

Teachers' Quality and Graduates Employability: The Case of Public Universities in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating the impact of teachers' quality on graduates' employability: the case of public universities in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon. The purpose of the study was to examine the extent to which lecturers'/teachers' quality affect the quality of training of graduates. The survey research design was adopted for the study. Data was successfully collected from 361 graduates, 385 final year undergraduate students preparing for graduation in 2019 and 56 academic staff. Questionnaire was the instruments used for the study. Instruments consisted of both closed and opened ended items. The reliability statistics for graduates and students from the University of Buea was 0.876 and 0.827 respectively while that for graduates and students from the University of Bamenda was 0.871 and 0.894 respectively. Data from closed ended questions was analysed using SPSS 23.0, with the aid of descriptive and inferential statistical tools while the opened ended questions were analysed thematically. Findings showed that lecturers'/teachers' quality ($R = 412^{**}$, $P = 0.000$) strongly and significantly affect the quality of training and employability chances of graduates with all P -values < 0.001 , far < 0.05 . Aside this relationship, a significant proportion of graduates, students and academic staff indicated that not all teachers employed in the University and in their department are qualify to teach. Therefore, it was recommended that adequate measures should be adopted to improve on teachers' quality by creating a teacher education center.

KEYWORDS: Students, Graduates, Employability, Teachers' Quality, Professionalisation

INTRODUCTION

In a rapidly changing world and consequently very dynamic Higher Education (HE) landscape, Higher Education (HE) systems are faced with many challenges. Barely recovering from the onset of massification in the seventies, Higher Education is faced with increasing competition, extensive internationalization, higher demand for quality and the obligation to prove themselves worthy to varying stakeholders. These stakeholders unfortunately often are sponsors and at the same time beneficiaries of Higher Education products and services. As Malcolm and Zukas (1999) argued, teaching has become a focus of attention in Higher Education, but much of this attention has been marked by a technicist discourse and a 'surface learning' about teaching (Rowland, 1999). In Higher Education, this is a time of increasing emphasis on standards, benchmarks, measurable and comparable outcomes, a hard-edged accountability and the bottom line. The purposes of Higher Education go beyond knowledge dissemination to lifelong learning. This statement is supported with that of Smyth (1995) when he said "Times of Higher Educational Supplement" Higher Education should enable students to find and develop something of value on which to build a life, while learning to value what others offer as well.

In fact, professionalisation of programmes or training, as the case may be, is a prerequisite to resolving the problem of

graduates' employment. Theories at Universities are pretty good but there is need for graduates who are ready for action-oriented. It is for this reason that this study is emphasizing on the need for government to put in more effort to professionalised HE programmes to produce graduates who will not only rely on the government for employment but would be able to develop opportunities for them, create jobs, be more productive in the private sector and above all can be self-employed. The fact cannot be denied that a good quality human resource-base is extremely important in today's highly competitive environment (Khare, 2016).

Background to the Study

The Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP) is the main governance body for the state Universities. The ministry of Higher Education was created in 1992 (Decree of 27th November 1992). It defined policies for both state and private Higher Education sectors. The Cameroon HE system operates within the framework of the 1993 reforms. Before 2008, the Higher Education system in Cameroon comprised of two degree structures according to the French and Anglophone systems. To ensure mobility between the two subsystems and in response to the pressures of regional integration and globalisation, the degree structures were harmonised according to the Bachelor, Master and Doctoral

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structure. The Francophone structure today is called the LMD system (Licence, Master and Doctoral cycles of 3+2+3 years each) corresponding to BMD (Bachelor, Master and Doctoral cycles) which existed in the Anglophone system. This new and comparable degree structure went operational from 2008.

Besides the 1993 reforms, there have been revisions and additions which relate to Higher Education. Some of these include:

- Law No. 005 of 16th April 2001 on the orientation of Higher Education in Cameroon. It defined the orientation of Higher Education in terms of teaching, research, and contribution to development, bilingualism and cooperation.
- Decree No. 2005/383 of 17th October 2005 on New University Governance lays down the financial regulations applicable to Universities.
- The 9th August 2008 decree creating the University of Maroua.
- Decree No. 2010/372 of 14th December 2010, creating a second Anglophone state University, the University of Bamenda.
- The University-Industry Charter signed on 20th December 2010 expressing the values that should be upheld and the rules and regulations in University-industry relations.
- The 2006-2009 Education Sectors Strategic Plan (ESSP).
- The 2010-2014 Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP).

Higher Education objectives result from overlapping national and international policies. Cameroon is a signatory to several international conventions related to education. As a developing and aid-dependent country, Cameroon's Higher Education system is influenced by the World Bank, UNESCO, the African Development Bank and other sub regional organizations which shape what is deemed strategic for Higher Education (Doh, 2012). Today, there exist eight (08) state Universities and over 116 private Higher Institutions which are claimed to provide professional training to students. According to the Sector Wide Approach to Education as cited by Titanji (2017), 20% of every course should be professionalised. Since the inception of these reforms and other laws, Cameroon is still faced with high a rate of unemployed graduates and underemployment. In our state Universities, there exist professional and classic disciplines/programmes. Despite this dual existence in academic programmes in our state Universities, many have said that there is actually no professionalisation involved. According to Law No. 005 of 16 April 2001 to Guide Higher Education, article 2 states that the Higher Education realm shall be assigned a basic mission of producing, organizing and disseminating scientific, cultural, professional and ethical knowledge for development purposes. Article 3 also states that State shall grant the Higher Education realm a national priority status and it shall organize and supervise Higher Education. The new policy on University governance laid down in decree No. 2005/383 of 17th December 2005 was aimed at improving governance of Higher Education in four perspectives (managerial, academic, financial and social governance). The decree emphasizes efficiency, effectiveness, management with rigour transparency and results.

It is asserted that the purpose was to review and reorient Higher Education to meet the needs of the society and the labour market. Given that Higher Education does not need to train without focusing on where the graduates will end up, in (2018), the Head of State signed a Memorandum of understanding with the objective to bring other stakeholders on board to professionalised Higher Education. This therefore implied that since 1993 reforms and 2001 law of orientation to HE, to date, professionalisation of Higher Education in Cameroon is till to gain effective ground despite the evolution of several academic programmes. HE in Cameroon is free for State-owned/public Universities with delimitation for classic programmes and for nationals.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, Higher Education in Cameroon has witnessed several reforms. The primary drive of these reforms was to address the issue of high rate of graduate unemployment. Article 4.1 of the 1998, in its section 2, it state education is to develop creativity, a sense of initiative and the spirit of enterprise in learners. The government has placed great importance on quality education and recognizes it as an essential component for the development needs of the society. However, quality is still an issue of concern with high levels of unemployment. According to the International Labour Organization's 2015 report, the unemployment rate in Cameroon is 30% and that of underemployment is 75%.

This is further justified by the fact that in (2018), the Head of State signed a Memorandum of understanding with the objective to bring other stakeholders on board to professionalised Higher Education. Also, during the Head of State traditional addressing to youths in 2017, he said the reason while many graduates are unemployed is because HE education has not been professionalised. Recently, the Minister of Employment and Vocational Training (Tchiroma, 2019), said "we have hundreds of thousands of our youths who do not find jobs because they don't have the skills. They don't have the skills because they have not been trained yet many have acquired HE certificate".

This therefore implied that since 1993 reforms and 2001 law of orientation to HE, to date, professionalisation of Higher Education in Cameroon is till to gain effective ground in spite of the evolution of several academic programmes. According to the Human capital economic theory, knowledge has to be put to work, seen to work and be in work and employability is the predominant purpose for professionalisation. Therefore, if Higher Education is not contributing self-sufficiently to enhancing graduates' employability skills, then, it implies that HE it is very expensive and time consuming.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the extent to which teachers' quality affects the quality of training of graduates.

Research Questions

Is there a relationship between teachers' quality and students and graduates employability skills?

Hypothesis

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between lecturers'/teachers' quality and the quality training of graduates.

Ha₁: There is a significant relationship between teachers' quality and the quality training of graduates.

Significance of the Study

It is hoped that findings of the study would encouraged the government of Cameroon to put in more effort, to effectively professionalised HE academic programmes or to effectively implement the sub objective 10 stated in the Draft Document of Sector Wide Approach (2006) which is to ameliorate the quality of Higher Education by

- Putting in place of an efficient system of evaluation and valorisation of pedagogic activities
- Creation and putting in place a pedagogic perfection center
- Putting in place of an evaluation system of teachers by students and
- Putting in place a support fund to pedagogic renovation projects in Universities on competitive basis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers' Quality

Professionalising HE programmes without putting in place adequate majors to improve on teachers'/lecturers' quality will not yield the expected results. On the other hand, having professional teachers teaching unprofessional courses will still not yield the expected results. Therefore, the two must be ensured. Derek (2017) stated that many instructors do not teach their courses in ways best calculated to achieve the ends that faculties themselves consider important.

Teachers are considered the most important in-school impact factor on the quality of student achievement. From McKinsey's (2004) report on how the world's best-performing school systems come out on top, Barber and Mourshed (2007) stated that the main driver of the variation in student learning at school is the quality of the teachers. Also, based on a large scale survey on factors influencing learning outcomes of students, Hattie (2009) suggested that the quality of lecturers/teachers has a larger impact on the learning of students than the quality of the curriculum, the teaching methods, the school buildings or the role of parents. As a result of the widely acknowledged importance of teachers, much attention should be given to policies with respect to teachers' quality within the context of profeessionalising HE programmes to enhance graduates' employability.

The individual performance of each faculty member is a crucial factor in quality teaching and in the professionalisation of HE programmes. Quality teaching is the use of pedagogical techniques to produce learning outcomes for students (OECD, 2008). Experience showed that fostering quality teaching is a multi-level endeavour. Support for quality teaching takes place at three inter-dependent levels:

- At the institution-wide level: including projects such as policy design, and support to organisation and internal quality assurance systems.
- Programme level: comprising actions to measure and enhance the design, content and delivery of the programmes within a department or a school.
- Individual level: including initiatives that help teachers achieve their mission, encouraging them to innovate and to support improvements to student learning and adopt a learner oriented focus.

These three levels are essential and inter-dependent. However, supporting quality teaching at the programme level is a key step as to ensure improvement in quality teaching at the discipline level and across the institution.

A number of factors have brought quality teaching to the forefront of higher education policies. Almost every education system has experienced substantial growth of student numbers in recent decades and the student profile has become more diverse. At the same time, HE faces greater pressure from students, parents, employers and taxpayers to account for their performance and demonstrate their teaching quality (Harold, 1999).

Support for quality teaching can be manifested through a wide range of activities that are likely to improve the quality of the teaching process, of the programme content, as well as the learning conditions of students (Bédard, Clément, & Taylor, 2010). According to the Draft Document of Sector Wide Approach to Education (2006), at every level of the educational system the Cameroonian educational system seemed suffer from the shortage of qualified teachers. Because of this shortage of qualified teachers, it has led to the employment of many unqualified teachers. Particularly, at the tertiary level, it was realised that the number of lecturers with professional status is low. This shortage in the number of lecturers with professorial rank is critical in the quality of the lectures and promotion of research.

Today, many Universities in Cameroon are largely dominated by assistant lecturers who might have not undergone any training. Therefore, the pedagogic competence of many may be weak which may not adequate support the agenda of the professionalisation of HE programmes to improve on graduates' employability. This alone is capable to cause many students to be less engaged in studies cognitively, emotionally and behaviorally. Given that this problem is not new, one of the missions of Universities' current strategic plan (2007-2015) was to improve teaching conditions, staff competence and teaching quality. Another objective was to improve research output, relevance and good practice. Also, according to the Draft Document of Sector Wide Approach to Education (2006), one of its strategic objectives (objective 4) was aimed to ameliorate the management and governance of the education system by defining policy of recruitment and distribution of teachers.

On this same document, the improvement of special status of teachers of Higher Education was highly recommended. To ameliorate the quality of Higher Education Sub objective 10, actions to be taken were:

- Putting in place an efficient system of evaluation and valorisation of pedagogic activities
- Creation and putting in place a pedagogic perfection center
- Putting in place of an evaluation system of teachers by students
- Putting in place a support fund to pedagogic renovation projects in Universities on competitive basis.

All these strategic actions were to ameliorate quality of teaching in Universities in Cameroon and to support the professionalisation of HE. However, ever since these actions were adopted, little or nothing seems to have been done. For instance, in our Universities, the school administration had never give students that autonomy to evaluate their

teachers/lecturers, talk less of creating and putting in place a pedagogic perfection center. Therefore, it is expected that within the context of professionalizing HE programmes, adequate actions must be taken to ameliorate teachers'/lecturers' quality.

The focus on improving Higher Education quality has led to a stronger attention for personalised teaching and learning (OECD, 2007). The expectations that society has towards teachers and their professionalism is high. Teachers are therefore challenged to show extended professionalism and a wider perspective on their role within Universities through research (Stenhouse 1975). In two recent studies (Finnish Institute for Educational Research 2009; Snoek, Swennen, & Van der Klink, 2009) national standards and curricula for teacher education in the European member states have been analyzed. These studies showed that there is a general consensus on the competences that teachers need. These competences are focused around subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, classroom management, linking theory to practice, co-operation and collaboration, continuous and lifelong learning and less prominent, quality assurance, mobility and also leadership (European Commission, 2010). These are individual characteristics that HEIs expect from it teachers when talking about professionalising HE programmes.

Putting in place a pedagogic perfection center for teachers in Higher Education Institutions could be profitable not only to students/graduates but to the society and labour market as a whole. The conceptions of teaching can be divided into two main categories: teachers who see their primary role as transmitting concepts or knowledge and teachers whose approach to teaching is essentially to help students develop.

In terms of underpinning learning theory, it is evident that the former is based on behaviouristic learning principles and that the latter assumes a constructivist philosophy. Teachers who see their role as helping students to develop is what is greatly needed within the context of professionalisation of HE programmes. Teachers in Universities should be advised to conceptualise teachings in the constructivist's approach that is, making learners to actively construct knowledge for themselves. However, the question is could lecturers/teachers in our Cameroon Universities do this on their own without provision of support from the government? This calls on the need for effective professional development of teachers/lecturers in our Universities.

Le Boterf (1999) said that a professional is someone capable of managing a complex working situation. So, he opts for a definition that associates professionalism with competence. His proposal gives an explicit breakdown of the various components that characterise a professional:

- He/She is able to precede properly, above and beyond his/her duties, in a specific context or situation.
- He/She is able to combine personal and environmental resources, which, in specific contexts, he/she is able to mobilise properly.
- He/She is able to transfer personal resources to situations that are required by the context.
- He/She is able to learn from experience, and learn to learn.
- He/She is able to commit to his/her work and to professional relationships with others.

By including teaching and the analysis of relationships between training and professionalism, which is of interest here, according to Tejada (2009; 2011), professionalisation is a process that is articulated around the construction of a professional identity, professional competencies, access requirements, the associated training, the development of a professional career, and the processes of evaluation of professional performance. Professionalisation as a process does not constitute the final state that occupations lead towards, but rather a continuous process that pursues their useful and responsible practice (Darling-Hammond, 2005). Adult development is the accumulation of experience, and training therefore appears to be at the root of the professional development of teachers (VillegasRemser, 2003; Fernández Cruz, 2006; NemiñaGarcíaRuso; & Montero, 2009; Marcelo, 2011).

With Cameroon becoming an emerging nation by 2035, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is expected to improve on their programme quality whilst on the other hand should be concern with upgrading its' teachers'/lecturers' quality. According to Tejada (2009), Tejada & Fernández Cruz, (2009), University lecturers undergoing professional development from a perspective of lifelong learning is vital in the context of professionalisation of HE programmes. In a context of independent lifelong learning, the professional development of teachers implies that they should according to Mas and Tejada (2012),

- Continue systematically to reflect on professional practice.
- Do research in the classrooms.
- Incorporate into their teaching the results of research in the classrooms and of academic research.
- Assess the effectiveness of their teaching strategies and change them accordingly.
- Assesses their own learning needs.
- Collaborate with other professionals in an interdisciplinary manner (training-work).

According to the Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications (European Commission, 2005), all teachers are required to be graduates from Higher Education Institutions and are required to have extensive subject knowledge, a good knowledge of pedagogy, the skills and competencies required to guide and support learners, and an understanding of the social and cultural dimension of education. Again, the Commission stated that in the context of lifelong learning, teachers should be supported in order to continue their professional development throughout their careers. The Commission also recommended that teachers should be encouraged to spend time working or studying in other European countries for professional development purposes.

All these were emphasized because sometimes, even the knowledge that teachers possess is too fragmented and decontextualized and by the Commission report, this phenomenon has resulted to precarious employment and professional imposture. This Commission also reported that University lecturers very often identify themselves with the specialty and not with teaching, the latter of which becomes a somewhat secondary aspect of their professional practice which was supposed to be the primary aspect of their professional practice.

The creation of training support units which exist in many European Countries have been acknowledged in Cameroon as clearly articulated in the Draft Document of Sector Wide Approach to Education (2006) in its sub objective 10, page 165 stating the actions to be taken to ameliorate the quality of Higher Education which are;

- Putting in place of an efficient system of evaluation and valorisation of pedagogic activities
- Creation and putting in place a pedagogic perfection center

In addition, little has been done for the realization of these objectives and the incentives for lecturers to continue updating their teaching competencies through their professional careers are scarce. Adequate training of lecturers / teachers plays a key role in professionalisation of Higher Education programmes. Therefore, professionalisation of Higher Education programmes in Cameroon should have serious repercussions for initial training and continuing education of its teachers. Professionalisation of HE programmes within the Cameroon context must be blend with quality teaching from it academic staff if positive results are to be attained.

Theoretical Review

The Improvement Theory (Benthum, Gulikers, Jong & Mulder, 2011)

Theory of improvement describes how the characteristics of the professionalisation programme contribute to teachers' learning. Because of the experienced difficulties in professionalising teaching, a theory of improvement is critical in successful professionalisation of programmes in HE (Birenbaum, 2011; Smith, 2011; Segers & Tillema, 2011). Effective professional development of teachers is needed to help teachers implement new reforms. Change is often accompanied with complexity and therefore, opportunities for effective professional development are paramount for teachers.

According to the theory of improvement, Higher Education Institutions are arguably responsible for helping students to gain the skills, knowledge and attributes required of them in the initial stages of their careers, and for ensuring students' ability to adapt to changing workforce needs. Although not all educators may agree with this statement, most institutions are moving to accept this responsibility. This theory of improvement focuses on the need to improve on teachers' training to support the professionalisation of HE. Teachers' professionalisation of good practices is very instrumental because of its capability to enhance graduates' professional growth to the workplace. Therefore, Imants and Van Veen (2010) have emphasized that the professionalisation approach and the theory of improvement should be highly reflected in the context of educational reform project.

This theory is relevant to the study in that it informs stakeholders that for professionalisation of HE academic programmes to take place with its objective to improve on

graduates' quality as seen in the 1993 reforms and 2001 law of orientation to HE, there is the need to adopt and implement effective mechanism to improve on teachers' professional competencies. As stated in the Sector Wide Approach to Education (2006) some mechanisms were recommended to improve on HE teachers' quality and one of it is the creation of centres for pedagogic perfection of teachers.

Professionalisation of HE academic programmes might be difficult to attain if ways to on improve teacher's competencies are lacking in educational reform or if present and not effectively implemented. According to the Law of orientation of HE (2001), teachers have been described as guarantors of quality education and given that Hattie (2009) has opined that the quality of teachers has a larger impact on the learning of students than the quality of the curriculum, the teaching methods, the school building or the role of parents. Adequate strategies should be adopted to make sure teachers fulfill what is demanded of them.

Methodology

The survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of final year undergraduate students and graduates from the two public Universities. The target population consisted of participants from education (field of teaching), chemistry, banking and finance, Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine and College of Technology. Data was collected from 385 final year undergraduate students 365 graduates and 56 lecturers. Among the 385 final year students, 233 were from University of Buea and 152 from the University of Bamenda. Furthermore, among the 365 graduates sampled, 230 were from University of Buea and 135 from the University of Bamenda and among the 56 lecturers, 35 were from the University of Buea and 21 from the University of Bamenda. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection which consisted of both closed and opened ended items. The opened ended item was to allow the participants to share their own view using their own words about the quality of teachers in their department of studies. The questionnaire consisted of a total of 17 test items. The instrument after designed was presented to some University lecturers/teachers to ensure that it is valid for the study. The test items were designed using the five point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The reliability analysis of the participants was calculated using the Cronbach Alpha test. The reliability coefficient gotten from graduates from the University of Buea was 0.867 while that from graduates of University of Bamenda was 0.871. As for the final year undergraduate students, the reliability coefficient gotten from students from the University of Buea was 0.827 while that from students of University of Bamenda was 0.894. The data was analysed using SPSS version 23, with the aid of frequency, percentage and Spearman rho test which was used to test the hypothesis of the study. Finally, statistics were presented at 95% confidence interval with alpha set at 0.05 levels.

Findings**Table 1: Graduates Perception of Lecturers/Teachers Quality (N=361)**

Test items	Strongly Agree and Agree	Neutral	Disagree and Strongly Disagree
From the way I was taught by lecturers in my department, I say the professional status of some lecturers was low.	179 (49.6%)	5 (1.4%)	177 (49.0%)
During my stay in the University, there were lecturers in their department teaching who needed adequate training on how to teach.	240 (66.5%)	6 (1.7%)	115 (31.9%)
*Having a pedagogic perfection center that offer short courses on how to teach will be good for lecturers.	317 (87.8%)	26 (7.2%)	18 (5.0%)
*Implementing an evaluation system of teachers by students is required (students evaluating teachers at the end of each course taught).	289 (80.1%)	0 (0.0%)	72 (19.9%)
During my stay in the University, I observed that some lecturers in my department have good knowledge of subject matter but poor pedagogical skills.	264 (73.1%)	0 (0.0%)	97 (26.9%)
During my stay in the University, I observed that some lecturers in my department lack adequate knowledge of subject matter and have poor pedagogical skills.	155 (42.9%)	0 (0.0%)	206 (57.1%)
Throughout my degree programme, I can say some lecturers are not qualified to teach in my department.	168 (46.5%)	0 (0.0%)	193 (53.5%)
Graduates unemployment in Cameroon can also be attributed to the quality of lecturers teaching in the University.	145 (40.2%)	0 (0.0%)	216 (59.8%)
Multiple response set	1151 (53.1%)	11 (0.5%)	1004 (46.3%)

Generally, findings show that 53.1% of the graduates indicated that lecturers' quality is low while 46.3% of the graduates disagreed and 0.5% of them were neutral. To be specific, 240 (66.5%) of the graduates strongly agreed and agreed that during their stay in the University, there were lecturers teaching in their department who needed adequate training on how to teach. 264 (73.1%) of the graduates also strongly agreed and agreed that during their stay in the University, they observed that some lecturers in their department had good knowledge of subject matter but poor pedagogical skills while 97 (26.9%) of them disagreed.

Findings also show that 155 (42.9%) of the graduates agreed that during their stay in the University, they observed that some lecturers in my department lack adequate knowledge of subject matter and had poor pedagogical skills while 206 (57.1%) of them disagreed. Findings also show that 168 (46.5%) of the graduates agreed that throughout their degree programme, there are some lecturers who are not qualified to teach in their department while 193 (53.5%) of them disagreed. 179 (49.6%) of the graduates also agreed that there are lecturers who taught whose professional status is low because of the way they taught while 177 (49.0%) of them disagreed. Findings also show that while 145 (40.2%) of the graduates agreed that graduates' unemployment can also be attributed to quality of lecturers while 216 (59.8%) of them disagreed. Finally, findings further reveal that 317 (87.8%) and 289 (80.1%) of the graduates respectively agreed that having a pedagogic perfection center that offers short courses on how to teach will be good for lecturers and implementing an evaluation system where students are given the chance to evaluate teachers at the end of each course taught is required.

Table 2: Graduates Own Opinion on the Quality of Lectures that taught them During Studies

Themes	Groundings	Sampled Quotations
Lecturers perceived to be qualified/competent (Good pedagogical skills and mastery of subject matter)	135	<p>"They are my role model. They teach with real examples in life and provide the necessary skills to solve them".</p> <p>"I appreciate the quality of my lecturers from my department because they had a good mastery of the subject matter and pedagogy".</p> <p>"Professional and have a full mastery of the subject matter".</p> <p>"The quality of lecturers who have taught me so far have mastery of their subject".</p> <p>"They have skills and knowledge".</p> <p>"The quality of lecturers that have taught me so far have professional attribute and have a good knowledge on instructional learning or delivery".</p> <p>"They are competent and have a good mastery of the subject matter".</p> <p>"They are professionally intelligent".</p>

Few /some lecturers perceived to have good pedagogical skills and mastery of content and others not.	70	<p>"Some of them are doing their job well but some are not".</p> <p>"Just a hand few of the lecturers who taught me possessed good pedagogical skills and showed mastery of the subject matter".</p> <p>"Some are qualified while others are not and they need further training".</p> <p>"Some lecturers are really qualified to teach while others lack the skills".</p> <p>"Most of the lecturers are ineffective".</p> <p>"Majority of the lecturers has poor lecturing techniques but few of them have good lecturing skills".</p> <p>"In my opinion, some have a good mastery of content and subject matter and know how to deliver the goods while some lecturers do not".</p>
Some lecturers perceived to be poor in pedagogical skills but good knowledge of subject matter	60	<p>"A majority of the lecturers are knowledgeable with their subject matter but are not stable and consistent in dishing out the knowledge".</p> <p>"Some lecturers have a good mastery of the subject matter but lack pedagogical skills".</p> <p>"Most of the lecturers lacked training skills but have mastery of the subject matter".</p>
Lecturers perceived to be incompetent	25	<p>"We don't have competent lecturers on Campus especially in my field of Special Education".</p> <p>"Many of the lecturers are not efficient nor duty conscious".</p> <p>"Most of the lecturers are not well trained which makes their quality low".</p>
Some lecturers perceived to be lazy and not honest to their profession	20	<p>"Some of the lecturers are very lazy".</p> <p>"Lecturers are not entire committed".</p> <p>"Some are good, well learned and gives the required skills to students but others are lazy, arrogant and sometimes don't take their academic work seriously".</p>
Lecturers perceived to be competent but more effort required	10	<p>"They are good in teaching but they still need to put in more effort".</p> <p>"In my department, the lecturers are competent but effort will always be required".</p> <p>"Although a good number of the lecturers are competent they still need to improve on their pedagogical skills".</p>

Findings on table 2 show that graduates' own stake about lecturers who taught during their studies was grouped into six (06) categories. Findings show that while some of the graduates said that their lecturers were competent/qualified that is having a good mastery of the subject and pedagogical skills as depicted in some of their statements "I appreciate the quality of my lecturers from my department because they had a good mastery of the subject matter and pedagogy", "Professional and have a full mastery of the subject matter", a good number of the graduates as well also said some of their lecturers have good mastery of content but poor pedagogical skills as depicted in some of their statements "Some lecturers have a good mastery of the subject matter but lack pedagogical skills", "Most of the lecturers lack training skills but have mastery of the subject matter". Findings further show while some of the graduates said their lecturers are incompetent, lazy and not honest to their profession, others said that their lecturers are competent but more effort is required of them as supported by the statements "They are good in teaching but they still need to put in more effort", "In my department, the lecturers are competent but effort will always be required".

Table 3: Students Perception of Lecturers/Teachers Quality (N=385)

Test items	Strongly Agree and Agree	Neutral	Disagree and Strongly Disagree
Judging from the way many lecturers teach in my department, I say the professional status of many is low.	161 (41.8%)	7 (1.8%)	217 (56.4%)
There are lecturers in my department teaching who need adequate training on how to teach.	280 (72.7%)	0 (0.0%)	105 (27.3%)
*Having a pedagogic perfection center that offer short courses on how to teach will be good for lecturers.	350 (90.9%)	14 (3.6%)	21 (5.5%)
*Implementing an evaluation system of teachers by students is required (students evaluating teachers at the end of each course taught).	287 (74.5%)	14 (3.6%)	84 (21.8%)
Some lecturers in my department have good knowledge of subject matter but poor pedagogical skills	287 (74.5%)	14 (3.6%)	84 (21.8%)
Some lecturers in my department lack knowledge of both subject matter and pedagogical skills.	168 (43.6%)	21 (5.5%)	196 (50.9%)
Throughout my degree programme, I can say some lecturers are not qualified to teach in my department.	182 (47.3%)	28 (7.3%)	175 (45.5%)
Graduates unemployment in Cameroon can also be contributed to the quality of lecturers/teachers in the University.	217 (56.4%)	35 (9.1%)	133 (34.5%)
Multiple response set	1295 (56.1%)	105 (4.5%)	910 (39.4%)

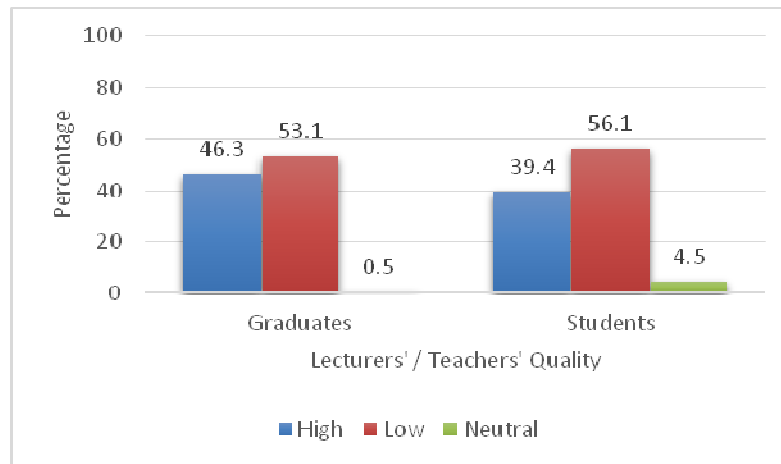
In general, findings show that 56.1% indicated that teachers' quality is low while 39.4% of the students disagreed with 4.5% of them being neutral. To be specific, 280 (72.7%) of the students agreed that there are lecturers in their department teaching who need adequate training on how to teach. 287 (74.5%) of the students also agreed that some lecturers in their department have good knowledge of subject matter but poor pedagogical skills. 182 (47.3%) of the students equally agreed that there are lecturers teaching in their departments who lack both knowledge of subject matter and pedagogical skills while 196 (50.9%) of them disagreed. Also, while findings show that 182 (47.3%) of the students agreed that throughout their degree programme, there were some lecturers who were not qualified to teach in their department, 175 (45.5%) of the students disagreed.

Furthermore, while findings show that 161 (41.8%) of the students agreed that there were lecturers in their department whose professional status is low from the way they teach, 217 (56.4%) of the students disagreed. Findings also show that while 217 (56.4%) of the students agreed that graduates' unemployment in Cameroon can also be attributed to the quality of lecturers teaching in the University, 133 (34.5%) of the students disagreed. Finally, findings show that 350 (90.9%) of the students agreed that having a pedagogic perfection center that offer short courses on how to teach will be good for lecturers while 287 (74.5%) of the students equally agreed that implementing a system of evaluation where students are required to evaluate lecturers at the end of each course taught is required.

Table 4: Students Own Opinion on the Quality of Lectures in their Department

Themes	Groundings	Sampled Quotations
Lecturers perceived as competent	125	<p>"Most of my lecturer that have taught me had a good mastery of their courses. That is to say their teaching is satisfactory".</p> <p>"The quality of lecturers that have taught me have been great".</p> <p>"So far, I have been lucky to have good and very qualified lecturers".</p> <p>"Lecturers who have taught me so far are of high quality as they master both knowledge of subject matter and pedagogical skills to teach. They teach you to understand well".</p> <p>"Most of the lecturers are highly skilled, well trained and have vast knowledge of the subject matter".</p>
Majority of lecturers perceived to have good mastery content while few are not	65	<p>"I can say that 80% of my lecturers have mastery of what they are teaching and they know how to do it while others are just going in for money".</p> <p>"Some of them are excellent in their teaching while others are lacking behind".</p> <p>"Some of the lecturers have a good mastery of their subject matter while others are very poor".</p> <p>"80% of my lecturers are amazing while the rest 20% are barely talking and wasting time".</p> <p>"Most of my lecturers 70% are very good and the rest 30% are still adjusting to the name lecturer".</p>
Good mastery of content but poor pedagogical skills	60	<p>"Majority of the lecturers have good knowledge of the content but low pedagogical skills".</p> <p>"Many are skillful but lack the style or effective teaching methods to present subject matter while some are just being lazy".</p> <p>"To me, the quality of training is not satisfactory to me given that most of my lecturers teaching have good knowledge of the content by poor pedagogical skills".</p> <p>"Many are competent but their methodology is not the best".</p> <p>"Some lecturers have good knowledge of subject matter but poor pedagogical skills".</p>
Lack of professional training	23	<p>"The lecturers are quite skillful but some of them lack professional training".</p> <p>"There are lecturers in my department who teach as if they are trained to be teachers while others are good at their job".</p> <p>"Some of the lecturers in my department need professional training on how to teach. This is so because a lecturer might have knowledge of the content but when skills are lacking, their lecturers are boring to students".</p>
Skillful but lack passion for job	7	<p>"Most of the lecturers have the skills but not the passion for their job".</p> <p>"Some lecturers teach with very low passion".</p>

Students' description of the quality of lecturers in their department was grouped into five (05) categories. Findings show while a good number of the students said all the lecturers in their department are competent that is having good mastery of content and pedagogical skills, some of the students said in their department some of lecturers are competent while others are not. Findings also show that some of the students said there are lecturers in their department who have good mastery of content but poor pedagogical skills. Lack of professional skills by some lecturers was also mentioned by some of the students. Aside this, some of the students said there are lecturers in their department who are skillful but teach with low passion.



$$\chi^2=2.18, df=1, P=0.139$$

Figure 1: Comparing Graduates and Students' Opinion on Lecturers/Teachers Quality

Generally, findings on figure 1 show that graduates and students do not significantly differ in the opinion on lecturers'/teachers' quality ($P>0.05$) with 53.1% of the graduates and 56.1% of the students indicating that lecturers' quality is low while 46.3% of the graduates and 39.4% of the students indicating that teachers quality is high.

Academic Staff Perspective of Lecturer's /Teachers' Quality

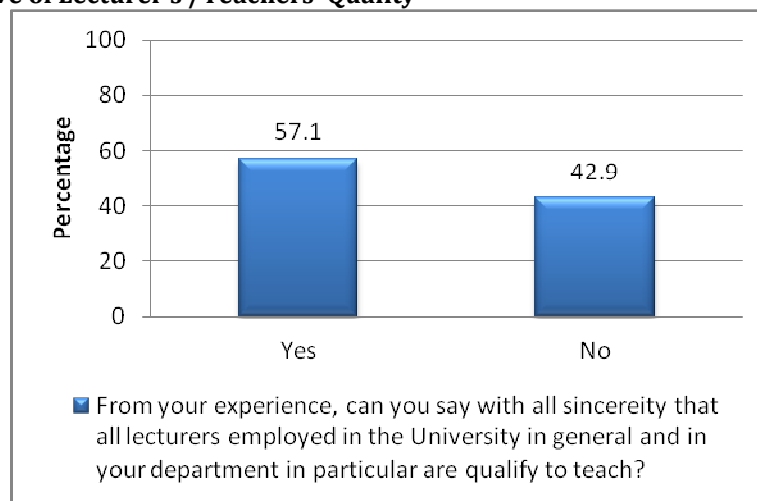


Figure 2: Academic Staff Perspective of Lecturer's /Teachers' Quality

Findings on the figure 2 show that out of 56 of the lecturers sampled, 32 (57.1%) of them agreed that all lecturers employed in the University in general and in their department in particular are qualified to teach while 24 (42.9%) of the lecturers disagreed.

Table 5: Academic Staff Opinion of the Kind of Qualities expected from Lectures

Themes	Groundings	Sampled Quotations
Good mastery of content (knowledge)	19	"Good mastery in their field of specialty". "Knowledge". "Professional mastery of the subject matter". "Specialized knowledge". "Lecturers should be more acquainted to practice in order to help the students to be ready for the field of work". "Mastery of topic". "The knowledge and expertise".
Practical teaching	18	"To be more practical in teaching". "Teach using didactic materials". "Teach using real examples". "I expect them to be more practical in their lecturers". "Practical illustration in teaching". "Practice oriented teaching".
Professional competencies	14	"Lecturers should have professional skills in their field of study". "Lectures should have in-depth professional experience and competency in the area which they are teaching". "Lecturers/teachers should be of good academic standing". "Professionalism and competencies".

Research skills	12	"Research and teaching are fundamental. Lecturers should stay clear from politics and focus in research". "They should be research oriented and have production skills". "Research and use of contemporary knowledge and technologies in teaching". "More field work". "Research skills". "Research competencies".
Assiduity	11	"High quality of teaching from lecturers". "Dedication". "Assiduity". "Assiduity in duties".
ICT skills	6	"ICT skills". "Training in special skills like ICTs". "Increase the use of ICTs and other visual aids".
Enthusiasm	4	"Enthusiastic and innovative lecturers". "Enthusiasm about what they teach".
Commitment	4	"Devotedness". "Commitment".
Consciousness	4	"Proper time management". "Time conscious".
Honesty	3	"Honesty". "Moral standard".
Good teacher-student relation	3	"A cordial relationship between teachers and students". "Loving and kind to students".
Innovative	1	"Be innovative and creative".

Academic staff opinions on the kind of qualities they expect from lecturers/teachers were grouped into 12 categories. The frequently mentioned qualities were that lecturers should have good mastery of content, teach using a practical approach, possess professional competences must have research skills and be hard working (assiduous). Skills in ICT, teaching with enthusiasm, committed to teaching, honesty, consciousness, good teacher-student relationship and innovation were other qualities expected from University lecturers.

Verification of Hypothesis One (Ho1): There Is no Significant Relationship Between Lecturers'/Teachers' Quality and The Quality Training of Graduates.

Table 6: Relationship between Lecturers'/Teachers Quality and Quality of Graduates Training

	Test Statistics	Lecturer/Teacher Quality	Quality of Graduates Training
Spearman's rho	R-value	1.000	.412**
	P-value	.	.000
	N	361	361

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Finally, findings on table 6 show that there is a very significant and strong relationship between lecturer/teacher quality and quality of graduates training ($P < 0.001$, far less than 0.05). The positive sign of the relationship ($R = .412^{**}$) implies that graduates are more likely to benefit from quality training when well qualified lecturers/teachers are employed or when the quality of lecturers/ teachers is high. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that states that there is a significant relationship between lecturers'/teachers' quality and the quality training of graduates was accepted while the null hypothesis that states there is no significant relationship between lecturers'/teachers' quality and the quality training of graduates was rejected.

Discussion and Conclusion

Statistically, findings show that lecturers'/teachers' quality has a very significant, strong and positive effect on the quality of graduates training. Despite this relationship between teacher quality and quality of graduates training, findings show that while some of the graduates and students said that the lecturers teaching in their programme of study are qualified as supported with some of their statements "I appreciate the quality of my lecturers from my department because they had a good mastery of the subject matter and pedagogy", "Professional and have a full mastery of the subject matter", a majority of the graduates and students said that not all lecturers' in their programme of study are qualify to teach as supported with some of their statements "Some lecturers have a good mastery of the subject matter but lack pedagogical skills", "Most of the lecturers lacked training skills but have mastery of the subject matter".

Furthermore, while some of graduates and students said some of the lecturers have good mastery of content but poor pedagogical skills, some of the students further reported that there are lecturers in their department who lack professional skills, incompetent, lazy, not honest to their profession and teach with low passion. Aside these descriptions of lecturers by graduates and students, some of the graduates on the other hand said lecturers are competent but more effort is required of them as supported with their statement "They are good in teaching but they still need to put in more effort", "In my department, the lecturers are competent but effort will always be required". This kind of responses signifies the need for more in-service training of lecturers/teachers which can be done through organization of seminars and workshops.

It should be noted that not only a majority of the graduates and students said teachers' quality is low. A significant proportion of the lecturers/teachers equally said not all lecturers employed in the University in general and in their department in particular are qualified to teach. Some twelve (12) qualities were deemed necessary from lecturers/teachers. The frequently mentioned qualities as mentioned by academic staff themselves were that lecturers should have good mastery of content, teach using a practical approach, possess professional competences must have research skills and be hard working (assiduous). Skills in ICT, teaching with enthusiasm, commitment, honesty, consciousness, good teacher-student relationship and innovation were other qualities expected from University lecturers as stated by academic staff.

Professionalising HE programmes without putting in place adequate majors to improve on teachers'/lecturers' quality will not yield the expected results. On the other hand, having professional teachers teaching unprofessional courses will still not yield the expected results. Therefore, the two must be ensured. Derek (2017) stated that many instructors do not teach their courses in ways best calculated to achieve the ends that faculties themselves consider important. Teachers are considered the most important in-school impact factor on the quality of student achievement. From McKinsey's (2004) report on how the world's best-performing school systems come out on top, Barber and Mourshed (2007) stated that the main driver of the variation in student learning at school is the quality of the teachers. Hattie (2009) suggested that the quality of lecturers/teachers has a larger impact on the learning of students than the quality of the curriculum, the teaching methods, the school building or the role of parents. As a result of the widely acknowledged importance of teachers, much attention should be given to policies with respect to teacher quality within the context of professionalising HE programmes to enhance graduates' employability.

In a study carried out by Hattie (2009) on factors responsible for University students less engagement in studies, findings showed that poor pedagogical skills of lecturers was the most mentioned factor. Based on this, the quality of graduates training will negatively affected. According to the Human Capital theory by Becker (1964), Higher Education has been acknowledged as a key indicator of economic development, yet in many developing countries like Cameroon, this is yet to be realized despite all the reforms made in the past to improve on its quality to enhance graduates' employability skills because of lack of a strong political will to ensure its implementation.

According to Benthum, Gulikers, Jong and Mulder (2011), theory of improvement, for professionalisation of HE academic programmes to take place with its objective to improve on graduates' quality as seen in the 1993 reforms and 2001 law of orientation to HE, there is the need to adopt and implement effective mechanisms to improve on teachers' professional competencies. Professionalisation of HE academic programmes might be difficult to attain if ways to improve on teachers' competencies are lacking in educational reform or if present and not effectively implemented. Countries such as Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan have achieved extraordinary rates of economic growth while making large investments in HE. HEIs in Cameroon can do the same.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were put forward:

A system of teacher evaluation done by students and monitoring mechanisms for teacher effectiveness should be implemented. A school of education should be created in every state university to provide teacher education certification while teachers on the ground should get certificates from accredited institutions. Workshops and capacity building programmes should constantly be organized to improve on the pedagogical competences of academic staff.

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