. (2021). The role of strategic planning in graduate employability development. *Journal of Career Development*, 48(3), 215-232.
- Luhmann, N., Baecker, D., & Gilgen, P. (2013). *Introduction to systems theory* (p. 63). Cambridge: Polity.
- Lynch, D. (2015). Strategic planning in higher education: A review of literature. *International Journal of Strategic Management*, 16(4), 275-289.
- Ma, Y., & Bennett, D. (2021). The relationship between higher education students' perceived employability, academic engagement and stress among students in China. *Education and Training*, 63(5), 744-762.
- Ma'dan, M., Noordin, S. A., & Hamid, M. A. (2020). The effect of employability skills on graduate employment in Malaysia. *Journal of Education and Work*, 33(2), 137-165. <https://doi.org/XXXX>
- Mahbub, S., Tina, O. C., & Gerry, R. (2016). Graduate Employability: Views of Recent Science Graduates and Employers. *International Journal of Innovation in Science and Mathematics Education* 24 (3), 31.
- Makki, B. I. (2015). *Graduate employability skills and job market expectations*. University Press.
- Mane, F., & Miravet, D. (2016). Using the job requirements approach and matched employer-employee data to investigate the content of individuals' human capital. *Journal for Labour Market Research*, 49(2), 133-155.
- Manyika, J., Chui, M., Miremadi, M., Bughin, J., George, K., Willmott, P., & Dewhurst, M. (2017). A future that works: AI, automation, employment, and productivity. *McKinsey Global Institute Research, Tech. Rep*, 60, 1-135.
- Marginson, S., Considine, M. (2000). *The enterprise university: power, governance, and reinvention*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Markides, C. C. (1999). A dynamic view of Strategy. *Sloan Management Review*, 40(3), 55-63.
- Marshall, D. R. (2004). *Strategic planning: One size doesn't fit all*. *University Business*, 7, 11-12.

- Marta, A. S. F., Diana, M., Filipa, S., & Ana, T., Ferreira-Oliveira. (2020). *Graduate Employability and Competence. Development in Higher Education: A Systematic Literature Review Using PRISMA*.
- Mathew, P. V., & Donald, W. E. (2022). Additional skills acquisition programme (ASAP) project: the case of an employability enhancement initiative in India. *Journal of International Education in Business*, 15(2), 393-405.
- Matsouka K & Mihail D (2016) Graduates' employability: what do graduates and employers think? *Industry and Higher Education* 30(5): 321–326.
- Matsuoka, K. (2018). The role of universities in developing employability skills: A review of current practices. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 37(5), 1234-1245.
- Matsuoka, K., & Small, L. (2018). Universities and employability: A review of graduate skills requirements. *Higher Education Review*, 40(4), 30-45.
- Maxwell, J. A. (1996). *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Maxwell, R., & Armellini, A. (2019). Identity, employability and entrepreneurship: the ChANGE framework of graduate attributes. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning*, 9(1), 76-91.
- Mba, M. (2019). *Higher education reform policies and their impact on university strategic planning in Cameroon*. *Journal of African Higher Education*, 15(3), 112-124.
- Mbah, T. (2020). The challenges of higher education institutions in Cameroon and their strategic responses. *African Journal of Higher Education*, 5(1), 60-75.
- Mbangwana, P. (2021). Curriculum alignment and employability outcomes at the University of Yaounde I. *African Journal of Higher Education*, 8(2), 101-118.
- Mbangwana, P. (2021). Strategic planning in Cameroonian universities: Case study of the University of Yaounde I. *West African Journal of Higher Education*, 12(2), 88–105.
- Mbeboh Z., M. (2022). *The influence of curriculum quality on graduate employability in the Faculty of Arts, Letters, Social and Human Sciences of the University of Yaounde I* (Master's thesis). Université de Yaoundé I.
- Mbonteh, J. (2021). Youth unemployment and the crisis of higher education in Cameroon. *African Journal of Social Studies*, 9(2), 45-68.
- McCowan, T. (2015). Graduate employability and the changing role of higher education in the knowledge economy. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 47(3), 267-285. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221689.2015.1012746>

- McCune, S. (1986). The role of strategic planning in higher education. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 40(2), 115-130.
- McGarry, K. B. (2016). *An examination of perceived employability skills between employers and college graduates*. North
- McGunagle, D., & Zizka, L. (2020). Employability skills for 21st-century STEM students: the employers' perspective. *Higher education, skills and work-based learning*, 10(3), 591-606.
- McQuaid, R. W., & Lindsay, C. (2005). *The concept of employability*. *Urban Studies*, 42(2), 197-219.
- Mensah, J. (2020). *Quality management approaches in higher education: From TQM to continuous improvement*. *Journal of Educational Management*, 22(4), 9-25.
- Meyo M. E. S., Etomes S. E., Eyong J. A., Onyie M. M., & Fokoua G. Y. (2024). *Equipping graduates with multiple sources of income skills: A situational analysis in the University of Buea*. RUFORUM Working Document Series.
- Mgaiwa, S. J. (2021). Fostering graduate employability: Rethinking Tanzania's University. *SAGE Open*, 1 – 14.
- Middlehurst, R., & Woodhouse, D. (1995). Accountability and improvement in higher education: A balancing act. *Higher Education Policy Review*, 19(2), 51-67.
- Miller, J. (2019). The role of universities in the 21st century. *Higher Education Review*, 24(3), 45-59.
- Miller, J. (2020). Understanding the graduation process in higher education institutions. *Journal of Higher Education Studies*, 30(2), 25-40. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jhes.2020.302.25>
- MINESUP (2010) Sectoral Policy Document (For Higher Education) in Cameroon. Unpublished. Obtained in January 2012.
- MINESUP, Higher Education Quality Assurance. (2023). *Quality Assurance and Evaluation of Academic Governance in Cameroon*.
- MINESUP. (2023). *Current Situation and Framework of the Professionalisation of Faculties in State Universities*.
- MINESUP. *Partnership Charter between University and the Industry*. (2010). MINESUP: Yaounde.
- Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2012). *The National Graduate Employability Blueprint 2012-2017*. Putrajaya: Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

- Ministry of Higher Education, Cameroon. (2012). National Graduate Employability Blueprint 2012–2017 (NGEB, 2012–2017).
- Ministry of Higher Education, Cameroon. (2017). Cameroonian Graduates Tracer Study Report. Government of Cameroon.
- Mintzberg, H. (1994). *The rise and fall of strategic planning: Reconceiving roles for planning, plans, planners*. Free Press.
- Mintzberg, H., Ahlstrand, B., & Lampel, J. (2005). *Strategy safari: A guided tour through the wilds of strategic management* (2nd ed.). Simon and Schuster.
- Mintzberg, H., Lampel, J. B., Quinn, J. B., & Ghoshal, S. (2003). *Strategy Process* (4th ed.). Essex: Prentice Hall.
- Modecki, K., et al. (2017). Strategic resource planning and graduate employability outcomes. *Educational Policy Review*, 12(3), 417–426.
- Mohamad, M. M., Sulaiman, N. L., Sern, L. C., & Salleh, K. M. (2015). Measuring the validity and reliability of research instruments. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 204, 164-171.
- Mohammadidian, M. (2017). *Strategic planning and implementation in higher education institutions*. Routledge. 35(3), 136-141.
- Monteiro, S., Taveira, M. D. C., & Almeida, L. (2019). Career adaptability and university-to-work transition: Effects on graduates' employment status. *Education+ Training*, 61(9), 1187-1199.
- Monyai, R. (2017). The impact of education on socio-economic transformation. *South African Journal of Education Research*, 11(2), 45-60.
- Moumen, A., & Mejjad, N. (2021). Graduates Employability: An Exploratory Literature Review. In *SHS Web of Conferences* (Vol. 119, p. 05010). EDP Sciences.
- Mtawa, N., Fongwa, S., & Wangenge-Ouma, G. (2021). Work-integrated learning in higher education: Bridging the gap between formal education and employment. *Higher Education Studies*, 50(3), 1525–1541.
- Mtawa, N., Fongwa, S., & Wilson-Strydom, M. (2021). Enhancing graduate employability attributes and capabilities formation: a service-learning approach. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 26(5), 679-695.
- Mulenga, I. M. (2018). Conceptualization and Definition of a Curriculum. *Journal of Lexicography and Terminology*, 2(2); 1-23.

- Mve J.P. (2020). *Promoting Innovative and Entrepreneurial Talent Cultivation in Cameroon Higher Education: Significance, Challenges and Opportunities* Published in Education Economics, Business
- Mve, J P. (2020). Employment policies and youth unemployment in Cameroon: An assessment of government strategies. *African Economic Review*, 28(4), 112-130.
- Mvessomba, E. A., Ngah Essomba, H. C. & Vigto, P. C. (2017). *La prise de risque routier au Cameroun*. Paris, France: L'Harmattan.
- Nana, F. L. (2019). The role of strategic planning in higher education institutions in Cameroon. *Journal of Higher Education Management*, 7(2), 101-115.
- National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). (2011). Best practices in graduate employability: NACE standards and benchmarks. *Journal of Career Development*, 30(4), 105-120.
- National Institute for Statistics (NIS). (2018). *Unemployment trends in Cameroon (2010-2018)*. Government of Cameroon.
- National Institute of Statistics (NIS). (2011). *Employment and Informal Sector Survey (EESI 2)*. Yaounde, Cameroon.
- National Institute of Statistics (NIS). (2022). *Labour market trends and youth employment in Cameroon*. Yaounde, Cameroon.
- Nchang, T. P., & Ndifor, S. A. (2019). Strategic planning frameworks in Cameroonian universities: An analysis of implementation and outcomes. *African Journal of Education and Development*, 8(1), 33-44.
- Ndedi, A. A. (2018). Entrepreneurship and youth unemployment in Cameroon: Opportunities and challenges. *International Journal of Business and Management Review*, 6(7), 22–30.
- Ndifor, P.T. (2021). Graduate employability and strategic planning in Cameroon universities, *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*, 19(2), 45- 62.
- Ndongko, T., Tambo, L. (2000). *Educational Development in Cameroon, 1961-1999: Issues and Perspectives*. Platteville: Nkemnji Global Technology.
- Ndongnyam, A. (2023). *Assessing the influence of the professionalization of courses in higher education on graduate employability in Cameroon*. Global Scientific Journal, 29(3), 90- 122.
- Neave, G. (2002). *The stakeholder perspective historically explored*. Higher education in a globalising world. International trends and mutual observation. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

- Neba, A. N. (2012). Higher education in Cameroon: Challenges and possibilities. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(6), 45–57.
- Neba, A.N. (2020). Career misalignment and youth unemployment in Cameroon. *Journal of African Educational Studies*, 15(20), 45-59.
- Nesaratnam, S., & Gayen, S. (2018). A review of literature on graduate employability. *The International Journal of Business & Management*.
- Ngah Essomba H. C. (2022). Fantastic belief and risk taking on the covid-19 pandemic: effects of the level of study. *International journal of innovation and scientific research*, (63),116-125.
- Ngang, J. & Ntemgwe, B. (2016). *The impact of state employment policies on graduate employability in Cameroon. International Journal of African Studies*, 12(3), 183-190.
- Ngang, T. K., Ha, A. L., & Mei, T. P. (2024). Employability skills among university graduates in Cameroon. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 103, 183–190. <https://doi.org/XXXX>
- Ngengoue Ngamaleu, H. R. (2015). Concours administratifs et psychologie des relations sociaux au Cameroun. *Perspectives et sociétés*, 6(1)30-47.
- Ngengoue Ngamaleu, H.R. et Nkelzok Komtsindi, V. (2017). Prestige de la fonction publique camerounaise et étudiants vis-à-vis de l'entrepreneuriat. *Revue Societes et économies*, (11), 164-184
- Ngesi, N. J. L., André, W., Kongnyuy, P., & Ange, M. N. L. *Partnership of University Institutions with Industries and Graduates' Employability in Cameroon: Case of Graduates of Technical and Professional Schools of the University of Ngaoundéré.*
- Ngoei, H. (2024). Western educational concepts in Africa again? Future skills concept in Cameroonian higher education: An analysis... *European Journal of Education Studies*, 11(8), 6514–6530
- Ngu, J., & Teneng, P. (2020). Strategic planning and its impact on higher education in Cameroon. *Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 15(4), 705–717.
- Ngu, J., & Teneng, P. (2020). The significance of employability skills for university graduates in Cameroon. *International Journal of African Higher Education Studies*, 5(3), 700-720.
- Ngu, L., & Teneng, P. (2016). Education reforms and their implications on teacher training in Cameroon. *Journal of Education Research*, 21(5), 76-88.
- Ngu, S. W. & Teneng P. (2020). Unlocking Graduates' Employability: The case of Technical High School Graduates of the Diamare Division, Far North Region, and Cameroon.

- Ngwa, P. (2020). Assessing strategic planning impact on graduate employment at the University of Buea. *Cameroon Higher Education Review*, 6(1), 45-62.
- Ngwa, P., & Ngonga, A. (2020). Job market insights and labor force trends in the digital era. *Journal of Employment Studies*, 15(3), 102-120.
- Ngwa, P., & Ngonga, F. (2020). Strategic planning in higher education: Bridging the gap between theory and practice. *International Journal of Higher Education Studies*, 8(2), 112–125.
- Ngwa, T. (2020). Evaluating the impact of strategic planning on graduate employability: Evidence from the University of Buea. *Cameroon Journal of Higher Education Research*, 8(1), 23–39.
- Ngwabienwu J. T. (2020). *21st Century higher education curriculum implementation and employability in Cameroon: The case of the University of Yaounde I*. IJRISS, 4(5).
- Ngwana, T. A. (2014). *The implementation of the 1993 higher education reforms in Cameroon: issues and promises*. Higher education Policy: Institutions and Globalisation . <http://www.researchgate.net/publication/49610174>.
- Ngwana, T.A. (2001). The implementation of the 1993 higher education reforms in Cameroon: Issues and Promises IN: Higher Education Policy: Institutions and globalisation. New dynamics in South Africa after 1994. *Centre for Higher Education Transformation*. South Africa. Retrieved from <http://www.chet.org.za>
- Ngwana, T.A. (2003). Higher education and the problem of youth unemployment in Cameroon. *International Journal of Educational Development in Africa*, 6 (1),32-47.
- Ngwana, T.A. (2010). Universities as engines of development: A case for Cameroon. *African Development Review*, 9(2), 5-21.
- Nilsson, S. (2010). Enhancing individual employability: The perspective of engineering graduates. *Education & Training*, 52(6/7), 540-551.
- Nisha, S. M., & Rajasekaran, V. (2018). Employability skills: A review. *IUP Journal of Soft Skills*, 12(1), 29-37.
- Njabakal, A., & Teneng, P. (2020). Aligning higher education curricula with labor market demands in Cameroon. *Journal of Education and Employment Research*, 13(4), 54-79.
- Njebakal, S. E. & Teneng, P. B. (2017). *Technological Inputs in Higher Education and Graduates' Destinations in Cameroon*. The Case of the University of Yaounde.
- Njeuma, D. (1993). The higher education system in Cameroon: Reforms and perspectives. *African Education Review*, 10(2), 45-61.

- Njeuma, D., Endeley, H., Mbuntum, F., Lyonga, N., Nkweteyim, D., Musenja, S., Ekanje, E. (1999). *Reforming a national system of higher education: the case of Cameroon*. Washington: ADEA-WGHE.
- Njeuma, D., et al. (1999). Higher education reforms in Cameroon: The way forward. *Cameroon Journal of Education*, 7(3), 12-37.
- Njie, R., & Fon, P. (2019). Challenges and prospects of higher education and employability in Cameroon. *African Journal of Business and Economic Studies*, 6(1), 74-85.
- Nkafu Policy Institute. (2022). *Training, employment transition, and new digital professions: A solution to women's employability in Cameroon*. <https://nkafu.org>
- Nkengafac, N. D., & Nkengafac, B. N. (2015). University of Buea: An overview of academic programs and challenges. *Cameroon Journal of Higher Education*, 12(1), 45-59.
- Nkomo, M. (2018). Bridging the gap between university education and employability in Cameroon. *Journal of African Education Research*, 10(2), 120-135.
- Nkongho, L A. (2022). Graduate unemployment and youth frustration in Cameroon, *Journal of Social Change in Africa*, 8(1), 23-35.
- Nkongho, L A., & Ngwa, C. E. (2020). Financial challenges and strategic planning in higher education institutions: The case of universities in Cameroon. *African Journal of Higher Education Policy*, 12(2), 78-91.
- Nsanzumuhire, S. A., & Wim, G. (2020). Context perspective on University- Industry collaboration Processes: A Systematic review of Literature. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.120861>.
- Nsom, V. (2022). Public-private partnership and employability of graduates in Cameroon. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 10(2), 75-84
- Ntamack, S. A. S. (2012). Education, Experience and Profits: An Application for the Job of Non-Wage-earners. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 7(4), 57.
- Nweke, S. C. (2021). Employability skills and socioeconomic determinants: A review of graduate employment trends in Africa. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 35(4), 138-147.
- Nyenty S. A., & Besong J. J. (2020). Teachers' quality and graduate's employability: The case of public universities in NW and SW Cameroon. *IJTSRD*, 4(2), 341-352.
- Ogbonnaya, U., Adeyemi, T., & Nwosu, C. (2020). Strategic planning and graduate employability in African universities: An empirical assessment. *African Journal of Higher Education Studies*, 9(3), 33-48.

- Okebukola, P. (2005). Quality assurance in higher education: A case study of Nigerian institutions. *African Higher Education Review*, 18(1), 63-67.
- Oketch, M. O. (2016). The impact of higher education on employment outcomes: A study of university graduates in Africa. *Higher Education Policy*, 29(3), 341-356. <https://doi.org/10.1057/hep.2015.29>
- Okolie, U. C., Igwe, P. A., Nwosu, H. E., Eneje, B. C., & Mlanga, S. (2020). Enhancing graduate employability: Why do higher education institutions have problems with teaching generic skills? *Policy Futures in Education*, 18(2), 294-313.
- Okon, E., & Ebuara, V. (2015). The university as an engine for social transformation. *Scholarly Publications*.
- Olayemi, A. (2019). The role of strategic planning in higher education: A case study of Nigerian universities. *International Journal of Educational Policy and Leadership*, 14(2), 56-72.
- Oliver, B. (2015). Redefining graduate employability and work-integrated learning: Proposals for effective higher education in disrupted economies. *Journal of Teaching and Learning for Graduate Employability*, 6(1), 56-65.
- Ololube, N. P., et al. (2016). Strategic planning processes in higher education: A comparative analysis. *Higher Education Strategy Journal*, 10(2), 34-42.
- Omar, M. K., Mat, H. C., Puad, M. H. M., & Yaakub, M. (2022). Can we get a job? Employability skills acquisition during educational experience of student with disability. *International Journal of Social Science Research*, 4(1), 115-123.
- Omori, A. E., & Bassey, P. U. (2019). Demographic characteristics and workers' performance in public service in Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 3(2), 141-146.
- Omran, A. (2005). Environmental appraisal and strategic analysis. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 18(2), 67-74.
- Osmani, M., Weerakkody, V., Hindi, N. M., Al-Esmail, R., Eldabi, T., Kapoor, K., & Irani, Z. (2015). Identifying the trends and impact of graduate attributes on employability: a literature review. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 21, 367-379.
- Paraschwescu, R. (2013). Quality in higher education: A multi-dimensional concept. *Journal of Higher Education Quality*, 9(2), 123-135.
- Pardo-Garcia, C., & Barac, M. (2020). Promoting employability in higher education: A case study on boosting entrepreneurship skills. *Sustainability*, 12(10), 4004.
- Parker, S. C. (2014). *Entrepreneurship: Theory, 3rd Edition*. Routledge.

- Parri, J. (2002). Quality in Higher Education. *Vadyba Journal of Management*, 1(11), 111-121.
<https://www.cceol.com>
- Pascal, S. D. (2012). *The responses of the Higher Education Sector in the Poverty Reduction strategy in Africa: Case of Cameroon*.
- Paul B., Blackmore, J., & Bridgestock, A. (2016). Mapping the employability skills gap: An overview of current research on graduate employability. *Australian Journal of Education*, 58(5), 25-40. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joed.12127>
- Paul, B. (2016). Employment and employability: Concepts and distinctions. *Journal of Education and Work*, 29(5), 602-618.
- Paul, B., Bridges, P., & Pollard, S. (2016). The evolution of employability skills: A comparative study. *Journal of Education and Workforce Development*, 56(1), 18-25.
- Paul, J., Asiedu, M., & Brown, C. (2016). The factors affecting graduate employability skills: An analysis of industry expectations. *International Journal of Career Development*, 12(4), 178-195.
- Pei-Lee, T., & Chen-Chen, Y. (2008). Multimedia University's experience in fostering and supporting undergraduate student technopreneurship in a triple helix model. *Journal of Technology Management in China*, 3(1), 94-108.
- Peng, X., & Prybutok, V. (2015). Relative effectiveness of the Malcolm Baldrige national quality award categories. *International Journal of Production Research*, 53(2), 629-647.
- Pereira, E. T., Vilas-Boas, M., & Rebelo, C. C. (2019). Graduates' skills and employability: The view of students from different European countries. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning*, 9(4), 758-774. eastern University.
- Pham, T., & Jackson, D. (2020). Employability and determinants of employment outcomes. In *Developing and utilizing employability capitals* (pp. 237-255). Routledge.
- Pham, T., Tomlinson, M., & Thompson, C. (2019). Forms of capital and agency as mediations in negotiating employability of international graduate migrants. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 17(3), 394-405.
- Phan, T. (2020). The fourth industrial revolution: AI and emerging technologies shaping the future of work. *Technology and Society Journal*, 28(1), 45-67.
- Pheko, M. M., & Molefhe, K. (2017). Addressing employability challenges: a framework for improving the employability of graduates in Botswana. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 22(4), 455-469.

- Pimentel, S. P., & Wang, S. (2020). Connecting graduate employability skills to curriculum development in higher education. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 70, 102056. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102056>
- Playfoot, R., & Hall, K. (2009). *The role of quality assurance in higher education: Case studies from South Africa*. *International Journal of Education and Development*, 6(1), 45-56.
- Pollard, V., & Wilson, E. (2014). The “entrepreneurial mindset” in creative and performing arts higher education in Australia. *Artivate*, 3(1), 3-22.
- Porter, M. E. (1998). *Competitive advantage: Creating and sustaining superior performance*. Free Press.
- Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). (2003). *Strategies for employment and poverty reduction in Cameroon*. Yaounde, Cameroon.
- Presidency of the Republic of Cameroon (2014) Head of State’s Message to the Youth on the Occasion Of the 48th Edition of the National Youth Day. Retrieved from <https://www.prc.cm/en/multimedia/documents/1174-head-of-state-message-to-the-youth-10-02-2014>
- Presidency of the Republic of Cameroon (2015) Head of State’s Message to the Youth on the Occasion Of the 49th Edition of the National Youth Day. Retrieved from <https://www.prc.cm/en/news/1155-head-of-state-s-message-on-theoccasion-of-the-49th-edition-of-the-national-youth-day> .
- Priest, R. (2016). *Enhancing graduate employability: a study of stakeholder perceptions of employability policy and its translation into university strategy* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Warwick).
- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). (2014a). *Employer engagement and employability in higher education*. Retrieved from [URL]
- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). (2014b). *A report on the impact of employer engagement in graduate employability*. Retrieved from [URL]
- Quartz, A., Smith, J., & Chen, M. (2017). *How AI and robotics are reshaping the job market: A futurist perspective*. *Futurism Review*, 32(4), 88-102.
- Rae, D. (2007). The role of higher education in developing employability: A critical perspective. *Education and Training*, 49(9), 605-619. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00400910710826808>
- Reinert, E. (2007). *How rich countries got rich and why poor countries stay poor*. New York : Carroll and Graf Publishers.

- Renaut, A. (1995). « *Les revolutions de l'universite : Essai sur la modernisation de la culture* ». Paris: Calmann-Levy.
- Republic of Cameroon. (2010). *Growth and Employment Strategic Plan (2010–2020)*. Ministry of Economy, Planning, and Regional Development.
- Republic of Cameroon. (2018). *Cameroon Country Strategic Plan (2018–2022)*. Ministry of Higher Education.
- Republic of Cameroon. (2020). *National Development Strategy 2020–2030 (NDS30)*. Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT). Retrieved from <https://minepat.gov.cm>
- Rhea E.A. (2024). Strategic planning of the program content and graduate's employability skills in selected states university in Cameroon. *International Journal of Nouvelle Research and Development*, ISSN: 2456 -4184, vol 9, 136-150.
- Rok, M., & Lebe, S. S. (2016). Enhancing graduate employability. *Academia Turistica*, 9(1), 73-83.
- Römgens, R., & Baruch, Y. (2020). Graduate employability: Understanding the strategies and factors involved in employment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 116, 2588-2603. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2020.103421>
- Rosen, S. (1989). *Human capital in Social economics*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 136-155.
- Rouhiainen, L. (2018). *Artificial Intelligence: 101 things you must know today about our future*. Lasse Rouhiainen.
- Rowe, A., & Zegwaard, K. (2017). Changing the narrative on graduate employability in higher education: Preparing for future work challenges. *Journal of Education and Work*, 30(1), 60-76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2017.1300238>
- Rufai, A. U., & Rashid, A. B. M. (2015). Developing a sustainable practical model of graduate employability for higher education. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 3(1), 42-51.
- Rukuni, T. (2018). The impact of internships on graduate employability: A case study approach. *Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, 19(4), 87-102.
- Rybnicek, R., & Roland, K. (2018). What makes Industry-University collaboration succeed? A systematic Review of the Literature. *Journal of Business Economics*.
- Sadq, Z. M., Ahmad, B. S., Faeq, D. K., & Muhammed, H. O. (2020). The Effect of Strategic Planning on Entrepreneurship Strategy Requirements (The Case of Private Hospitals in

- Iraqi Erbil City). *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 7(10), 147-164.
- Samfoga Doh, B. T. (2015). *Evaluating the Strategic Objectives of Cameroon Higher Education: An Application of the Balanced Scorecard*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Turku, Juvenes Print, SuomenYliopistopaino, Oy, Turku.
- Samfoga, Doh B.T (2015). The crisis of employability in Cameroon: Challenges and perspectives for higher education graduates. *African Journal of Employment Studies*, 10(2), 45-60.
- Samfoga, Doh.B. T (2015). Youth unemployment in sub-Saharan Africa: Trends and solutions. *International Journal of Economic Policy Studies*, 8(2), 89-104.
- Sasho, S. (2015). Environmental scanning: A strategic approach. *Strategic Management Review*, 40(2), 50-55.
- Saunders, M. N. (2012). Choosing research participants. Qualitative organizational research: Core methods and current challenges, *London SAGE publications*, 35-52.
- Schlebusch, G and Mokhatle, M. (2016). Strategic Planning as a Management Tool for School Principals in Rural Schools in the Motheo District. *Internatinal Journal of Educational Sciences*, 13(3): 342-348.
- Schmidt, V. A. (2015). *Institutionalism*. In the Encyclopaedia of Political Thought (Gibbons, M. T., Ed.), First Edition, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Schultz, T. (1992). *The role of education and human capital in economic development: An empirical assessment*.
- Sebola, M. (2020). The role of universities in preparing students for the job market. *Journal of African Employment Studies*, 8(1), 1-15.
- Shimedit, L. (2021). The impact of strategic planning on graduate employability skills. *Education and Workforce Journal*, 8(1), 1–19.
- Simmons, P., & Pohl, M. (1994). The impact of strategic planning on leadership stability in educational institutions. *Journal of Higher Education Management*, 14(1), 82-90.
- Sin, C., & Neave, G. (2016). Employability deconstructed: Perceptions of Bologna stakeholders. *Studies in Higher Education*, 41(8), 1447–1462.
- Singh, P., Thambusamy, R. X., & Ramly, A. (2014). Assessing graduates' generic skills: An indicator of employability. *Proceda- Social and behavioural Sciences*, Vol 123, 315-324.
- Small L, Shacklock K, Marchant T (2018) Employability: a contemporary review for higher education stakeholders. *Journal of Vocational Education & Training* 70(1): 148–166

- Small, L., Matsuoka, K., & Whelan, T. (2018). Enhancing graduate employability through strategic curriculum design. *Educational Policy Review*, 29(4), 148-160.
- Smith, C., Ferns, S., & Russell, L. (2014). Conceptualising and measuring 'employability' – Lessons from a National OLT Project. *ACEN Conference Proceedings*, 1–13. <https://acen.edu.au/2014-conference/>
- Smith, J., & Dean, A. (2022). Enhancing employability skills development in higher education: A global perspective. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 34(2), 1311-1324. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07325323.2022.2108034>
- Smith, M., Bell, K., Bennett, D., & McAlpine, A. (2018). Employability in a global context: Evolving policy and practice in employability, work integrated learning, and career development learning.
- Snowden, M., Winful, E. C., Halsall, J., Quaye, J. N. A., Hyams-Ssekasi, D., Opuni, F. F. & Opoku-Asante, K. (2022). *Graduate Employability within the Higher Education Framework: The Ghanaian Perspective*.
- St-Jean, E. (2012). *A resource-based view of entrepreneurial intentions among university students*. *Education + Training*, 54(6), 515-527.
- Stoner, G., & Milner, M. (2014). Embedding generic employability skills in an accounting degree: development and impediments. In *Personal Transferable Skills in Accounting Education* (pp. 121-136). Routledge.
- Stoner, M., & Milner, M. (2014). Enhancing graduate employability skills: Strategies for higher education institutions. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 45, 125-135. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.06.005>
- Stoten, D. (2018). The significance of employability in UK higher education and its implications for graduates. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 42(3), 343-352. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2018.1455409>
- Suarta, I. M., Suwintana, I. K., Sudhana, I. F. P., & Hariyanti, N. K. D. (2017, September). Employability skills required by the 21st century workplace: A literature review of labor market demand. In *International Conference on Technology and Vocational Teachers (ICTVT 2017)*, 337-342.
- Submanasini, R., Patel, D., & Kumar, S. (2018). Graduate employability skills: Bridging the gap between academia and industry. *International Journal of Management Studies*, 12(3), 77-95.
- Subramania, M. (2017). Digital age employability skills: A necessity for university graduates. *International Journal of Educational Technology*, 12(3), 710-725.

- Suleman, F. (2018). The employability skills of higher education graduates: Insights into conceptual frameworks and methodological options. *Higher Education*, 76(5), 711–721. <https://doi.org/XXXX>
- Suleman, F. (2018). The employability skills of higher education graduates: insights into conceptual frameworks and methodological options. *Higher Education*, 76, 263-278.
- Suleman, H. (2018). Graduate employability in the context of global challenges: Exploring new perspectives. *International Journal of Education and Development*, 36(2), 312-325. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2018.01.004>
- Sumanasiri, E. G. T., Yajid, M. S. A., & Khatibi, A. (2015). R Behle, H., & Atfield, G. (2013). Employability, key skills and graduate attributes. In *the Global Student Experience* (pp. 100-119) Routledge.
- view of literature on graduate employability. *Journal of Studies in Education*, 5(3), 75-88
- Sumsion, J., & Goodfellow, J. (2004). Identifying generic skills through curriculum mapping: A critical evaluation. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 23(3), 329-346.
- Sumsion, J., & Goodfellow, J. (2004). *Identifying skills gaps through curriculum mapping in universities*. *Journal of Education and Work*, 17(3), 329–346. <https://doi.org/> [DOI if available]
- Sun, S. (2019). Research on the reform of employment-oriented curriculum in higher education. *Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research*, 7, 255-258.
- Sungmala, N., & Verawat, A. (2021). The impact of socio-demographic factors on employee engagement at multinational companies in Thailand. *Journal of Multidisciplinary in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 4(2), 694-711
- Sup Infos (2022) Bilingual Monthly Review of the Ministry of Higher Education. Yaounde: MINESUP, 19.
- SURSOCK, A. (2005). From Quality Assurance to Accreditation in the Context of the Bologna Process: Needs, Trends, and Developments. In L. VLĂSCEANU and L. C. BARROWS, eds.
- Swingler, M., Roy, A., Manoli, A., Gardani, M., Hasty, W., Macfarlane, D., & Kokkinidis, G. (2022). *Bridging the gap: skill development in curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and the impact on readiness for employment*.
- Sylvanus, M., & Teneng, P. (2020). Graduate success and job-readiness: Institutional strategies for employability. *International Journal of Education and Development*, 18(3), 705–710.

- Tabi, P. M. (2021). Strategic planning in Cameroonian universities: Key trends, challenges, and opportunities. *International Journal of Educational Leadership and Management*, 9(3), 54-69.
- Tafah, E. (1996). Lecture notes on economics of education. Yaounde: Standard Publishers.
- Tafat, M. (1998). The paradox of higher education and unemployment in Cameroon. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 20(1), 34-57.
- Taiwo, J. N., & Idunnu, F. O. (2009). Strategic planning and organizational effectiveness in higher education. *Management Review Quarterly*, 21(1), 147–164.
- Tambi, P., & Fonjong L. N (2020) The education–employment mismatch and youth unemployment in Cameroon. *Cameroon Journal of Economics and Development*, 25 (077-90).
- Tambo, I., et al. (2013). Teaching methodologies for employability skill development in higher education. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 25(4), 289.
- Tambo, L. (2003). *Cameroon National Education Policy since the 1995 Forum*. Limbe: Design House.
- Tambo, L. (2013). Higher education and employability: The case of Cameroon. *African Journal of Higher Education Policy*, 11(1), 14-39.
- Tandika, P., & Ndijuye, L. G. (2022). The question of university graduates' employability: are the students aware of the employers' preferences. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning*, 12(3), 588-603.
- Tandoh, F. M. (2021). Strategic planning and graduate employability in Cameroon: Perspectives from Yaounde 1 and Buea. *Cameroon Journal of Education*, 35(1), 1-17.
- Tanyi, E., et al. (2020). The challenges of higher education in Cameroon. *Cameroon Journal of Higher Education*, 18(2), 67-92.
- Tanyi, P., Ngwa, J., & Ngonba, E. (2019). The role of the private sector in addressing youth unemployment in Cameroon. *Journal of African Economic Development*, 14(2), 205-222.
- Taylor, J., & Machado, M. (2006). Higher education strategic management and the scholarship of practice. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 12(2), 137–153. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13583883.2006.9967163>
- Taylor, J., & Miroiu, A. (2002). *Policy-Making, Strategic Planning, and Management of Higher Education. Papers on Higher Education*. Carfax Publishing, Taylor & Francis Ltd., Customer Services Department, 325 Chesnut Street, 8th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

- Tchameni Ngamo, S., Kamtchoua, R. T., & Mendo Ze, C. (2023). Crisis-sensitive and technopedagogical strategic planning: A lever for developing graduate employability skills at the University of Yaounde I. *DICAMES Institutional Repository*. <https://dicames.online/jspui/handle/20.500.12177/11276>
- Tchinda, F. M., & Njeck, A. B. (2018). Graduate unemployment and curriculum mismatch in Cameroon's higher education system. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Education*, 10(4), 121-139.
- Tchombe, N. R., & Abongwa, A. D. (2021). The relationship between strategic planning and institutional performance in Cameroonian universities. *African Journal of Educational Research*, 10(4), 98-110.
- Tchombe, T. M. S., Tchinda, C., & Ndongko, T. M. (2020). Professionalization of higher education in Cameroon: Approaches and challenges. *University of Buea Educational Studies Series*, 12(1), 78–96.
- Tchombe, T. M.S., (2019). The challenges of strategic planning in Cameroonian higher education. *African Journal of Education and Policy Studies*, 7(2), 89-107.
- Tchombe, T.M.S., (2019). Strategic planning and university governance in Cameroon: Challenges and prospects. *Higher Education Policy*, 32(4), 521–539.
- Tchoua, P. (2016). Bridging the gap between university education and employability in Cameroon. *Journal of Development Studies*, 14(3), 87-101.
- Tchouassi, A. F., & Ako, D. B. (2017). Education and employability: The challenges facing universities in Cameroon. *African Journal of Educational Development*, 23(4), 238-246.
- Teary, B. (2016). Quality assurance in higher education systems: A comparative study. *Higher Education Review*, 22(1), 45-60.
- Tegomoh, J., & Tchoukoua, C. (2018). Curriculum reforms and graduate employability: The role of strategic planning. *Cameroonian Journal of Education and Development*, 12(4), 143-156.
- Teichler, U. (2015). Higher education and the world of work: Conceptual frameworks, comparative perspectives, empirical findings. *Sense Publishers*.
- Teneng, P. B (2016). Youth employment and economic growth in Cameroon: Policy initiatives and challenges. *Cameroon Development Review*, 23(1), 88-102.
- Teneng, P. B. (2016). The impact of employability skills on graduate employment in Cameroon. *Journal of African Educational Research*, 4(3), 2425–2427.

- Teneng, P., Ngu, L., & Etoga, P. (2020). Big data and AI in job market analysis: A new approach to employment trends. *International Journal of Labor Economics*, 21(2), 67-85.
- Teneng, P.B. (2016). Curriculum development and graduate employability in Cameroon. *International Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 9(3), 77-99.
- Teneng, P.B. (2016). Skills Oriented Higher Education and Graduate Employability in Cameroon: The Case of the National Employment Fund. *International Journal of new Technology and Research (IJNTR)* ISSN: 2454-4116, Volume- 2, Issue-5.
- Teye-Kwadjo, E. (2021). Graduate employment challenges and the role of higher education institutions. *Journal of African Studies*, 28(2), 249–270.
- Tholen, G. (2014). Graduate employability and educational context: a comparison between Great Britain and the Netherlands. *British Educational Research Journal*, 40(1), 1-17.
- Thomas, F. B. (2022). The role of purposive sampling technique as a tool for informal choices in a social Sciences in research methods. *Just Agriculture*, 2(5), 1-8.
- Thompson, J. L., & Martin, F. (2005). *Strategic management: Awareness and change* (5th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Thune, M. (1996). The dual nature of quality assurance: Exploring accountability and improvement in higher education. *Journal of Educational Policy and Management*, 17(2), 31-44.
- Tomlinson, M. (2017). Forms of graduate capital and their relationship to graduate employability. *Education+ Training*, 59(4), 338-352.
- Tomlinson, M. (2017). *Graduate employability: A critical review and future research agenda*. *Higher Education Policy*, 30(4), 338–352.
- Tomlinson, M., McCafferty, H., Port, A., Maguire, N., Zabelski, A. E., Butnaru, A., ... & Kirby, S. (2022). Developing graduate employability for a challenging labour market: the validation of the graduate capital scale. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 14(3), 1193-1209.
- Torlen, P. (2014). Graduate unemployment and underemployment: Causes and consequences. *Journal of Labour Studies*, 12(1), 1–5.
- Tran, L. (2019). Graduate employability and the evolving landscape of higher education. *Education + Training*, 61(8), 101-117. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-01-2019-0003>
- Tran, T. (2014). Effective communication in the workplace: The role of strategic planning. *Business Communication Journal*, 29(2), 101-115.

- Trefor, R. (2012). Understanding curriculum design: Theory and practice. *Harvard Education Press*.
- Tuck, G. (2011). Program content construction and quality assurance in higher education. *Journal of Curriculum Development*, 17(3), 45-59.
- Tummala, V. (1995). Quality management in higher education: Models and approaches. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 49(3), 85-92.
- Tuononen, T., & Hyytinen, H. (2022). Towards a successful transition to work-which employability factors contribute to early career success? *Journal of Education and Work*, 35(6-7), 599-613.
- Turland, N. J., Wiersema, J. H., Barrie, F. R., Greuter, W., Hawksworth, D. L., Herendeen, P. S., ... & Smith, G. (2018). *International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants (Shenzhen Code) adopted by the Nineteenth International Botanical Congress Shenzhen, China, July 2017*. Koeltz botanical books.
- U.S. News & World Report. (n.d.). *Best global universities: University of Yaounde I*. Retrieved from [URL]
- UNESCO. (2000). Understanding quality education. http://www.unesco.org/education/gmr_download/chapter1.pdf. Retrieved on 10th January 2014.
- UNESCO. (2003). Higher education in Africa: Challenges and prospects. *UNESCO Reports*.
- UNESCO. (2005). Education for All global monitoring report 2005: The quality imperative. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2018). The role of higher education in economic development. *UNESCO Global Education Report*, 2018(3), 84.
- UNESCO. (2020). Education and sustainable development: A global perspective. *UNESCO Publications*.
- UNESCO. (2020). *Skills for the future: The role of higher education in graduate employability in Africa*. UNESCO. Retrieved from <https://www.unesco.org/africa>
- UNESCO. (2022). *Quality assurance in higher education: Challenges and solutions*. UNESCO Publishing.
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). (2002). *Youth unemployment and crime in Africa*. Addis Ababa: UNECA.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2019). *Global education monitoring report 2019*. UNESCO Publishing.

- University Employability Strategy (2022-2025). *Enhancing graduate employability through strategic initiatives*. University of Yaounde I and University of Buea Publications.
- University of Buea. (2020). *About Us*. Retrieved from <http://www.ubuea.cm>
- University of Buea. (2020). *Strategic goals and objectives*. Retrieved from <https://www.ubuea.cm/>
- University of Buea. (2020). *Vision and mission*. Retrieved from <https://www.ubuea.cm/>
- University of Yaounde I. (2020). *Vision and mission*. Retrieved from <https://www.univ-yaounde1.cm/>
- University of Buea. (2022). Strategic goals and employability initiatives. Retrieved from www.ubuea.cm
- University of Buea. (2022). Vision, mission, and strategic goals. Retrieved from www.ubuea.cm
- University of Sydney. (1997). *Graduate skills for the modern workforce*. Sydney University Press.
- University of Yaounde I. (2020). *Institutional Profile*. Retrieved from <http://www.univ-yaounde1.cm>
- University of Yaounde I. (2020). *Strategic goals and objectives*. Retrieved from <https://www.univ-yaounde1.cm/>
- University of Yaounde I. (2021). Institutional mission and vision statement. Retrieved from www.uy1.cm
- van der Heijden, B. I. J. M., Boon, J., & van der Klink, M. (2021). Employability and lifelong learning: Perspectives from education and industry. *Journal of Career Development*, 48(2), 96–112.
- Vision 2035. (2009). *Cameroon's long-term development strategy for employment and economic growth*. Ministry of Economy, Planning, and Regional Development, Yaounde.
- Walker, M., Fongwa, S., Walker, M., & Fongwa, S. (2017). Contextual and Policy Conditions. *Universities, Employability and Human Development*, 1-28.
- Weeks-Kaye, B. (2004). Ensuring institutional quality through the strategic planning framework, Proceedings of the Australian Universities Quality Forum 2004. AUQA.
- Weligamage, S. S. (2009). *Graduates' employability skills: Evidence from literature review*. Sri Lanka: University of Kelaniya.
- Weller, I. (2019). Specific human capital: a matching perspective. In *Handbook of research on strategic human capital resources* (pp. 144-156). Edward Elgar Publishing.

- Weller, S. (2019). Social capital and graduate employment: A framework for understanding graduate labour market outcomes. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 41(2), 144–156.
- Wikipedia. (2023, May 18). *University of Yaounde I*. Retrieved from [URL]
- Wikipedia. (2023, May 18). *University of Yaounde I*. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Yaounde_I
- Wikipedia. (2023, May 8). *University of Buea*. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Buea
- Wiklund, H., Anderson, M., & Thune, M. (2003). Improvement in higher education: A participatory approach to quality. *Educational Quality Management*, 23(3), 115-130.
- Williams, L., & Jackson, D. (2016). Employability development and its integration in higher education curricula: Global perspectives. *Journal of Education and Work*, 29(4), 877-901. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2016.1228098>
- Wirba, A. V. (2021). Transforming Cameroon into a knowledge-based economy (KBE): The Role of Education, especially Higher Education. *Journal of the knowledge economy*
- Wittmann, W., & Reuter, M. (2008). *Strategic vision and business success*. Business Insights Press.
- World bank (2021). Cameroon Economic update: Enhancing job creation and productivity in a post COVID era. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/cameroon/publication/economic/update>
- World Bank. (2002). Higher education and development: The case of sub-Saharan Africa. *World Bank Policy Paper*.
- World Bank. (2008). *Higher education and the labour market: Challenges and opportunities in developing countries*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- World Bank. (2017). *Higher education and graduate employment in Sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges and opportunities*. The World Bank Group.
- World Bank. (2019). *The future of work in sub-Saharan Africa: Preparing for the global jobs challenge*. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr/publication/the-future-of-work-in-sub-saharan-africa>
- Yorke, M. (2001). *Employability in the first cycle higher education*. A working paper for the “Skills Plus” Project. Liverpool, John Moores U.
- Yorke, M. (2006). *Employability in higher education: What it is – what it is not*. Learning and Employability Series 1, The Higher Education Academy.

- Yorke, M., & Knight, P. (2003). *Embedding employability into the curriculum*. Higher Education Academy.
- Yorke, M., & Knight, P. (2004). *Learning & employability*. Learning and Teaching Support Network.
- Youmeyse K (2021). *Technology integration and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs: A social cognitive approach in the assessment of teaching and learning process in primary schools.*, faculty of education, University of Yaounde 1, Cameroon.
- Youmeyse K and Ngengoue Ngamaleu, H. R. (2020) Attitude towards technology integration and effective technology usage in the teaching learning process in primary schools in Cameroon. *International journal of innovative research, and Advanced studies (IJIRAS)* vol7, ISSN:2394-4404.
- Yushau, B, Arhyel, I. and Danjuma, I. M. (2021), Study strategy as predictor of undergraduate students' achievement of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. *International journal*
- Zais, D. (2011). The role of school environment in promoting quality education. *Educational Environment Review*, 12(4), 35-50.
- Zhang, H. (2022). *Structural equation modeling*. In *Models and Methods for Management Science* (pp. 363-381). Springer, Singapore.

GLOSSARY

Employability

The word "employability" has many meanings in different cultures. A graduate is stated to be more likely to find and hold a job if they have a certain combination of skills, knowledge, understanding, and personal qualities, according to the definition of employability (Holmes, 2017). Because it is a quality that promotes success in both the job and in life as a whole, employability is also known as "skills for life" (Bridgstock, 2019).

According to Pegg et al (2012) it is *a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.*

Planning

According to Omran (2005), planning is the process by which an individual or an organisation decides in advance on some future course of action (Omran, 2005, p 68). Planning has also been perceived by Gundars Benzins as a systematic building of the enterprise future and it include the process of developing and adopting the plans. It involves determination Planning is a process of determining how the organisation can get where it wants to go (Certo 2000).

In a narrower sense it could be said that planning is the process of a systematic preparation of decisions concerning future events.

Planning is a careful analysis of relevant information from the present and the past and using such information to predict future development so that a course of action can be determined that may enable attainment of stated objectives. Planning is concerned with the future and involves predicting the effect of future events so that hindrance of the presence could be minimized or eliminated in order to meet the future with more confidence and success

Educational Planning

Comb cited in (Akpan, 2000) described educational planning as the application of rational systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making

education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and goals of the learners and the society. This means that educational planning should take into account the needs of the pupils/students in terms of learning facilities and equipment, textbooks, classroom spaces and qualified educational personnel. (Akpan, 2000).

Educational planning involves a systematic and scientific set of decisions for future action with the aim of achieving set educational goals and objectives through effective use of scarce resources. It provides the tool for coordinating and controlling the direction of the educational system so that educational objectives can be realized. It is a process of identifying and classifying educational needs of a nation and the direction education should take and the strategies for implementing decisions concerning educational development

Strategy

Going by Alan Smith (2017), etymologically speaking, the word strategy comes from the Old French —” *strategie*” that in turns derives from the Ancient Greek —” *stratēgia*” that means —Office of General, —Commandor —Generalship. Therefore, strategy has in fact a true historic link with deliberation, skilful actions, leadership and... warfare

Sanjah Dhir (2018) holds that, strategy meant a way of prevailing over the adversary, a tool of victory in war and only afterwards was it applied to other contexts and fields of human relationships: political, economics, business, among others, but always retaining in all it uses the semantic root, to define paths

According to the Oxford Dictionary (<http://oxforddictionaries.com>)defines strategy as:

- ❖ A plan that is intended to achieve a particular purpose: to develop a strategy for dealing with unemployment. It is all part of an overall strategy to gain promotion. The government ‘s economic strategy
- ❖ the process of planning something or putting a plan into operation in a skilful way: marketing strategy

A Strategic plan:

A list of actions ordered to be attained over a particular period of time, certain desired objectives derived from a careful analysis of the internal and external factors likely to affect an organisation like school. School strategic plan refers to a formal document setting out school vision, goals, objectives and initiatives over a defined period of time. A school’s strategic plan according to Chukwuma can be considered as the physical document that embodies the guiding

orientation regarding how to manage the school within a larger national and local development policy/perspective. Such a plan can lead to school effectiveness, improvement and development when properly implemented.

Strategic planning

Boulter (1997), defines strategic planning as “a procedure for developing a long-term and policy-oriented device or scheme that ties together the present to a clarified image of the future” (p. 6). He proceeds to state that “strategic planning sets out to identify specifically an agency or governmental unit’s mission, goals, measurable objectives, and performance strategies.” Boulter states that: It includes an assessment of an agency’s performance and accomplishments using a multi-year outlook. It also provides a solid basis for priority-based resource allocations and decisions using a decision-making process that relies on careful consideration of an agency’s capabilities and environment.

Fehnel, (2000) in his approach look at strategic planning, as a systematic process in which an organization envisions its future and assesses its basic reason for being (i.e. its purpose or mission), what are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) it might face in the immediate and foreseeable future.

Strategic planning is the process of setting goals, it is also called Goal directed planning, it means deciding on actions to achieve those goals and mobilizing the resources needed to take those actions. A strategic plan describes how goals will be achieved through the use of available resources. Strategic planning is the process of reflecting on past performance, establishing future directions and deciding what will constitute success.

Strategic planning is a means of establishing major directions for the university, college/school or department. Through strategic planning, resources are concentrated in a limited number of major directions in order to maximize benefits to stakeholders. Strategic planning is a structured approach to anticipating the future and "exploiting the inevitable." The strategic plan should chart the broad course for the entire institution for the next five years.

Employment

Employment is a relationship between two parties regulating the provision of paid labour services. Usually based on a contract, one party, the employer, which might be a corporation, a not-for-profit organization, a co-operative, or any other entity, pays the other, the employee, in return for carrying out assigned work (Dakin, et al. 1989). Employees work in return for wages, which can be paid on the basis of an hourly rate, by piecework or an annual

salary, depending on the type of work an employee does, the prevailing conditions of the sector and the bargaining power between the parties. Employees in some sectors may receive gratuities, bonus payments or stock options. In some types of employment, employees may receive benefits in addition to payment. Benefits may include health insurance, housing, disability insurance.

Employment is typically governed by employment laws, organisation or legal contracts. Employment is the condition in which an individual works for an employer in exchange for compensation, which could be in the form of wages, salary, or other benefits. It involves the performance of specific duties and tasks as outlined in an employment contract, and the individual is usually entitled to certain rights and protections under labor laws. Employment is a key component of the economy, providing income and contributing to personal well-being and economic development. (Mitchell & Carlson, 2017)

Employer: An employer is an individual, company, or organization that hires people to perform specific tasks or services in exchange for compensation. Employers are responsible for providing the work environment, managing job responsibilities, and ensuring compliance with labor laws. (Armstrong, 2020). Employers are responsible for ensuring that employees work within a safe and regulated environment, as defined by Armstrong (2020).

Employee

An employee is a worker who gets paid an hourly wage or annual salary for a set job. Not all hourly workers are employees. Employees are generally defined by the higher level of control that the employer has over the details of the employee's work. An employee is hired for a specific job or to provide labor in the service of someone else (the employer). When an individual begins a long-term working relationship with a business, that person usually becomes an employee, though there are exceptions. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) sets the guidelines for determining which workers are employees. It's important for both the employee and employer to understand exactly what an employee is. Employees have special protections, as well as certain obligations, compared to other kinds of workers. Conversely, an employer usually has more control over its employees, but it also has tax obligations to meet on the employee's behalf.

An employee is simply an individual who is hired by an employer to perform specific tasks or services under an employment contract. Employees are typically compensated with

wages or salary and are entitled to various rights, such as job security and benefits, as defined by employment law. (Bratton & Gold, 2017)

Employability skills

The ILO defines employability skills as: The skills, knowledge and competencies that enhance a worker's ability to secure and retain a job, progress at work and cope with change, secure another job if he/she so wishes or has been laid off and enter more easily into the labour market at different periods of the life cycle. Individuals are most employable when they have broad-based education and training, basic and portable high-level skills, including teamwork, problem solving, information and communications technology (ICT) and communication and language skills (Brown and Hesketh, 2004).

Employability skills are the set of skills, knowledge, and attributes that enable an individual to gain and maintain employment. These skills are crucial for career success and are often categorized into core areas such as communication, problem-solving, teamwork, adaptability, and technical skills. Employability skills are essential for enhancing an individual's ability to perform effectively in the workplace and are often sought after by employers. (Hillage & Pollard, 1998) Employability skills encompass both technical and soft skills that are essential for career success (Evers, Rush, & Berdrow, 1998)

Graduates

This is someone who has received a degree or diploma on completing a course of study, as in a university or a college. This is someone who holds a bachelors degree or the first professional degree and is studying for an advanced degree. Students join their program as an undergraduate which literally translated means below graduate level. After a minimum of three years of study and on successfully completing the course, they graduate and are referred to as postgraduate (after graduation). Students who have earned their undergraduate degrees and are now pursuing advanced degrees are called graduates student

These are individuals who have successfully completed all the academic requirements of a university program, including the completion of coursework, examinations, and other institutional obligations, leading to the conferral of an academic degree or certificate. Graduates are typically awarded a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree upon the successful completion of their program of study, demonstrating their acquisition of the knowledge and skills necessary for their respective fields of study (Miller, 2020).

Skills

Literally speaking skills are recognised as a fundamental aspect of scholarly evaluation sociological research vocational education and the development of a competitive work force. a skill is also considered a learned ability to act with determined results with good execution often within a given amount of time energy or both. Skills may be called an art when it represents a body of knowledge or branch of learning. People need a broad range of skills to contribute to the modern economy. There are communication teamwork critical thinking self regulation leadership and entrepreneurship skills. Skills are also classified into soft, hard, social among others. Soft skills are a combination of interpersonal people skills social skills communication skills character traits attitudes career among others. Hard skills are also called technical skills are any skills relating to a specific task or situation. It involves both understanding and proficiency in such specific activity that involves methods processes procedures or techniques. Social skills are any skill facilitating interaction and communication with others.

Skills refer to the abilities, expertise, and competencies that enable an individual to perform specific tasks or activities effectively. Skills can be divided into technical skills, which are job-specific, and soft skills, which include interpersonal abilities, communication, and problem-solving skills. (Evers, Rush, & Berdrow, 1998).

Unemployment: this is a state where a person wants to work but cannot find a job. According to the ILO, unemployed workers are those who are currently not working but are willing and able to work for a pay, currently available to work and have actively searched for work. Unemployment is a key measure of the health of the country, the most frequently used measure is the unemployment rate. The four main types of unemployment are structural frictional cyclical and seasonal unemployment. The unemployment rate is the percentage of the people in the labour force who are unemployed. Underemployment occurs when a worker is employed in a job that is inferior by some standards, is linked to a broad range of negative outcomes for employees. In otherwords is a condition in which workers are employed in less than full-time or regular jobs or insufficient jobs for their training or economic needs.

Unemployment refers to the state in which people who are able to work, are seeking employment, but are unable to find jobs. It can be a key indicator of the health of an economy. As per the International Labour Organization (ILO), unemployment is defined as individuals who are without work, available for work, and actively seeking work. (Mankiw, 2018)

A university: Miller (2019) defines a university as "an institution of higher education and research, which grants academic degrees in various disciplines. It is responsible for the creation and dissemination of knowledge through both teaching and research activities." According to Cohen and Kisker (2020), a university is "a complex organization that provides education and research opportunities in a wide variety of disciplines, typically offering undergraduate and postgraduate degrees while contributing to the development of societal knowledge."



APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Questionnaires for University Graduates

Dear respondents, I am a PhD student of the University of Yaounde I, Faculty of Education, Department of curriculum and Evaluation, carrying out research on the topic: **Strategic Planning and graduate's employability skills in the universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon**. As part of my requirements of the course, I am required to undertake a research in my area of study. You have been selected as one of my respondents in this study. Your sincere and genuine answers will be important in attaining this goal. All information will be treated with utmost confidentiality

PART I - QUESTIONNAIRES ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GRADUATES EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

SECTION A - STRATEGIC PLANNING

Instruction: Indicate in your response the extent to which you agree with the following statements using the scale shown below. Please tick (√) in one of the boxes that best suit your opinion: 1. Strongly Disagree (SD) 2. Disagree (D) 3. Agree (A) 4. Strongly Agree (SA).

Numbers	STRATEGIC VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS	SD	D	A	SA
1	You are aware of the vision and mission statement of your university and you are working towards meeting that vision				
2	The mission statement of the university inspires you to work harder and in order to contribute to nation building				
3	This vision and mission fit with your academic and professional expectations				
4	The study provides possibility for students to meet stated vision and mission				
5	You rightly understand the mission statement of your university with its implications both on students, teachers and the society at large				

6	The mission statement of your university is always met according to your perception				
7	The mission statement of the university is an inspiration from national strategic documents				
8	Departmental objectives match with mission statement of the university				
9	The various institutional processes like the teaching, learning, administrative processes are well drafted to enhance the attainment of institutional mission statement.				
	STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	SD	D	A	SA
10	My department has a formal statement that described the goals and objectives of the system				
11	My department has established both main term and specific objectives				
12	My department constantly change its objectives based on the changes in the state policies and the society				
13	My department's objective is to ensure effective training for learners				
14	My departments' objective is to improve student learning outcomes for employability				
15	My department set objectives for all stakeholders and follow up				
	STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS	SD	D	A	SA
16	National strategic papers are employed during university strategic papers				
17	Program reviews are carried out after every five years to revise course objectives, contents and outcomes in every department of your institution				
18	The strategic planning process is an inclusive process involving salient stakeholders				

19	There is always an indebt diagnosis which is always carried out at the start of the process				
20	Graduate employability is always a salient element considered in your strategic documents				
21	The definition of salient pedagogic, human and material resources to optimize graduate employability skills are strictly defined.				
22	The strategic planning framework carried all aspects of your educational institution				
23	There are regular control mechanisms to check against wastage of salient resources in order to ensure internal efficiency				
24	Pedagogic seminars, conferences and workshops are always effectively carried out to make sure teachers acquire new teaching skills				
25	Strategic plans are constantly carried out in order to effectively identify loopholes especially in relation to planning and implementation processes				
26	Strategic plan revision is carried out in national strategic papers enacted				
	STRATEGIC PLANNING OF THE PROGRAM CONTENTS	SD	D	A	SA
27	The syllabuses covered are inspired from strategic plans especially at the levels of objectives, content and outcomes.				
28	The teaching approaches, methods and materials are well defined in school strategic plans				
29	Each teaching modules spells out a set or sets of practical skills to be acquired by graduates				
30	The quality of lecture is rightly defined by the plan especially in terms of possession of relevant skills				

31	Course contents significantly articulate plan goals and objectives.				
32	There is effectiveness in the teaching and learning processes carried out in your university				
33	Lecturers carryout effective curriculum coverage using adequate methods and techniques				
34	The various teaching strategies employed effectively enhance the acquisition of relevant skills				
35	The various evaluation methods and techniques used by the school permits students to exhibit salient skills				
	QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTROL MECHANISM	SD	D	A	SA
36	Quality assurance teams from the ministry do check on the quality of program contents students are studying				
37	The quality of study in your university could permit Cameroon to become an emergent economy by 2035				
38	Pedagogic inspectors do visit your institution to check on the quality of pedagogic processes as well as tools and materials used				
39	The inspectors are knowledgeable and do carry out effective inspection				
40	Inspectors have been trained on quality assurance aspects				
41	Inspectors equally check for program competitiveness in relation to other universities				
42	In the LMD system your university graduates are competitive in the Job market				
43	During inspection, the teachers and administrators are equally assessed				

	SECTION B: GRADUATES EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS	SD	D	A	SA
	Relevant acquisition of skills				
44	Relevant acquisition of soft and hard skills go on in the various departments of your institution.				
45	Students are very satisfied with the skills they acquire in various disciplines				
46	I have communication skills that permit me to communicate at ease with my office heads and collaborators				
47	Upon graduation, I had acquired substantial skills that facilitated my employment				
48	From what I learned in school, I have the competences to create my own job.				
	Sustainable access to the job market				
49	Based on the implementation, student do constantly have sustainable access to the job market				
50	My certificates are highly valued by the employers				
51	I did not need to take another specific training to get a job				
52	The training I have do really permit me to find a job				
	Graduates competitiveness in the job market				
53	I have created a job and even employed others				
54	I earn a salary that helps me to take care of myself and my family				
55	The skills I learnt will help me to bring innovation in my job side.				
56	There is Graduate competitiveness in the job market				

57	I have business opportunities that permit my business to grow				
	Employability skills development				
58	I have problem solving skills that permit me to solve problems in my job side				
59	I receive funds for my business from the government and others				
60	Internships and job placement are effective and enhance quality skills acquisition				

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Instructions: *kindly place a tick (✓) on the box that best describes your opinion.*

61. Gender: Male Female

62. Level of education: Degree Masters I Masters II PhD

63. Faculty of study _____

64. Department: _____

65. Employed Yes No underemployed _____

66. Number of years of employment (0-1), (2-3), (5-10), (10 above)

67. Age _____

Thank you for your collaboration

QUESTIONNAIRES POUR LES DIPLÔMÉS UNIVERSITAIRES

Chers répondants, Je suis doctorant à l'Université de Yaoundé I, Faculté d'Éducation, Département des curriculum et de l'Évaluation, menant des recherches sur le thème : **Planification stratégique et compétences d'employabilité des diplômés dans les universités de Yaoundé I et de Buea au Cameroun.** Dans le cadre de mes exigences du cours, je dois entreprendre une recherche dans mon domaine d'études. Vous avez été sélectionné parmi mes répondants dans cette étude. Vos réponses sincères et authentiques seront importantes pour atteindre cet objectif. Toutes les informations seront traitées avec la plus grande confidentialité

PARTIE I - QUESTIONNAIRES SUR LA PLANIFICATION STRATÉGIQUE ET LES COMPÉTENCES D'EMPLOYABILITÉ DES DIPLÔMÉS

SECTION A – PLANIFICATION STRATÉGIQUE

Instruction : Indiquez dans votre réponse dans quelle mesure vous êtes d'accord avec les énoncés suivants en utilisant l'échelle ci-dessous. Veuillez cocher (√) l'une des cases qui correspond le mieux à votre opinion : 1. Fortement en désaccord (FDE) 2. En désaccord (ED) 3. D'accord (D) 4. Tout à fait d'accord (TD).

NUMERO	VISION ET MISSIONS STRATEGIQUE	FDE	DE	D	TD
1	Vous connaissez la vision et l'énoncé de mission de votre université et vous travaillez à réaliser cette vision.				
2	L'énoncé de mission de l'université vous incite à travailler plus dur et à contribuer à l'édification de la nation.				
3	Cette vision et cette mission correspondent à vos attentes académiques et professionnelles				
4	Votre étude offre aux étudiants la possibilité de répondre à la vision et à la mission énoncée.				
5	Vous comprenez à juste titre l'énoncé de mission de votre université avec ses				

	implications tant sur les étudiants, les enseignants que sur la société en général.				
6	L'énoncé de mission de votre université est toujours respecté selon votre perception				
7	L'énoncé de mission de l'université s'inspire des documents stratégiques nationaux				
8	Les objectifs du département correspondent à l'énoncé de mission de l'université				
9	Les différents processus institutionnels tels que l'enseignement, l'apprentissage et les processus administratifs sont bien rédigés pour améliorer la réalisation de l'énoncé de mission institutionnelle.				
	BUTS ET OBJECTIFS STRATÉGIQUES	FDE	DE	D	TD
10	Mon ministère avait une déclaration officielle décrivant les buts et objectifs du système.				
11	Mon département avait établi à la fois des objectifs principaux et des objectifs spécifiques				
12	Mon département change constamment ses objectifs en fonction des changements dans les politiques de l'État et de la société.				
13	L'objectif de mon département était d'assurer une formation efficace aux apprenants				

14	L'objectif de mes départements était d'améliorer les résultats d'apprentissage des étudiants pour l'employabilité				
15	Mon service fixe des objectifs à toutes les parties prenantes et assure le suivi				
	PROCESSUS DE PLANIFICATION STRATÉGIQUE	FDE	DE	D	TD
16	Les documents stratégiques nationaux sont utilisés lors des documents stratégiques universitaires				
17	Des revues de programme sont effectuées tous les cinq ans pour réviser les objectifs, les contenus et les résultats des cours dans chaque département de votre établissement.				
18	Le processus de planification stratégique est un processus inclusif impliquant les principales parties prenantes				
19	Il y a toujours un diagnostic d'endettement qui est toujours réalisé en début de démarche				
20	L'employabilité des diplômés est toujours un élément saillant pris en compte dans vos documents stratégiques				
21	La définition des ressources pédagogiques, humaines et matérielles saillantes pour optimiser l'employabilité des diplômés est strictement définie.				

22	Le cadre de planification stratégique portait sur tous les aspects de votre établissement d'enseignement				
23	Il existe des mécanismes de contrôle réguliers pour vérifier le gaspillage des ressources importantes afin de garantir l'efficacité interne.				
24	Des séminaires pédagogiques, des conférences et des ateliers sont toujours organisés efficacement pour garantir aux enseignants l'acquisition de nouvelles compétences pédagogiques.				
25	Des plans stratégiques sont constamment réalisés afin d'identifier efficacement les lacunes, notamment en ce qui concerne les processus de planification et de mise en œuvre.				
26	La révision du plan stratégique est effectuée dans les documents stratégiques nationaux promulgués				
	PLANIFICATION STRATÉGIQUE DU CONTENU DU PROGRAMME	FDE	DE	D	TD
27	Les programmes couverts s'inspirent des plans stratégiques notamment au niveau des objectifs, des contenus et des résultats.				
28	Les approches, méthodes et matériels pédagogiques sont bien définis dans les plans stratégiques de l'école				
29	Chaque module d'enseignement énonce un ou plusieurs ensembles de compétences pratiques à acquérir par les diplômés.				

30	La qualité du cours est à juste titre définie par le plan, notamment en termes de possession des compétences pertinentes.				
31	Le contenu du cours articule de manière significative les buts et les objectifs du plan.				
32	Il y a de l'efficacité dans les processus d'enseignement et d'apprentissage menés dans votre université				
33	Les enseignants assurent une couverture efficace du programme en utilisant des méthodes et techniques adéquates				
34	Les différentes stratégies pédagogiques utilisées favorisent efficacement l'acquisition de compétences pertinentes				
35	Les différentes méthodes et techniques d'évaluation utilisées par l'école permettent aux étudiants de démontrer des compétences importantes.				
	MÉCANISME D'ASSURANCE ET DE CONTRÔLE DE LA QUALITÉ	T DE	DE	D	TD
36	Les équipes d'assurance qualité du ministère vérifient la qualité du contenu des programmes étudiés par les étudiants.				
37	La qualité des études dans votre université pourrait permettre au Cameroun de devenir une économie émergente d'ici 2035				
38	Des inspecteurs pédagogiques visitent votre établissement pour vérifier la				

	qualité des processus pédagogiques ainsi que des outils et du matériel utilisés.				
39	Les inspecteurs sont compétents et effectuent des inspections efficaces				
40	Les inspecteurs ont été formés sur les aspects de l'assurance qualité				
41	Les inspecteurs vérifient également la compétitivité du programme par rapport aux autres universités				
42	Dans le système LMD, vos diplômés universitaires sont compétitifs sur le marché du travail				
43	Lors de l'inspection, les enseignants et les administrateurs sont évalués de manière égale				
	SECTION B : COMPÉTENCES D'EMPLOYABILITÉ DES DIPLÔMÉS	TDE	DE	D	TD
	Acquisition de compétences pertinente				
44	L'acquisition pertinente de compétence se poursuit dans les différents départements de votre institution				
45	Les étudiants sont très satisfaits des compétences qu'ils acquièrent dans diverses disciplines				
46	J'ai des compétences en communication qui me permettent de communiquer à l'aise avec mes chefs de bureau et mes collaborateurs				
47	Une fois diplômé, j'ai acquis des compétences substantielles qui ont facilité mon emploi				

48	D'après ce que j'ai appris à l'école, j'ai les compétences nécessaires pour créer mon propre emploi.				
	Accès durable au marché du travail				
49	Grâce aux mesures mises en œuvre, les étudiants bénéficient en permanence d'un accès durable au marché du travail.				
50	Mes certificats sont très appréciés par les employeurs				
51	Je n'ai pas eu besoin de suivre une autre formation spécifique pour obtenir un emploi				
52	La formation que j'ai me permet vraiment de trouver un emploi				
	Compétitivité des diplômés sur le marché du travail				
53	J'ai créé un emploi et j'en ai même employé d'autres				
54	Je gagne un salaire qui m'aide à prendre soin de moi et de ma famille				
55	Les compétences que j'ai acquises m'aideront à apporter de l'innovation dans mon travail.				
56	Il existe une compétitivité des diplômés sur le marché du travail				
57	J'ai des opportunités d'affaires qui permettent à mon entreprise de se développer				
	Développement des compétences en matière d'employabilité				
58	J'ai des compétences en résolution de problèmes qui me permettent de				

	résoudre des problèmes dans mon travail				
59	Je reçois des fonds pour mon entreprise du gouvernement et d'autres				
60	Les stages et les placements professionnels sont efficaces et améliorent l'acquisition de compétences de qualité				

PARTIE II – INFORMATIONS DÉMOGRAPHIQUES

Instructions : veuillez cocher (√) la case qui décrit le mieux votre opinion.

61. Sexe : Homme Femme

62. Niveau d'études : Diplôme Master I Master II Doctorat

63. Faculté d'études _____

64. Département : _____

65. Employé Oui Non sous-employé _____

66. Nombre d'années d'emploi (0-1), (2-3), (5-10), (10 ci-dessus)

67. Âge _____

Merci pour votre collaboration

Appendix 2

Table for determining sample size of a known population

N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	346
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	354
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	191	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	170	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	180	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	190	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	200	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	370
65	56	210	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	58	220	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	230	144	550	226	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	240	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	250	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	260	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	254	2600	335	1000000	384

Now N is Population Size S is Sample Size

Appendix 3

Formulaire de consentement éthique

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN

Paix- Travail- Patrie

MINISTRE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT
SUPERIEUR

UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE I

FACULTE DES SCIENCES DE L'EDUCATION

DEPARTEMENT DE CURRICULA ET
EVALUATION



REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

Peace- Work- Fatherland

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND
EVALUATION

FORMULAIRE DE CONSENTEMENT ÉTHIQUE POUR LA PARTICIPATION À UNE RECHERCHE

Titre de la recherche :

**Planification stratégique et compétences en employabilité des diplômés dans les
Universités de Yaoundé I et de Buea, Cameroun**

Chercheur principal

RHEA ETA AGBOR

Matricule ; 16R3243

Candidat au doctorat

Email : rheaetaagbor6@gmail.com

Téléphone : 677 235 405

Superviseur de la recherche

HENRI RODRIGUE NJENGOUÉ NGAMALEU

Professeur

Faculté des sciences de l'éducation

Université de Yaoundé I

Co-superviseur

HELENE CHANTAL NGAH ESSOMBA

(Maîtres des conférences)

Faculté des Arts lettres et sciences sociales

Université de Yaoundé I

1. Introduction et Objectif de l'Étude

Vous êtes invité à participer à une étude de recherche dans le cadre d'un programme doctoral. Cette étude vise à examiner la relation entre la planification stratégique au sein des Universités de Yaounde I et de Buea et les compétences en employabilité des diplômés. Les résultats permettront d'informer les politiques et stratégies de l'enseignement supérieur pour mieux soutenir la transition des diplômés vers le marché du travail.

2. Procédures de l'Étude

Si vous choisissez de participer :

- Vous serez invité à remplir un questionnaire structuré sur votre expérience universitaire, la planification stratégique et le développement des compétences en employabilité.
- La participation prendra environ 20 à 30 minutes.
- Il n'y aura pas de suivi requis à moins que vous choisissiez de participer à une interview supplémentaire sur une base volontaire.

3. Participation Volontaire et Droit de Retrait

- Votre participation à cette étude est entièrement volontaire.
- Vous pouvez refuser de répondre à toute question ou vous retirer de l'étude à tout moment sans fournir de raison.
- Le retrait n'affectera pas votre progression académique ni vos avantages au sein de l'institution.

4. Confidentialité et Protection des Données

- Toutes les réponses seront traitées de manière strictement confidentielle.
- Aucun nom ou identifiant personnel n'apparaîtra dans les résultats publiés.
- Les données seront stockées de manière sécurisée sur des appareils protégés par mot de passe et détruites après 5 ans.
- Seule l'équipe de recherche aura accès aux données.

5. Risques et Inconforts Potentiels

- Aucun risque n'est anticipé lors de la participation.
- Vous pouvez choisir de ne pas répondre à toute question qui pourrait vous rendre mal à l'aise.

6. Bénéfices Potentiels

- Bien que vous ne bénéficiiez pas directement, vos réponses contribueront à améliorer la planification universitaire et les stratégies d'employabilité des diplômés dans les universités du Cameroun et dans des contextes similaires.

7. Questions ou Préoccupations

Si vous avez des questions sur l'étude ou sur vos droits en tant que participant, veuillez contacter le chercheur principal ou le superviseur de la recherche aux adresses e-mail fournies ci-dessus.

8. Déclaration de Consentement

Je confirme avoir lu et compris les informations ci-dessus. Je consens volontairement à participer à cette étude. Je suis informé que je peux me retirer à tout moment sans pénalité et que les informations que je fournis resteront confidentielles et utilisées uniquement à des fins académiques.

Nom complet du participant (en majuscules) : _____

Signature du participant : _____

Date : _____

Signature du chercheur : _____

Date: _____

Appendix 4
Ethical consent form

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Peace- Work- Fatherland

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

**DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND
EVALUATION**



REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
Paix- Travail- Patrie

MINISTERE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR

UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE I

FACULTE DES SCIENCES DE L'EDUCATION

**DEPARTEMENT DE CURRICULA ET
EVALUATION**

ETHICAL CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

Research Title:

Strategic Planning and Graduates' Employability Skills in the Universities of Yaounde I and Buea in Cameroon

Researcher

RHEA ETA AGBOR

Registration number; 16R3243

Doctorate fellow

Email: rheaetaagbor6@gmail.com

Telephone: 677 235 405

Main Supervisor

HENRI RODRIGUE NJENGOUE NGAMALEU

Professor

Faculty of Education

University of Yaounde I

Co-Supervisor

HELENE CHANTAL NGAH ESSOMBA

(MC)

Faculty of Arts Letters and social sciences

University of Yaounde I

1. Introduction and Purpose of the Study

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted as part of a doctoral program. This study seeks to examine the relationship between strategic planning within the Universities of Yaounde I and Buea and the employability skills developed by graduates. The findings aim to inform higher education planning and policy makers to better support graduates' transition into the workforce.

2. Study Procedures

If you choose to participate:

- You will complete a structured questionnaire on your university experience, strategic planning awareness, and employability skill development.
- Participation will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes.
- No follow-up will be required unless you choose to volunteer for a further interview.

3. Voluntary Participation and Right to Withdraw

- Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary.
- You may skip any question or withdraw from the study at any point without providing a reason.
- Withdrawing will not affect your academic progress or any benefits due to you from your institution.

4. Confidentiality and Data Protection

- All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- No names or personal identifiers will appear in the published results.
- Data will be stored securely on password-protected devices and will be destroyed after 5 years.
- Only the research team will have access to the data.

5. Potential Risks and Discomforts

- There are no anticipated risks associated with participation.
- You may decline to answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable.

6. Potential Benefits

- Although you may not benefit personally, your responses will contribute to improving university planning and graduate employability strategies in Cameroon and similar settings.

7. Questions or Concerns

If you have any questions about the study or your rights as a participant, please contact the principal investigator or the research supervisor at the email addresses provided above.

8. Consent Statement

I confirm that I have read and understood the information above. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I am aware that I may withdraw at any time without penalty and that the information I provide will remain confidential and used solely for academic purposes.

Participant's Full Name (Printed): _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 5

Research Authorisation

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN

Paix – Travail – Patrie

UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE I

FACULTE DES SCIENCES DE
L'EDUCATION

DEPARTEMENT DE CURRICULA
ET EVALUATION



REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

Peace – Work – Fatherland

THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I

THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM
AND EVALUATION

Le Doyen

The Dean

N° 4.37/24/UYI/FSE/CD

AUTORISATION DE RECHERCHE

Je soussigné, **Pr BELA Cyrille Bienvenu**, Doyen de la Faculté des Sciences de l'Éducation de l'Université de Yaoundé I, certifie que l'étudiante **RHEA ETA AGBOR**, Matricule **16R3243**, est inscrite en Doctorat/Ph.D à la Faculté des Sciences de l'Éducation, Département de **CURRICULA ET EVALUATION** Filière : **MANAGEMENT DE L'EDUCATION**, Spécialité : **Planification des systèmes Éducatifs**.

L'intéressée doit effectuer des travaux de recherche en vue de la préparation de son diplôme de Doctorat/Ph.D. Elle travaille en codirection avec le Pr. **NJENGOUE NGAMALEU Henri Rodrigue** et Pr **NGAH ESSOMBA Hélène Chantal**. Son sujet est intitulé : « **Motivation and teachers performance: case study of some public and private secondary schools in the Centre Region, Cameroon** ».

Je vous saurai gré de bien vouloir la recevoir pour la recherche et mettre à sa disposition toutes les informations susceptibles de l'aider dans son travail.

En foi de quoi, cette autorisation de recherche lui est délivrée pour servir et valoir ce que de droit.

Fait à Yaoundé, le 23 JUIL 2024

Pour le Doyen et par ordre


NGO Etienne
Professeur

Appendix 6

Research Authorisation

UNIVERSITY OF BUEA

P.O. Box 63
Buea, CAMEROON
Tel: (237) 233 32 21 34/233 32 26 90/23332 27 06
Fax: (237) 2332 22 72



REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
PEACE – WORK – FATHERLAND

PRO-CHANCELLOR: **Professor Edward Ako Oben**
VICE-CHANCELLOR: **Professor Ngomo Horace Manga**
DVC/Teaching, Professionalisation and Development of
Information and Communication Technologies: **Michael Ekonde Sone, PhD**
DVC/Research, Cooperation and Relations
with the Business World: **Professor Kingsley Lyonga NGANGE,**
DVC/Internal Control and Evaluation: **Peter Sakwe MASUMBE, Ph.D**
REGISTRAR: **Professor Eneke BECIEM**

Your Ref: _____

Our Ref: 2025/238 /UB/DVC/RCB/HOD/RP/AA

Date: 4 JUL 2025

Rhea Eta Agbor,
PhD Student,
University of Yaounde 1
Email: rheaetaagbor6@gmail.com
Tel: 677235405

Re: Request for Authorisation to Administer Questionnaires for Doctoral Research

With reference to your letter on the above subject, requesting for an authorisation to undertake research at the University of Buea, on the title: “*Strategic planning and graduates’ employability skills in the Universities of Yaoundé 1 and Buea, Cameroon*”, we are pleased to grant you authorisation.

The authorisation has been issued on condition that the data collected shall be utilized strictly for the purpose of your research. Please, remember to seek the consent of your research participants (staff and students) by presenting them with the consent form.


Professor Kingsley Lyonga Ngange
Deputy Vice-Chancellor/RCB



Appendix 7

Certificate of publication

IJNRD | ISSN : 2456-4184



**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF NOVEL RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT (IJNRD) | IJNRD.ORG**
An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal
ISSN : 2456-4184

The Board of
International Journal of Novel Research and Development

Is hereby awarding this certificate to
RHEA ETA AGBOR

In recognition of the publication of the paper entitled
Strategic planning of the program content and graduate employability skills in selected n state universities in Cameroon.

Published In IJNRD (www.ijnrd.org) ISSN Approved & 8.76 Impact Factor
Published in Volume 9 Issue 7, July-2024 | Date of Publication: 2024-07-22
Co-Authors - Henri Rodrigue Ngegoue
Ngamaleu

Registration ID : 225454 Paper ID - IJNRD2407312
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF NOVEL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT | IJNRD
An International Scholarly, Open Access, Multi-disciplinary, Indexed Journal
Website: www.ijnrd.org | Email: editor@ijnrd.org | ESTD: 2016



Editor-In Chief




An International Scholarly, Open Access, Multi-disciplinary, Monthly, Indexing in all Major Database & Metadata, Citation Generator
Manage By: IJPUBLICATION Website: www.ijnrd.org | Email ID: editor@ijnrd.org

An International Scholarly, Open Access, Multi-disciplinary, Monthly, Indexing in all Major Database & Metadata, Citation Generator
Manage By: IJPUBLICATION Website: www.ijnrd.org | Email ID: editor@ijnrd.org

An International Scholarly, Open Access, Multi-disciplinary, Monthly, Indexing in all Major Database & Metadata, Citation Generator
Manage By: IJPUBLICATION Website: www.ijnrd.org | Email ID: editor@ijnrd.org

Certificate of Publication