

PRO GRADU - TUTKIELMA

PASCAL SAMFOGA DOH

Harmonisation Challenges in Higher Education: Case of the French and British Bicultural System in Cameroon

TAMPEREEN YLIOPISTO
University of TAMPERE

**HARMONISATION CHALLENGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
CASE OF THE FRENCH AND BRITISH BICULTURAL SYSTEM IN
CAMEROON**

**Department of Management Studies
European Master Programme in Higher Education
Pro gradu Thesis
May 2007**

By: Pascal Samfoga Doh

Supervisor : Professor Seppo Hölttä

ABSTRACT

Department of Management Studies

European Master Programme in Higher Education

PASCAL S. DOH

Harmonisation Challenges in Higher Education: Case of the French and British Bicultural System in Cameroon

May, 2007

84 Pages

Viewing the recent global prominence of harmonization in higher education (HE), this thesis sought to contribute a practical experience from Cameroon, which has had a tradition of harmonisation in the French and British educational systems. The study investigated the systems' diversities and their significance on the harmonization policies in Cameroon. In order to establish the generality of the challenges, the conceptual variations of the global phenomena were examined with the case study. Differences in their contexts and scales were acknowledged, but their conceptual similarities noted on the significance of "cultural diversity" in HE.

Analyses on the systems' steering of the two subsystems pointed to disjuncture between macro level intentions and institutional practices. It revealed the tendency of different bottom-up initiatives meeting with monocultural experiences at the system level or, top-down policies versus bottom resistance as per the educational foundations and systems' spirit. The bilingual university as a feature of the bicultural system mirrored likely challenges of today's university viewing the growing use of extra language(s) of instruction. Challenges in maintaining language balance and dealing with its related cultural, economic and logistic implications were raised. The diversities were also found to be significant on the degree structures, grading systems and HE teaching qualifications. Similar challenges on harmonisation of the degree structures were seen to exist in, or result from the grading systems' and also between degree structures and the teaching qualifications. The challenges were observed to result from: approximations, arbitrary interpretations, and lack of systematic and consistent criteria for equivalences, lack of equivalences in the next system (eg qualifications), unjustifiable inequalities and inconvertibility between systems. The researcher noted that a common degree structure with comparable grading system would limit their discrepancies. Systems' curricular differences were found to impact on students' approaches and achievements. Based on certain contents and methodological issues which find greater coherency within the educational systems, curricular issues were observed to be differentiated between the two subsystems. This led to the assertion that the bottom-heaviness of HE, differences in traditions and foundations limit the range of harmonisation policy issues. It raised the impact of systems' cultural characteristics on the teaching-learning process in multicultural settings.

The study suggests that in its practice, HE harmonisation require mutually-reinforcing strategies that factor agreements between joint policies and bottom educational practices. In the bicultural system, harmonisation seems to have been tackled through a frame of policy options depending on specific objectives and effectiveness, such as: 1) equivalences aimed at comparability and mobility 2) differentiation to respond to diversities 3) standard criteria with equivalences and 4) cross-substitutions. Based on the case study and issues from the global phenomena, certain characteristics of harmonisation challenges in HE were observed such as: 1) "diversity" which normally challenges integration 2) the necessity for "differentiation" which challenges the extent of integration, its limit or questions the capacity of simplified frameworks responding to diverse needs of HE such as; lifelong and adult learning, certification of voluntary drop outs, exigencies of certain professional degrees and demands of external knowledge users. 3. "Homogenisation skepticism" or "cultural protectionism" as against cultural exportation, macdonalisation of contents or conformity. On grounds of the above, the researcher observes that HE Harmonisation would seem to remain a union of systems' convenience or unity in diversity.

Keywords: *Harmonisation, Biculturalism, Beliefs, Cultures and Structure*

DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my daughter, **Sania Nyonglemuga Doh** who was born during the busy moments of this research study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	i
Dedication.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Tables.....	vi
List of Figures.....	vii
List of Abbreviations.....	viii

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of the study.....	1
1.2 Historical background of the bicultural education system.....	3

CHAPTER 2: THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN CAMEROON

2.1 Structure of the system.....	6
2.2 The 1993 University Reforms in Cameroon.....	8
2.3 Student Population.....	12
2.4 Funding.....	12
2.5 Coordination: The State & the Academic Oligarchy.....	13
2.6 Language of Instruction.....	19
2.7 Private Higher Education.....	19
2.8 Degree structure.....	20
2.9 Grading system.....	20
2.10 Admission criteria.....	21
2.11 Teaching recruitments and promotion Policies.....	22

CHAPTER 3: ASSUMPTION, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, OBJECTIVES, RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

3.1 Assumption of the study.....	23
3.2 Research questions.....	23
3.3 Objective of the study.....	24
3.4 Rationale of the study.....	24
3.5 Significance of the study.....	25

CHAPTER 4: LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1	Beliefs, Cultures and Structures in HE.....	26
4.2	Sub-Cultures of Higher Education systems.....	27
4.3	Cultural Differences in HE Systems.....	28
4.4	Biculturalism.	29
4.5	Colonial Systems of Higher Education.....	30
4.6	The Bilingual University.....	31
4.7	Global Higher Education Harmonisation.....	33
4.8	The French and British systems of higher education: Cross National Analysis	36
4.9	Policy implementation in Higher Education: (Multilevel analysis).....	38

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

5.1	Analytical perspectives.....	40
5.2	Research design.....	41
5.3	Area of the study.....	41
5.4	Level of study.....	42
5.5	Target of respondents.....	42
5.6	Sample of study.....	44
5.7	Instrument/method of Data Collection.....	46
5.8	Data Analysis.....	47

CHAPTER 6: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

6.1	Structural integration and steering.....	49
6.2	Bilingual issues.....	53
6.3	The system of degree equivalences	58
6.4	Teaching qualifications and promotion	62
6.5	Workloads and Evaluation (grading system/ scales).....	64
6.6	Admission backgrounds.....	69
6.7	Curriculum standardisation.....	70
6.8	Interuniversity Collaboration (Joint Degrees & Research).....	71
6.9	The case study and global HE harmonisation: conceptual similarities.....	74

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

7.1 Analysis of the findings and suggestion.....76

7.2 Contending forces around Higher Education Harmonisation.....81

7.3 Perspectives.....83

References.....85

Appendix A.....90

Appendix B.....93

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Pre-1974 enrolments in Cameroon HE institutions.....	7
Table 2.	2002/2003 student population in Cameroon State Universities.....	12
Table 3.	Respondents of the study.....	43
Table 4.	Systems background of respondents.....	44
Table 5.	University identities of the respondents.....	45
Table 6.	Enrolment of English-speaking candidates into university of first language.....	55
Table 7.	French, Anglo-Saxon and Professional degree equivalences.....	59
Table 8.	Equivalences for teaching ranks and promotion criteria.....	62
Table 9.	Credit equivalences in Cameroon.....	65
Table 10.	Grade conversion in the Cameroonian Higher Education system.....	68

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Structure of the state university system in Cameroon.....	10
Figure 2.	Clark’s Triangle of Higher Education Coordination.....	14
Figure 3.	The cultural environment of the university academics.....	27
Figure 4.	Population of the study.....	43

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB:	Assez Bien
ADEA:	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AP :	Associate Professor
ASTI:	Advanced School of Translation and Interpretation
BAC:	Baccalaureat
BP:	Bologna Process
CEMAC:	Communauté Economique de l’Afrique Centrale
CCIU:	Comité Consultatif des Institutions Universitaires.
CNU :	Cameroon National Union/Union Nationale Camerounaise
CUSS :	Centre Universitaire des Sciences de la Santé
DDH:	Doctorate Degree Holder
DEA:	Diplôme d’Etudes Approfondir
DESS:	Diplôme d’Etudes Supérieures Spécialisées
DEUG:	Diplôme d’Etudes Universitaires Générales
Doc de 3eme C :	Doctorat de Troisième Cycle
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
ECTS:	European Credit Transfer System
ENAM:	Ecole Nationale d’Administration et de Magistrature
ENQUA:	European Network for Quality Assurance
ENS:	Ecole Normale Supérieure
ENSAI :	Ecole Nationale des Sciences Agro-industrielles
ENSP :	Ecole Nationale Supérieure Polytechnique
ESSTIC:	Ecole Supérieure des Sciences et Technique de l’Information et de Communication
EURYDICE:	Information Network on Education in Europe
FCFA:	Franc Communautaire Financière Africaine
FOL:	First Official Language
G.C.E.:	General Certificate of Education
HE:	Higher education
HE & RC:	Higher Education and Research Council
IAU:	International Association of Universities
IRIC :	Institut des Relations Internationales
IUT	Instituts Universitaires de Technologie
JCAS:	Journal of the Cameroon Academy of Sciences
LMD:	Licence, Mastère, Doctorat
MC :	Maître de Conférences
MINESUP:	Ministère d’Enseignement Supérieur/Ministry of Higher Education
M.Phil :	Master of Philosophy
USD:	United States Dollars
OECD:	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PCA :	Président du Conseil d’Administration
Ph.D:	Doctor of Philosophy
SOL:	Second Official Language
UB:	University of Buea
UGC :	University Grants Committee
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UK:	United Kingdom

UV:	Unité de valeur
VR	Vice-Rector
WGHE:	World Bank Group for Higher Education
2 nd Class Upp Div:	Second Class Upper Division
3 rd Class:	Third Class

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview of the study

The educational system in Cameroon is a legacy of the British and French colonial administration whose inherited practices gave rise to the bicultural and bilingual paths on which various aspects of its national life were to develop when it became independent. Based on the colonial legacies, various systems' practices in Cameroon convey its dual cultural and linguistic colonial backgrounds. Cameroon is a bilingual country, French and English being its two official languages. The educational sector has operated in two subsystems, the French and English subsystems with diverse curricular, structural and organization patterns. Until 2007 a bi-jural French and English Law system operated in Cameroon. The country belongs to the respective linguistic and cultural entities, the British Commonwealth and Francophonie.

The case study therefore presents a platform wherein two inherited educational traditions have coexisted for close to half a century, imposing on the national system a bicultural educational model and necessity for harmonisation policies on certain aspects. The existence of the two subsystems has often called for the necessity to reduce some of their inherent diversities and to ensure comparability between certain aspects in view of facilitating the functioning and coordination of the systems within a national framework. In the study, the bicultural higher education system is examined as a reflection of its colonial background and also of the entire bicultural educational tradition of the system. The study was based on the concept of belief and its relationship to the cultures and structures as applied to 'The Higher Education System' by Burton Clark (1983, 72-106). Clark (1983, 73) observes that as organizational producers of sub-cultures, various participants and entities have often constructed their own meanings of higher education which produce the cultures and structures that pertain to various systems and through which the systems have been traditionally identified. The belief and cultural differences suggest the diversities that exist between higher education systems considering that they originate from their different socio-historical contexts.

The choice of the topic was motivated by the current phenomenon of harmonisation which is gaining prominence in higher education as various systems of HE seek to integrate. The conceptual framework of the study gave rise to the research questions which were to examine how diversities in two higher education traditions affect their harmonization. The Bologna Process (BP) in Europe, involving forty-five (45) countries provided the frame of reference for a veritable global integration

and harmonisation in higher education. The researcher was interested in examining the extent of conceptual variations in the phenomenon of harmonisation in HE owing to the global scale in which it is gaining grounds, with regards to the experience in Cameroon. The researcher contends that the concept of harmonisation remains the same irrespective of the context, scale, scope owing to the significance of diversities in higher education traditions and cultures which are central issues that drive harmonisation. This perspective is premised on the synonymous existence of tradition and systems of higher education. In other words, who talks about higher education system talks about its traditions and cultures in higher education, which constitutes what Burton Clark termed as the “symbolic sides”, the system’s “doctrine” or circular version of national higher education religion (Clark 1983, 73). Based on this tight and synonymous relationship, the term “system” of higher education is interchangeably employed in the study for traditions and vice versa. Contextually, they are interchangeably employed to refer to the French and British educational subsystems in Cameroon.

The methods and conduct of the research were predominantly qualitative. It was designed as a case study which required concentration on its natural setting. Cameroon therefore provided the setting for examination of harmonisation issues. It was expected to provide generalisations on harmonisation challenges in three perspectives: HE harmonisation in general, specifically on the French and British HE traditions and within the context of the case study. The research methods were dominantly qualitative which involved analyzing contents of interviews that were conducted and review of policy documents that were related to the subject. Various documents and literatures on the Bologna Process also enabled the conceptualization on global integration and harmonisation in higher education. In a view to discern the interrelationship between the actors and structures on the adoption and implementation of the harmonisation policies in Cameroon, a framework for policy implementation in higher education was adopted which dictated a multilevel policy analysis in the study. The study was therefore carried out on three layers of the system: system level, institutional (university) level and their respective understructures (basic units). The respondents were targeted from the Cameroon Ministry of Higher Education, the Universities and basic units of the respective universities. The respondents were staff of the central or system administration and the three universities in their dual capacities as administrators and teaching staff since they were originally university teachers by profession, then students of the respective universities.

Some organizational and structural aspects of the system were sorted out as the research items through which the researcher was able to acquire a focus (see section 5.8). These items were derived from the theoretical framework as being some of the technical elements of a system through which cultural differences between systems can be discerned in a system or as their symbolic sides. Based on these items a semi structured interview was formulated and interviews conducted. The items also guided the documents review in the study. At the conclusive phase, the researcher sought to examine how some of the differences would practically manifest themselves in the event of a joint collaborative academic or research programme between the two university subsystems. With respect to academic collaboration, the phenomenon of “Joint Degree” which is currently gaining grounds in the HE as evidence of such cooperation was employed to assess its feasibility between the two university systems in Cameroon. Significant impact of the systems’ cultural and structural divergences were noted to affect harmonisation on seven of the eight research aspects with less significance on “research collaboration”. Research collaboration was found to be less affected by tradition differences owing to the self-directed, expert or subject-driven orientation or nature of research work, which render some of the systems’ cultural divergences irrelevant to interactions between systems. Opinions on the “Joint Degree’ varied especially in relation to levels which suggested that academic collaborations and mobility between the two traditions were not as fluid as supposed, due to the sub-systems’ differences.

1.2. Historical background of the Bicultural Educational System

The educational system, like many other aspects of national life in Cameroon stems from its colonial origins. The colonial history of Cameroon began with its Germans annexation in 1884. Although British missions had been in the area since 1845, the United Kingdom recognized the area as a German protectorate called “Kamerun” which came to be known as British Southern Cameroons and French “Cameroun” when the British and French later colonized the territory. During the German era, primary schools were opened in some towns. Based on an Education Law of 1910, the language of instruction in the schools was German and their subventions were contingent on the promotion of the German language, culture and administrative policies. By 1914 there were 531 primary schools with enrolment figure of 34.117 pupils with a few middle schools attributed the status of secondary schools (Amin 1997; Ngoh 1988; Aloangamo 1978; Tchombe, 2001). By then, no institution of higher education existed. Excelling and loyal graduates were sent to Germany for further studies. Cameroon remained a German protectorate from 1884 till the First

World War. After the war, one fifth of the German Cameroon which was contiguous with Eastern Nigeria was assigned to the United Kingdom and the remaining Four/Fifth to France constituting the two Cameroons. The two Cameroons then became mandated to the French and British under the supervision of the League of Nations after 1919 and later as trusteeships after 1945 to both countries (France and Britain) under the United Nations.

French and British entry into Cameroon implied the intrusion of two new European colonial cultures. These two cultures were going to determine the bicultural nature of the country in its various aspects, sectors and policies when it became independent. The educational sector was obviously targeted as one of the most important and strategic medium for transmission of the two colonial cultures. In the French portion, the colonial policy of “assimilation” whose aim was to replace the African culture with the French culture, language and civilization was pursued. Schools in Cameroon were set up and controlled from France. In 1924, French officially replaced the German Language as the language of instruction and the local languages (some of which had been admitted as secondary e.g. Duala and Mungaka’a by the Germans) were prohibited. In the British section vernacular was prohibited only in government schools. Ngoh (1988) contends that the British colonial policy was more paternalistic and decentralized, with education serving the traditions and cultures of the people. He however opines that the educational policy in the French territory was more vigorously pursued than in the British portion. For instance, it was not until 1939 that the first secondary school was opened in British Cameroons by the British missions in partnership with the native authority. The structure and contents of the programmes, pedagogic practices, examination and certification in French “Cameroun” were tailored along the French system. The Baccalaureat in Cameroon was marked in France. Similarly, the curriculum structure in the British portion reflected the British system. Secondary schools in British Cameroons followed the Cambridge and West African School syllabi (Tchombe 2001, 8).

When Cameroun became independent in 1960 there had been on-going consultations on an eventual reunification of the French and British Southern Cameroons. During a plebiscite that held on 11th February 1961 in the British Southern and Northern Cameroons under the auspices of the United Nations, British Southern Cameroonians voted to join the “Cameroun Republic” while those in Northern Cameroon opted for union with Nigeria. A draft constitution for a federation was approved by the Cameroun National Assembly on 7th September, 1961 and the new Federation became a reality on 1st October 1961. The “Cameroun’ Republic became the State of “East

Cameroon” while the former British (Southern) Cameroons became the State of West Cameroon in a new “Federal Republic”. Consistent with the Federal structure of the country, each state maintained its previous structures, cultures and institutions. The educational systems in both states maintained their respective colonial structures. When the two Federal States finally united in 1972, there was the need to reconcile the divergences in the two systems.

Generally, the reunification of the former British Southern Cameroons and the French (East) Cameroun in 1972 brought to the new national government, enormous challenges on national cohesion and in formulating national policies that were to reflect the new dispensation. The national unity brought together two sets of people who had inherited different colonial cultures, systems, structures, languages and practices for several decades. There was an absolute necessity to formulate national policies that would integrate or satisfy both peoples while examining their related issues to reflect the bicultural nature of the country. Bilingualism became one of the key policy instruments. According to the 1972 constitution, French and English were adopted as the two official languages. The country adopted a bi-jural system of the French and British Law systems in the Francophone “La Republique” and the British section, respectively¹.

The unification of the two states and by implication, two traditions and systems created challenges of harmonisation in the educational sector. The unique Ministry of National Education (set up in 1957 in East Cameroun) was to accommodate and administer both systems of education in a national system where various structural and organizational divergences abounded. Today, two systems of education exist within two different sets of structures, programmes and examination practices. The Francophones and Anglophones have a group and single certificates respectively, different examination schemes, sequencing of subjects for instruction and inherent attitudes towards education as a process of human development (Tchombe 2001, 15). The Anglophone pre-university system is based on a 7-5-2 (fourteen years) sequences while the Francophones’ on the other hand is 6-4-3 (thirteen years). Similar structural, pedagogic and organizational difficulties were to emerge when the higher education system began in the 1960s, most of which were not unconnected to those of the pre-university systems or backgrounds. Informed of the harmonisation difficulties in pre-university education in Cameroon, this study sought to investigate the structural, organizational and pedagogical differences in the higher education traditions in Cameroon and their impact to harmonisation.

¹ A harmonized Law system of the two traditions operates from 1st January 2007.

CHAPTER 2: THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN CAMEROON

Higher Education in Cameroon timidly began after independence (1960) with the creation of a university complex in 1962 known as “*Institut Nationale d’Etudes Universitaires*” (National Institute for University Studies) with assistance from the French Government. As had been the case in the German era, Cameroonians in the subsequent pre-independent years pursued HE only abroad, and predominantly in French and English-speaking countries. In 1962, the National Institute for University Studies evolved to a Federal University of Cameroon. Up to 1973 it was administered and funded essentially by the French Foundation

2.1 Structure of the system

The pre-1993 structure of the higher education system in Cameroon can be uneasily described as a “dual” or “stratified” system. It constituted of the Faculties of Law and Economics, Science and Arts under the (Federal) University of Yaounde. Subsequently, Professional and technical programmes were developed and hosted in parallel units outside the main university known as “Centres Universitaires”, “Institut” “Institut Supérieur” and Ecoles Nationales or “Supérieure” (University Centres, Institutes, Advanced Institutes, National or Advanced Schools respectively) in the French structural tradition. These were the cases in 1969 with the *Centre Universitaire des Sciences de Santé* (University Centre for Health Sciences) (CUSS), Management Programmes at the *Institut de l’Administration des Entreprise* (IAE)-Institute of Management, the *Ecole Nationale Polytechnique* (National Polytechnic School). In 1970 and 1971 the *Ecole Supérieure Internationale de Journalisme* de Yaounde- Advanced International School of Journalism- and the *Institut des Relations Internationales*-Institute of International Relations were respectively created with professional and regional missions. At the same, time other higher professional establishments such as the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM), the School of Agriculture, *Ecole Militaire Inter Armée* (EMIA) (Military Academy) with similar status and functions were developed as HE institutions under the supervision of the different ministries within which the professions were tailored to serve (ADEA/WGHE, 1999, MINESUP 2006).

With French funding, cooperation and to an extent, senior administrators and lecturers during most of the years preceding 1993, the structural development pattern of the HE system in Cameroon followed the French system in terms of establishments, traditions and functions. By 1974, there

were close to five thousand five hundred and thirty-three (5533) students in the University system as follows:

Table 1: Pre-1974 enrolments in the Cameroon Higher Education Institutions

Establishments	1967-68	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Fac of Law (Licence & Capacité)	1095	881	874	1093	1393	1755	1831
IAE Ist Section		87	83	111	90	65	91
Fac. Letters	251	196	305	450	590	821	1274
Fac Science	160	162	280	427	561	922	1248
E.N.S	202	204	240	333	439	485	563
ENSA	47	59	51	45	60	56	59
CUSS	-	-	39	88	132	191	268
ESIY	-	-	-	25	50	84	88
ENSP	-	-	-	-	29	54	81
IRIC	-	-	-	-	-	36	30
TOTAL	2025	1599	1872	2572	3299	4469	5533

Source: 1st HE, Scientific & Technical Research Council (1974, 35)

Though the professional and technical programmes were second cycle or one tier institutions with second cycle diploma status, they were not academic or research postgraduate degrees (be it the *Maîtrise* or Masters). It was typical with the French tradition that within the technical and professional sector their hierarchical distinctions were seldom discernible except for their civil service, technical or professional orientations. Ben-David (1977, 39) had opined with reference to the French system, that the division between such institutions was not water tight since their functions overlapped at various stages. The system was much more expanded in the direction of specialized, fragmented faculty-like units. Most of the establishments created between 1962 and 1993 served elitist functions with characteristically selective entrance examination and immediate prospects for graduate integration into the civil service. What seemed clear about the structure was that higher education was offered in two types of establishment, the fundamental or interdisciplinary university on the one hand, and technical and professional education outside the interdisciplinary university.

2.2 The 1993 University Reforms in Cameroon

When in the early 1990s, massification stroke the Cameroonian system of HE with severe impact on quality and funding amongst other attendant implications, the government was compelled to undertake a vast reform. The University of Yaoundé had attained an explosive level of congestion with a student enrolment of about forty thousand (40000) in a campus meant for five thousand (5000) (ADEA/WGHE, 1999, 1). This was coupled with high graduate unemployment since only graduates of the professional (elitist) institutions were directly recruited into the public service. The system's problems were exacerbated by language difficulties. In the University of Yaoundé which had been intended as a Bilingual University, its programmes were dominantly designed in the French tradition and taught in French. This led to access difficulties for Anglophone Cameroonians with high drop out rates and difficult working conditions for the teaching staff. On the contrary the University Centers, Institutes and Schools remained elitist and underutilized. For instance, the Buea University Centre had facilities for 2000 but only 60 students enrolled in a single school (the Advanced School of Translation and Interpretation). Dschang had accommodation for 4000 student and only 555 enrolled, Ngaoundere for 2000 with 306 enrolled (ADEA/WGHE 1999, 1). Between 1992 and 1993 the government undertook a broad reform of the university system as follows:

1. In order to reduce overcrowding, broaden participation, provide quality HE and professionalize teaching programmes in the fundamental University, five extra universities were created. The defunct University of Yaoundé was split into Universities of Yaoundé 1 and II. Four of the University Centres were converted into full-fledged universities and granted autonomy. This gave birth to the Universities of Buea, Dschang, Douala, Ngaoundere.
2. A token of CFA50.000 (USD 90) was introduced as student registration fees.
3. In a bid to solve the problem of language balance the University of Buea was created in a monolingual Anglo-Saxon tradition, English being the only language of instruction.
4. Also the University of Ngaoundere was created as a monolingual French-speaking university.
5. The University Academic Year was reorganized into two semesters and a modular credit system introduced.

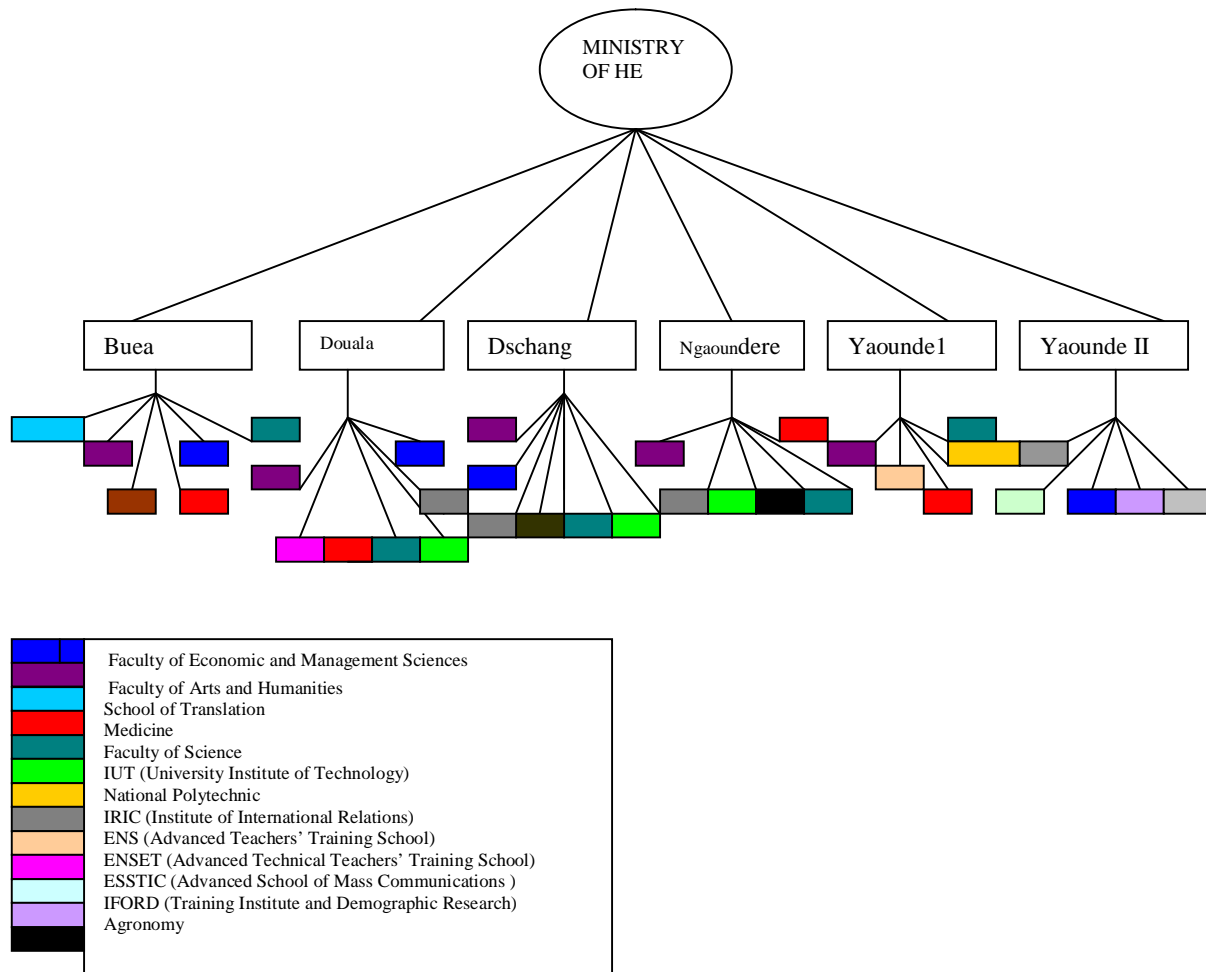
6. In order to facilitate coordination, all the professional and technical programmes which had hitherto been run in independent institutions were absorbed into the six state universities but they maintained their peculiarities (as schools, centres, faculties and institutes) with selective entrance examinations. They were also granted academic or postgraduate status in addition to their professional character such that some upward and horizontal mobility could be achieved within, across institutions and with other systems. In the previous dispensation, mobility and recognition of their diplomas were limited to the Cameroonian Administration and other French-speaking countries. These were non-research and non-academic postgraduate institutions serving professional purposes in the form of the French Grandes Ecoles and National institutes. Institutions such as the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM) amongst others which were under other Ministries exceptionally maintained their professional orientations and diploma status. Overall, the 1993 university reforms in Cameroon were contained in several Presidential Decrees amongst which: Decrees number 92/074 of 13 April 1992, 93/026 of 19 January 1993, 93/034 of 19 January 1993, 93/027 of 19 January 1993 and 93/032 of 19 January 1993.

While the reforms seemed to have favoured an expansion of the fundamental university, recent trends point back to the dire need for further expansion in professional and technical sector as seen in the creation of IUTs (Instituts Universitaires de Technologie-University Institutes of Technology) and recently in 2006, of three extra Faculties of Medicine within the main interdisciplinary university².

Based on the 1993 University reforms, the HE system in Cameroon today presents a “Unitary” structure with six State Universities within which, about forty-five establishments (Faculties, Centers, Schools, Advanced Schools, Institutes and Advanced Institutes) (see figure 1.):

² See website of the Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP) <http://www.minesup.gov.cm>.

Figure 1. Structure of the State University system in Cameroon.



From its precipitating circumstances, several factors could account for the new unitary structure of the Cameroon HE system which was ushered in by the 1993 reforms. With spectacularly increasing numbers, there was the need to expand the system with university institutions of greater adaptive capacities to absorb the masses since the disparate institutions were elitist. Through integration, the new unitary structure was going to respond to practical and logical purposes to achieve greater coherence in the coordination of the system. The incapacity of the disparate elitist institutions to absorb the surging student numbers was a repetition in the history of French HE, in a colonial setting. Similar situations had led to vast structural changes through the “Faure Acte” of 1968 in France which replaced most of the disciplined-based structures that had been created by Napoleon in 1806 with multi-disciplinary public institutions. The four Parisian faculties were transformed into 13 Public Universities. Between 1968 and 1971 in France, 73 faculties were turned into universities (EURYDICE, 2000, 4). The French reforms had also been necessitated by shortage of manpower or

University graduates for an expanded French economy. Consequently, admissions which had been constrained by entrance conditions into the elitist institutions became relaxed (Ben-David 1977, 39).

There was the necessity to professionalise programmes in the main university following concerns in the 1990s on the programmes' irrelevance to employment and national development. The new professional face lift of the university was considered to be partially arrived at through the incorporation of the professional schools in the university. A similar situation had occurred in the 1850s in UK higher education when the need to professionalise university studies or integrate the studies into training ended up with the eventual transfer of all training into the university (Ben-David 1977, 55). Since the previous non-research institutions that characterize the system were going to acquire academic postgraduate status in the new dispensation, the integration was also meant to boost the research productivity of the HE system. That was deemed achievable only within a unified university structure in which the research productivity could develop and where there would be greater benefits from the spillovers of the university activities or their symbiotic relationships.

Finally, the economic atmosphere in the 1990s under which the reforms took place also conditioned the adoption of the unified structure. Prior to the reforms, the government had expressed concerns to be convinced by its proponents that the reforms were not to induce the government into huge budgetary expenditures since Cameroon was in the midst of severe economic crisis. The proponents argued that there already existed university centers whose campuses and infrastructure could be used for the universities. The integrated system structure therefore emerged out of the economic consideration to build the new universities on the existing university centers which had been underutilized.

2.3 Student Population

As at the 2002/2003 academic year, the student population in the six State Universities stood at seventy-four thousand one hundred and five as below:

Table 2: 2002/2003 Student population in Cameroon State Universities

University	Enrolment	Enrolment Percentage
Buea	7, 282	9,80 %
Douala	12, 316	16,60 %
Dschang	10, 321	13,90 %
Ngaoundere	7,407	10,00 %
Yaounde I	22, 065	29,80 %
Yaounde II	14, 714	19,90 %
Total	74, 105	100 %

Source: 2004 Statistical Yearbook of Higher Education in Cameroon, MINESUP.

Recent trends indicate an annual enrolment increase of about twenty percent (20%). The student population in the 2006/2007 academic year was about one hundred and thirty thousand (130.000) in the State universities, the University of Yaoundé I being the most populated with about thirty-three thousand (33.000) students (MINESUP, 2006). This trend indicates enormous challenges for funding since it may not usually keep pace with such enrolment rates amongst other changes in the system.

2.4 Funding

Up to 1973, the main sources for financing the HE system came from the French government in addition to state subsidies and subsequently, entirely by the state. As in most African countries after independence (1960s), one of the crucial problems for governments was the need to train indigenous manpower or senior civil servants to replace the colonial administrators. There was therefore, the need for greater access to HE. As a means of inducing participation in Cameroon, a very generous welfare scheme was put in place. Students paid no tuition fees, received subsidies for accommodation and meals and in addition, substantial non-refundable bursaries. Due to increased demands for HE as could be discerned from the congestion in the University of Yaounde in the 1980s coupled with the economic crises, there was the need to rethink the funding mechanism for HE system. This became one of the main items of the 1993 agenda. The bursaries were eliminated, a token registration fee of FCFA 50.000 introduced and financial autonomy granted to the universities to generate funds from diverse sources.

Today, the sheer size of its funding comes from the state and the student fees. However, the fees have not been significant enough to render the universities self-sustaining. About eighty percent of university running costs is still borne by the state. The functioning of the system is hampered by the rising cost and spectacular uncontrollable numbers, government irregular and parsimonious disbursements and interventions notwithstanding parents' and students' resistance on the finances. The situations affect various missions of the University, for instance most lecturers with non terminal degrees have often had to be trained abroad through various cooperation schemes. It only requires foreign grants for Masters and Ph.D programmes in the sciences to hold in good numbers.

2.5 Coordination: The State and the Academic Oligarchy

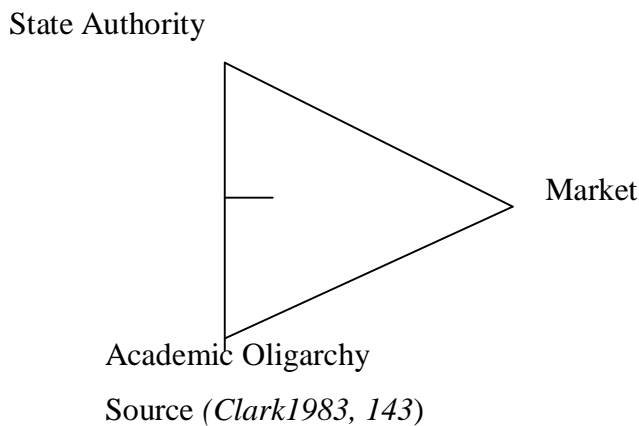
Before 1973, the Federal University had been headed by a Chancellor who was also the Minister of National Education with responsibility for its administrative and financial management, as well as the recruitment of teaching staff. The Vice-Chancellor, some of the administrators, and a sizeable proportion of the academic staff were French. The French government designated the executive and academic head of the university. The Minister of National Education retained supervisory authority over the university. The Chancellor recommended the Deans of Faculty and Directors of professional schools for appointment by the head of state. He or she also appointed Heads of Department on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor, following election by teaching staff (Njeuma et al 2003).

Currently, each of the State Universities in Cameroon is headed by a Rector or a Vice-Chancellor in the case of the Anglo-Saxon University. The Rectors are assisted by three Vice-Rectors/Deputy Vice-Chancellors (VR & DVC's) in charge of Academics, Research and Administration followed by a Secretary General or Registrar (Anglo-Saxon). The faculty establishments are headed by Deans of Faculty or Directors of School and institutes down to Heads of Department and Programme Coordinators. The university has a Governing Council, presided over by the *Président du Conseil d'Administration*. A number of government ministries, including the presidency of the republic, education, finance, public service, planning, and labor are also represented on the council. Unlike in Canada Belgium and Switzerland with two or more Education Ministries or systems as per educational traditions or regions (IAU, 2004), there is one Ministry of Higher Education headed by a Minister in charge of the entire HE system in Cameroon. Similarly, there is one minister in charge of both subsystems for basic and secondary education. The Minister of HE is assisted by a

Secretary General under which a team of academics in the General Inspectorate in Charge of Academics (University Affairs), Service Control and various Directors. Other important arms of the Ministry are the Division for Degree Recognition and Equivalences, Directorate of Private Higher Education and a Translation Unit.

With higher education tasks characteristically proliferating, beliefs multiplying and forms of authority pulling in different directions, Burton Clark contextually perceived higher education coordination as the mechanisms through which a higher education system ‘pulls’ itself together (Clark 1983, 136). Despite the fragmented nature of higher education systems, he asserts that some order still emerges in the various parts: disciplines linking members from far and wide, universities symbolically bringing together their many specialists and local and national authorities providing uniform codes and regulations (ibid.). Clark articulates on three types of mechanisms through which various national systems of higher education have traditionally been integrated or coordinated amongst which: ‘the state system’, ‘the market system’ and ‘the professional system’ (Academic Oligarchy (ibid.)). Using Clark’s analytical Triangle of HE coordination, the Cameroon system of HE is oriented between ‘State Authority’ and ‘Academic Oligarchy’ in similar position like the French. Its location can be schematically presented as follows:

Figure 2: Triangle of Higher Education Coordination



The state orientation of the universities lead to the assertion that the higher education system still remains centralized as per the philosophical foundations on which it was original conceived. The Rectors/Vice-Chancellor and other senior officials of the University (VR, DVCs, Deans and Directors) are all appointed by Presidential Decrees. Academic staff are under government payrolls as civil servants under the Ministry of the Economy and Finance. Despite the University autonomy

implied in the 1993 Reform Decree and as reemphasized by subsequent decrees amongst which that of 17th October 2005 termed “Governance Manageriale”, government grip on the Universities still seems strong. Despite various articles of the reform decrees stating that Vice-Chancellors of the Universities shall be elected from a peer of senior university professors, their appointments today still go by Presidential Decrees owing to the influence of across-the-board policies and traditions which are skewed in the direction of the French system.

Recent innovations in the university governance structure and steering mechanisms of the system were the new office of “*Président du Conseil d’Administration* (PCA) as Head of Council in the Francophone University and also the introduction of a “Quarterly External Evaluation” in 2005. These innovations seem to generate some controversies on their necessity. Some opinions hold that the PCA is a supervisory structure for greater accountability being equivalent to the office of the Pro-Chancellor which has existed in the Anglo-Saxon University. As such, it is a structural cross substitution from the Anglo-Saxon tradition to the Francophone university. Another school of thought contends that the structural innovations signal a government “come-back” to the university as opposed to the notion of autonomy in the 1993 reforms, especially as the first appointed officials as PCAs constituted of senior politicians. This second opinion also bases on the meaning of the term “Conseil d’Administration” (Board of Directors) which in itself is a managerial language for corporations, implicitly the patron or highest decision-making organ of the organisation.

The spirit of the autonomy and devolved authority in the 1993 decrees could be likened to the first wave of European reforms or the “reinvention of government (Peters 2001, Osborne and Gaebler 1992). The European reforms were variously described in higher education as a paradigm shift from detailed system steering to autonomous decentralised HE systems” or from the “state” to supervisory model (De Boer & Goedegebuure 2003; Maassen & van Vught 1994). Government “come back” would be likened to the second wave of reforms (1990s) or the “evaluative state” which sought to redress the excesses of the first (Peters 2001; Neave 1998). Government return and strong involvement in the Cameroonian university system can be explained by the power of the purse which is exacerbated by over-reliance on state funding, control and the culture of free higher education on the part of students and parents. Also in recent years there have been a series of university crises (student strikes and protests) some of which generate unimaginable discussions on their political undertones and which the universities have not been able to handle within their spheres of competence. As long as the system remains dominantly reliant on government budgets

its involvement would be inevitable. This can be contended to be a global phenomenon. Due to government tax payer's dollars into higher education, government supervision is indispensable to ensure greater efficiency. Under such circumstance, the university cannot remain the "Ivory Tower" that it has been before; governments all over the world would want to ensure value for money.

Consequent to strong state involvement in the Cameroon HE system is the tendency that the university system becomes politicized. Increasingly, university issues such as appointments, policies and achievements have to be politicized. Clark observed that it is more difficult than in advanced nations to dissociate the task of the university from the task of the state (Clark 1983, 250). University administrators may constantly be induced to prove their militancy to the dominant political party to maintain their positions, with risk of victimization and marginalization for those who move contrary to the seemingly political paradigm. Also, some academics have deserved sanctions from the hierarchies because they import their political radicalism into the university by being indiscriminately disrespectful to the administrative authorities for their contrary political inclinations. Such attitudes seem to impinge on some of the basic principles of the universities such as loyalty which Clark (1983, 259) opine to be indispensable for the university as an organization or system.

The active participation of the University community in national politics is not completely out of place. Amongst the four functions which Castells (2001, 206) attributes to be the university's, is the "generation and transmission of ideology". This implies that higher education systems should be able to support the national ideology within whose framework it operates and considering that it would seldom operate within an ideological vacuum. From that perspective, institutional or HE autonomy does not seem to convey the same meaning as independence. However, it only becomes problematic where ideologies are interpreted as obligation for partisan politics rather than support for government policies. A resolution of the 1974 Higher Education and Scientific Research Council stating that: "*Researchers, lecturers and students have the responsibility to militate in the Cameroon National Union (CNU) and to contribute in concrete ways to national consciousness*"³ (Higher Education and Research Council, 1974, 70) depicted such misinterpretations. The obligation for academics to militate in the CNU becomes partisan politics rather support for government in building national consciousness. State centralized systems would seem to be affected more by such misinterpretations. Also where democracy and especially multi party politics is still

³ Les Chercheurs, les Enseignants comme les étudiants ont le devoir de militer dans l'Union Nationale Camerounaise et de contribuer de manière concrète à la formation de la conscience nationale.

young, it also becomes difficult to separate the party policies from the government policies in higher education since political parties have specific visions (ideologies) for each sector. It would seem the university is not the right place for political loyalties especially with the advent of multiparty politics. Partisan activities account for the mutual suspicions that loom around the university enterprises in developing countries, thereby not providing a conducive atmosphere necessary for work as well as inhibiting university autonomy and academic freedom. In such situations, each action is perceived to be politically motivated, whether wrongly or rightly.

The second pattern of coordination accompanying the “State’s” in Cameroon is what Clark qualified as “Academic Oligarchy” (Clark 1983, 143). The university administrators, central university and the system’s administrators in Cameroon are career academic staff who double as institutional and/or systems administrators. Ben-David described such a teacher-administrator system with reference to the French higher education system as the “*Mandarines*”, where members taught in the institutions of higher education and administered the whole system from the ministry down through the Universities (Clark 1983, 37). This pattern finds relevance in the bottom-heaviness or technocratic nature of higher education, knowledge being its organizational building block. This pattern remains as one of the main forms of coordination which was traditionally seen as an ‘unavoidable evil’ necessary to create optimal circumstances for the professors to operate autonomously (Maassen & Cloete 2002, 26). Clark (1983, 133) asserts that it would have been created in higher education if it was not part and parcel of its coordination. The effectiveness of this pattern of coordination in HE today seem to be eroding with implications that stem from differences in interpretations as well as its simple combination with the state.

The strong involvement of academics in administration may negatively impact on the autonomous missions of the University. While recent and general concerns in the western countries point to the negative impact heavy research loads seem to be having on teaching, it is increasing the case that due to the numerous fringe benefits and prestige that accrue from administrative positions, university lecturers in developing countries are more attracted by administrative positions. On the other hand, it is because the governments do not accord the necessary importance that can render the academic profession attractive and remunerative as it is the case with the administration. However, it all sums up to be a matter of the individual interest of the academics of the developed and developing worlds alike, since over focus on research may also be attributed to its more

rewarding characteristics to individuals. What matters and makes their differences is the contribution of the different foci to the systems and national development.

Since academic coordination may imply the division of administrative responsibilities or power sharing amongst academics, it is tantamount to increase power politics and intrigues in the academic community to the detriment of its genuine visions. Also in a system that maintains only the state and academic administration, there is a tendency that academic excellence can be misconstrued for administrative expertise leading to misplaced priority in the use of academic talents. At the peak of their careers, academics/researchers become perceived as potential appointees to the highest administrative positions when they could make major scientific breakthroughs or mentor younger ones. Where the gap between the 'state' politics and administration of the HE systems is narrow, with non negotiable state authority in issues like university appointments, the academic community may become susceptible to partisan politics. It leads the academics having to attend to diverse issues of partisan and administrative natures, rather than their basic missions.

Even though the traditional 'Academic' and 'State' coordination would seem to seldom disappear in higher education the two may be insufficient in situations that impose obligations of results and maximum efficiency which is currently gaining grounds in higher education today. The third leg of the above triangle '*the Market*' (Clark 1983, 143) would seem to equilibrate various systems of HE by reducing the state orientation of such systems and rendering universities, lecturers and students alike, more discerning and responsive to their missions. Through 'Market' steering with consumers and stakeholders taking cost-sharing responsibility with the state, financial sustainability of the universities is improved leading to less state involvement, greater autonomy and mission focus. Recent trends point to the involvement of the 'stakeholder society' which also finds relevance in the Cameroonian situation. This leads to another version of the three corners of the above analytic triangle comprising of 'government policies' 'institutions' and 'society' (Maassen & Cloete 2002, 19).

2.6 Language of Instruction

The languages of instruction in the Cameroon Higher Education are French and English. Apart of the Universities of Buea and Ngaoundere which were conceived in monolingual English and French traditions respectively, the other four universities (Douala, Dschang, Yaounde I and Yaounde II) are bilingual. In these universities, instruction is done in both languages. The teacher employs the language he masters best (usually the first official language) and the students respond accordingly. Above all, as long as all the universities are state universities features of biculturalism (bilingualism) run through all the universities. Irrespective of whether the institutions are culturally identified as bilingual, Anglosaxon or Francophone, teachers and students can be recruited or admitted from any regional or systems background as long as the teachers meet the recruitment criteria and the particular linguistic conditions for admission are met by the students.

2.7 Private Higher Education

Private Higher Education emerged only recently in the Cameroon HE. By the 1993 Reforms, only the Catholic University of Central Africa created in 1989 with a regional character operated as the private institution of HE in Cameroon. However, trends in private HE as well as their acceptance and accommodation into the system seemed to have accelerated in the recent years. By 2003, there were 17 private accredited institutions and by 2005, 37 institutions (MINESUP, 2003; 2006). The institutions offer in most part, short professional courses in areas such as secretarial studies, insurance, accounting, banking, finance, commerce, management, journalism, information technology, hotel management, and electronics. They prepare students for the Brevet de Technicien Supérieur (Vocational Training Certificate) organized by the Ministry of HE, as well as other foreign diplomas and are run from private funds and tuition from their respective students.

Government's reluctance to approve some of the institutions is based on its skepticism on the quality and dubiousness of some of the programmes. Some do not meet minimum requirements for infrastructure, equipment, and staffing and charge exorbitantly high fees. Though some of the institutions and programmes are likely to offer credible alternatives to those in the states', their acceptance to an extent seems to be tied down by the Administrators in the state sector since competition may diminish or dilute the government's authority in HE. Recent acceptance and recognition of private HE in Cameroon could be explained by massification and its funding impacts

on the government, among other factors. According to some scholars, even the introduction of fees and involvement of other stakeholders in the financing of the institutions seemed to signal a gradual shift towards some form of privatization (Ngwana 2002). Ngwana (2002) opines that such transformations might imply a shift in the steering mechanisms from being an active controller to a supervisor and the necessity to establish an intermediate body that will provide a link between state financing and private HE institutions and stakeholders. There might also emerge the necessity of government reinforcing the capacities of some of the newly-accredited institutions through technical, financial assistance and various regulatory frameworks as a credible way of cost-sharing or public private partnership to absorb part of the mass in the state universities.

2.8 Degree structure

As stipulated in Arrêté No. 99/055/MINESUP/DDES of 16 November 1999 the Cameroon system of higher education operates on two degree structures according to the French and British sequences. In the French sequences, the degrees are certified according to the university annual study duration from the high school 'Baccalaureat' termed (BAC +). It is comprised of the 'Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaires Générales' (DEUG) conferred after two years of university studies (BAC +2), the 'Licence' (one year after the DEUG or BAC + 3) leading to the 'Maîtrise' (one/two years after the Licence or BAC+ 4) to the Diplôme Etude Approfondir (DEA), then to Doctorat de Troisième Cycle and finally Doctorat. The English subsystem operates on the two tier or 3 cycle degree structure from Bachelor to Masters and then Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D). Some equivalence exist in the professional tracts of the University system such as the *Diplôme d'Etude Universitaire Professionnelles* (DEUP) (for DEUG), *Licence Professionnelles* (for *Licence* and Bachelors), *Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisées* (for DEA and Masters) which facilitate classifications and cross transfers. Professional or technical programmes like teachers' training, Medicine and Engineering are hosted in Schools, Centers and Institutes of the universities. Programmes like Medicine and Engineering are one tier institutions of five to six years' duration, with their final certificates having corresponding equivalences in the degree structure of the interdisciplinary university.

2.9 Grading system

Two types of grading systems exist in the Cameroon HE system, the French "Average" system on a scale of '20' and Anglo-Saxon 'Grade point Average' (GPA) on a scale of '4.00'. In the

Anglosaxon university the degrees are classified into five categories according to the range of the GPAs and as per the percentage scores ranging from 'Pass' to 'Third Class', 'Second Class Lower Division', Second Class to First Class degrees (Lowest to highest). The Cameroonian French scheme is classified into four categories according to the final average termed 'mention' which ranges from 'Passable' to 'Assez Bien' to 'Bien' and the highest range being 'Très Bien'. Grading for single courses or subjects follows the "average" scheme on '20' in the French-speaking universities but in the Anglo-Saxon University, the courses are evaluated on an A-E scale as per the percentage scores. Also, two types of credit systems are employed in the HE system: the "semester course credit" and the "modular" system in the Anglo-Saxon and Francophone Universities respectively. The conversion rate of "1 unités de valeur" in the Francophone University system is adopted as the equivalent of '3 credits' in the Anglosaxon university tradition (UB syllabus, 2003).

2.10 Admission criteria

Generally, admission into Cameroon Post-secondary institutions follows the two inherited educational traditions. The admissions are based on the two high school graduate qualifications being the Baccalaureat (BAC) and General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Level for Francophone and Anglophones respectively. While the Baccalaureat is a group (average) certificate, the GCE advanced level is limited to single subjects with a range of maximum five subjects. The Baccalaureat is sanctioned by a grouped or total average scheme on 20 while the GCE is graded from A-E according to the percentage scores. Other supplementary and compulsory conditions are language proficiency and relevance of the high school subject background. English Language is a compulsory and non negotiable condition for admission into the Anglo-Saxon University, French in the French University, and French and or English in the bilingual Universities. There also exist dispensation for advanced placement for students from professional programmes to obtain an academic degree on grounds that they initially meet the high school graduate (BAC or GCE) and language requirements. Admissions into the professional and technical university centers, schools and institutes which were absorbed into the fundamental University sector as per the 1993 reforms is still based on tight or selective entrance examinations.

2.11 Teaching Recruitment and Promotion Policies

Currently, teaching recruitments and promotions in Cameroon are regulated by Arrêté No.03/0050/MINESUP/DDES of 30 July 2003. The teachers are recruited with terminal degrees from both the French and Anglo-Saxon (American) University systems as well their equivalences from other parts of the world. Within the two traditions, the terminal degrees include the Doctorat (Doctorat d'Etat, Unique etc) and Ph.D for the French and Anglo-Saxon traditions respectively and various equivalences. Non terminal degree holders with Doctorat de 3eme Cycle, DEA, Masters, M.Phil etc are eligible for recruitment on grounds of evidence of advanced work towards a terminal degree. Non-terminal degree holders are recruited in certain areas which face scarcity in terminal degree holders for the academic profession such as Accountancy, Computer Science etc. Names of potential candidates for recruitments are transmitted from the departments to a University Consultative Committee (the Ministry represented) for joint examination based on the necessity of service. They are subsequently forwarded to the council which meets on a biannual basis to approve the candidature and finally for the minister's endorsement and integration clearances.

Promotion within the Higher Education corps in Cameroon is based on expert review and recommendation of a National Interuniversity Consultative Committee (CCIU) composed of peers of senior academics in the respective domains. This Committee examines the eligibility of the candidates and recommends for placement on an aptitude list for formal approval by the Minister of Higher Education. In the system, two promotion paths of equal ranks and standard criteria exist for the French and English subsystems in their English and French appellations respectively. From the entry point, the candidate earns the title 'Assistant lecturer' (Assistant) leading to 'Lecturer' (Chargé des Cours), then to 'Associate Professor (Maître de Conférences) and finally 'Professor' (Professeur). Prospects for upward mobility or promotion for Masters or Master of Philosophy (DEA or Doctorat de Troisième Cycle) holders who gain recruitment into the HE system are limited to the rank or level of lecturer. As stipulated by the Arrêté they can only be promoted to the next rank (Associate Professor or Maître de Conférences) if they hold doctorate degrees.

CHAPTER 3 ASSUMPTIONS, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, OBJECTIVES, RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 Assumptions

Due to its French & British colonial backgrounds and inherited educational traditions, Cameroon runs a bicultural higher education system. The French and British higher education and university traditions are run in a single national system. The continuity in the traditions has traditionally been based on the existing strong cooperation ties with the two colonial powers and the adherence to their respective post colonial or cultural networks. The conceptual background of the universities and entire HE system is a mixture of both traditions. A majority of the administrators and lecturers of the system have French and English academic backgrounds and views. The necessity to maintain the system into two subsystems also results from the obvious need for consistency with the two pre-university backgrounds. The above-mentioned elements impact on the cultures, structures, qualifications, the views from the two subsystems with respective diversities as per their system's origin and foundations. The divergences in the two educational systems with their respective elements therefore constitute organizational and structural challenges for their harmonisation at the national level.

3.2 Research Questions

Observing that the Cameroonian higher education system is constituted from two different systems of higher education with respective cultural, structural, pedagogic and organizational patterns, the research questions of the thesis follow:

1. How do systems' cultural differences affect harmonization at various levels and aspects of a higher education system?
2. What have been the rationales of the harmonisation policies on the French and British higher education traditions in Cameroon?

3.3 Objectives of the study

Through the Cameroon higher education system the study was aimed at investigating the conceptual and practical challenges involved in the employment of two traditions of HE. It sought to examine the impact of the systems' differences on their integration within the national framework. The researcher was going to highlight the beliefs, cultural and structural differences in the French and Anglo-Saxon traditions in the system. Secondly, the study was going to point out the incompatibilities between the two subsystems, their national policies and the rationales for adoption of the policies. The research questions were to be applied on certain aspects of the system to assess the significance of the subsystems' divergences on a harmonized coordination and functioning of the national system.

3.4 Rationale of the study

It is increasing the case today that several issues emerge from the higher education landscape which cannot be unilaterally resolved by one country or system without the cooperation of others. This situation is leading to the necessity for greater cooperation and integration between systems of higher education. Owing to the cultural and structural diversities that have traditionally existed in higher education systems as per their foundations, the increase prominence of systems' cooperation and integration in the 21st Century seem to increase the quest for transparency and comparability of elements of the various systems, thus requiring harmonisation. Through the Cameroonian experience in two systems' traditions of higher education, the researcher sought to highlight certain dynamics and complexities involved in HE harmonization in relation to the impact of the differences on the process. The importance of the subject was further buttressed by the popularity of the two traditions of higher education which the case study provided. Even though the prevailing integration efforts in higher education seem to be taking place much more at a global level, the researcher was influenced by the conceptual significance of traditions and cultures whose diversities seem to drive the necessity for harmonisation in higher education. The Cameroonian experience in the French and English educational traditions was anticipated to provide valid generalisations on the challenges.

3.5 Significance of the study

While the phenomenon of integration or system convergence in higher education seems to be intensifying since the beginning of this third millennium, several studies have been undertaken a bulk of which focus on the impact of the supranational or joint policy options on the systems. In highlighting the dynamics and complexities involved in harmonization process in the comparative French and Anglo-Saxon systems studies, this researcher sought to make a practical contribution to the emerging and wide repertoires of harmonization or integration literatures in higher education. The extensive nature of the French and British higher education systems seems to suggest the importance of the study to world systems. The conceptual and practical issues that stem from the integration of two systems in the case study were deemed to provide a valuable data for various integration ventures in HE.

Due to the French and English bicultural and bilingual nature of Cameroon, it has often been said that Cameroon is “Africa in Miniature”. This is because a majority of the fifty two African countries belong to these two cultural and linguistic entities and to which Cameroon belongs owing to its bicultural origins. As much as HE integration gains more momentum in Africa, this study would be instrumental in informing joint or supra-national policies on HE as well as various quality assurance initiatives in the continent.

CHAPTER 4: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents some relevant literature on the theoretical framework, concepts and recurrent themes employed in the study.

4.1 Theoretical Framework: Beliefs, Cultures and Structures in HE

This study drew its conceptual framework from the interrelationship between beliefs, organizational cultures and structures which apply to ‘Systems of Higher Education’ (Clark 1983, 72-106). It focused on the ways cultures are constructed by beliefs and the structures that emerge from such beliefs and cultures. Burton Clark contends that as any major social entity or organizational producers of sub-cultures, higher education systems have a symbolic side, a culture as well as a social structure, some shared accounts and a common belief that help define for participants what they are doing, why they are doing it and whether they have been blessed or curse (Clark 1983, 72). According to the author, the Cultural side of human affairs involves the construction of meaning, something we are incapable of doing without no matter how narrowly rational our purpose or technical our organization. He explains that participants have often constructed their own meanings of HE, their interpretation of outside trends, and how to mediate between the system and other parts of the society. The beliefs, interpretation and cultures consequently establish the system’s “doctrine” or somewhat a secular version of the system’s religion in HE which creates the systems’ identity or symbolic side. Clark observes that it is through such symbols and technical structures that higher education systems are generally known by outsiders (Clark 1983, 72). For instance, the Germans were traditionally known to be relatively scientific, the Italians relatively humanistic, the Anglo-Americans oriented to general education and the French specialized training. He asserts that the academic beliefs have their principal source and attachment in national systems as whole and the beliefs and cultures have been usually strongly connected to the social foundations on which they operate. As such, higher education systems turn to be expressions of the specific social agreement and historical context after which they are conceived.

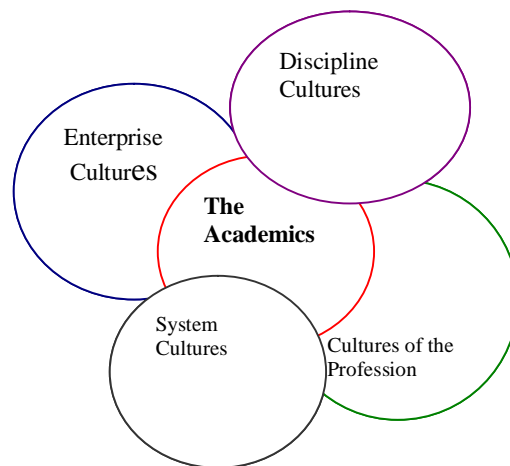
Beliefs and cultures have often impacted on the perceptions and conception of university systems and structures, the cultures constraining the structures or vice-versa. For instance, the disparate or disjointed nature of the French University system up to mid 20th Century seemed to have been influenced by its professional orientation since they were often planned and regulated by the

government according to specific professional and administrative needs. As such, university institutions were created based on their specific purposes with little rationale to be attached to each other. Joseph Ben-David (1977, 17) observed that in France, different faculties were not merged into something like a corporate entity (university) until 1968. He agrees with other scholars (Prost 1968; Zeldin 1967) on the notion that as at 1896, the name ‘University’ had been used as a designation for several loosely-linked faculties (Ben-David 1977, 17)

4.2 Sub-Cultures of Higher Education

Clark sub-divided the beliefs or cultures in higher education into four categories amongst which the cultures of the “discipline”, the “profession”, “enterprise” and “systems”, within which various sub-cultures emerge. He draws attention to the overlapping nature of the different cultures which surround the different units or participants in higher education. He employs the example of a Physics Professor in the University of Heidelberg who finds himself having to partake in the (disciplinary) culture of physics, the (enterprise) culture of the University of Heidelberg, the culture of the academic profession at large (in Germany and International community) and the culture of the German academic system (Clark 1983, 75). The actions of the professor become regulated by norms from various nested grouping in which he is surrounded as follows:

Figure 3: The Cultural Environments of the University Academics



Adapted from Clark (1983, 75)

4.3 Cultural Differences in HE Systems

Since higher education traditions, cultures and by implication structures seem to owe their origins to their social foundation or national contexts, Clark implicitly stresses on the differences in the systems' (national) traditions of higher education as per their respective context and social foundations. He extensively buttresses from his sociological perspective, earlier assertions by Joseph Ben-David in "Centers of Learning" (1977) on existing divergences in system's traditions. Clark contends that systems differ in their beliefs on access, specialization, employment and research (Clark 1983, 96). Ben-David (1977, 28) had observed system differences in organizational structures, dependence on government, curricular and emphasis placed on them. These beliefs in turn construct different sub-cultures of the system with impact on its structural organization. Clark also observes variations in system's "assumptions about the breadth of access", qualification requirements (quota, procedures and levels) and their perspectives and interpretation to certain admission concepts such "open door" or "universal" enrolments (Clark 1983, 95). He states that differences exist in perspectives on general education, in line with Ben-David's assertion on the systems divergences in "emphasis on specialization and the openness of the system to the traditions it cultivates" (Ben-David 1977, 27). According to these authors, the continental system of higher education generally favored the existence of specialized faculties while, the Anglo-American system seemed to have "glorified" Liberal Education.

Even when systems outwardly appear to have similar orientations with respect to general education, specialized, or especially professional education, they usually differ in the conceptions and breadth of what is in general beyond the careers for which they prepare. With the British and Americans fundamental differences still seem to exist on their interpretations, approaches and directions of the curriculum. According to Ben-David (1977, 71), the French and Germans have been implicit with respect to such orientations in their educational practices whereas the United States and the United Kingdom have been explicit. He refers to the French '*Licence*' in Arts which until 1880 involved no specialization and both arts and sciences subjects were accompanied by good grounding in classical studies, languages and in multipurpose science subjects like mathematics. Also, the fact that even the most professionally-specialized polytechnics stressed basics in Mathematics, courses in Theoretical Physics, Economics, Philosophy, Literature etc. As for the UK, Ben David (1977, 71) observed that it explicitly stated its rationale towards the education of the mind and character, whatever the orientation. While the French educational practice favoured continuity between

secondary education and higher education, high school education in the British system was fairly specialised with a wide range of subjects' choices. The English favored a concentration on one or several field while the American's was spread across several range of fields. The authors equally agree on the notion of existing systems differences in perspectives on proper employment for graduates with regards to orientations especially towards government employment, private sector or profession. For instance, the French higher education system was known for its orientation towards government services. (Clark 1983, Ben-David 1977)

When Burton Clark wrote the classical volume 'The Higher Education System' (Clark 1983), he expressed concerns in relation to higher education systems that the 'symbolic sides' and cultures of modern organizations have been vastly understated in research. stated that there has been a usual failure to "tract those features of structures that could most readily be quantified or concretely depicted (Clark 1983, 73). Interestingly, he seemed not to have expressed any awareness of such cultural differences in the event of systems' integration or relationship to globalisation perhaps because globalization was yet to be intensified by the late 80s and 90s. However, his concerns about the cultural sides of academic organizations would seem to be very important owing to the significance of such cultural and structural diversities, which drive the necessity for harmonisation as systems seek to integrate.

4.4 Biculturalism

Biculturalism in the study is drawn from its Canadian etymology in which context, referred to the existence in Canada of two cultures that associated with the English and French Languages (Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, 1963). It became a policy option whose aim was to integrate the minority Francophone Canadians (from Quebec) and subsequently the coexistence and cooperation of the Anglophones and Francophone with their respective cultures and traditions. In the study, the term is examined from two perspectives. It conveys the employment of the two (French and Anglo-Saxon) inherited educational beliefs, traditions, cultures along side their respective structures, elements, protocols and steering mechanisms in Cameroon. Secondly, from a political perspective as an implementation of the national policy of biculturalism and national integration considering as per Holtta, that higher education institutions in Africa have been essential elements of national infrastructure (Holtta 1995, 1). As other sectors, the bicultural educational system was a vehicle and outcome of the political context in which it was conceived.

With the existence of two educational systems of diverse origins in Cameroon, there was the necessity to find common grounds for their operations and agreements as a national system. The Cameroonian experiences therefore leads to an operational definition of harmonisation in higher education as a strategy aimed at reconciling the existing cultural divergences between higher education systems. Its controlling purpose in Cameroon was to blend the inherited educational practices of the Francophones and Anglophones without necessarily creating a monolithic system (Tchombe 2001, 15). Harmonisation in the educational system involved establishing common frameworks for their coexistence and functioning with a view of facilitating their cooperation, interactions and coordination within the national framework.

4.5 Colonial Systems of Higher Education

Certain historical facts seem to point to the validity of the harmonisation case study as would occur between the original French and British systems. Despite the geographical setting under which such colonial models operate, the systems have been observed to be blue prints of their colonial powers', initially conceived along their respective models with similar philosophies. Castells observed that colonial systems have been clear cultural impositions with the character of the colonial foundations still permeating the structures and foundations of contemporary colleges (Castells 2001, 213). In the case of the British colonial university system, he referred to the Asquith Commission of 1945 which was mandated to lay grounds for post colonial universities which consequently conceived and organized the universities in the colonies around the models of the British Civic Universities.

The University of Ibadan, Nigeria could seldom be different from British University except its geographical location. Most recently in the early nineties, the University of Buea was created in the Anglo-Saxon tradition with the initial spirit that it was to serve as an extension of the University of Manchester. In a similar manner, the Brazzaville conference of 1944 in charge of the same missions in Africa conceived the colonial university as extensions of the French university system. The Universities of Yaoundé and Ngoundere in Cameroon were equally conceived with French assistance and according to the French tradition. Such colonial phenomena have been interpreted as "clear cultural imposition". The cultural and structural affinities of the colonial higher education systems to their founders' consequently led to a specific pattern of higher education cooperation and exchanges which has dominantly taken place within post-colonial networks. The creation of the

universities was usually followed by linkages with their founding systems to establish standards, access to international scientific information, academic staff training, programs reform as well as degree, structures, curricular and models of decision making (Holttala 1995, 2). For instance, a majority of the HE administrators (lecturers) in Cameroon predominantly studied in French and English-speaking universities. However, an observation on the ongoing trends in HE systems' integration in the 21st Century leads to the assertion the traditional patterns of cooperation and mobility within postcolonial networks would be altered and which would imply commensurate adaptation in the colonial systems.

It was a historical coincidence with challenges for harmonisation that Cameroon inherited the French and the Anglo-Saxon systems which constitute two of the major world models of HE in what Ben-David coined "centers of learning" (Ben-David 1977). In the preface to "Centers of Learning", Philip Altbach observed that "the Universities of Britain, Germany, France and the United States stem from a common European tradition that today are amongst the most influential and powerful in the world. Similarly, Clark Kerr, stated that those four systems have had visible influence beyond their national boundaries (Ben-David 1977). According to the three (Altbach, Kerr and Ben-David), the popularity of the systems was based on their widespread extension as political instruments to other countries as well as their observation that the strength of other seemingly powerful HE systems in the world such as Swedish, Dutch and Swiss systems had to a greater extent, been drawn from their exposure to the centers. The experience of harmonization in the French and British Higher Education systems in Cameroon mirrors various practical and conceptual challenges to be found in other case studies and situations.

4.6 The Bilingual University

One of the recurrent themes of the study is that of "official bilingualism" which has remained as a major vehicle of biculturalism and national integration in Cameroon. The institutional experiences in the case study were drawn from the "Bilingual University" in Cameroon as a melting pot of official bilingualism wherein two languages and traditions are formalised to operate in one institution. The bilingual University is a product of certain linguistic contexts, traditions and also of the prevailing political and social condition at the time of its conception (UNESCO-CEPES 2000). As such, its missions are closely linked to the specific situations and to the needs of the region, (Purser 2000, 451). As HE systems become more integrated in the 21st century, universities

becoming more global, multicultural and international, there is the likelihood that most universities are becoming bilingual or multilingual with the importation of additional language(s) as common media of instruction. This phenomenon is explained by the prominence of mobility and international exchanges in the era of globalization. The case of the English language which is being added to several regional or national languages may serve to illustrate the phenomenon. The position of the UNESCO-CEPES Bilingual conference in Bucharest was that 'if it is almost a universal practice today, then a unique structure exists-the Bilingual-University about which little is known' (UNESCO-CEPES 2000).

Establishing and developing a bilingual university is complex and delicate, and its policies, never easy to maintain. For instance, their funding formulae being different from those of monolingual universities. The experiences with the University of Ottawa with about 8% of its annual budget being allocated to maintain the bilingual-related implications and cultural issues would reveal such challenges (UNESCO-CEPES 2000, 474). Viewing that most Bilingual Universities often carry along national political missions, a majority of which are to integrate a minority cultural group Ankar (2000) observes in the case of the Bilingual Universities in Finland which were created to respond to the educational needs of the 11% minority Swedish-Speaking Finns, that the University may not be the best avenue for testing the implementation of such national political agenda. This can be attributed to peculiar complexities of education in general and HE in particular. Ankar (2000, 505) argues using the case study on the Abo Akademi University, that students prefer a monolingual university due to its obvious facility in knowledge transmission which constitutes their *raison d'être*. He opines that the existence of a minority population of up to half a million is sufficient to deserve the creation of a separate university, if affordable.

Bilingual education was instituted in Cameroon since 1961. It became prominent especially at the university level with the unique Federal Bilingual University of Yaounde with an ideology to serve national unity and integration. Article Five (5) of Law No.005 of 16 April 2001 which defines the general orientation of the higher education system in Cameroon highlights the importance the state accords to bilingualism as a factor of unity and integration. Following the 1993 reforms, English and French are used as languages of instruction in four out of the six state universities in lecture halls wherein Anglophones and Francophones sit side by side in the same classroom. The professor delivers the lectures in the official language he masters better. On their part, students take down notes and do tests and assignments in the language of their choice (Echu 2004). Despite the

conception of two of the six universities (Buea and Ngaoundere) in the Anglo-Saxon and French monolingual traditions, respectively, features of biculturalism (bilingualism) are observable in all the six state universities as outcome of the entire bicultural educational system which constantly calls for harmonisation on certain issues at the institutional levels. The persistent bicultural characters of the Cameroonian universities results from the constitution of the staff and students, since they can be admitted or recruited from any of the cultural backgrounds as long as they meet the academic or linguistic qualifications.

Having emerged as an implementation of the broad national bilingual policy in higher education, the bilingual type of university instruction in Cameroon produced its peculiar university system with which Cameroon can be identified. Tchombe observes in the case of Bilingual University of Yaounde that it consequently generated a new type of curriculum organization, representing a new approach to education that reflected a complex process of social change to which it in turn contributed (Tchombe 2001, 4). Some studies (ADEA/WGHE 1999; Ngwana 2002) point to the problem of language imbalance and lack of linguistic competence in the use second official language (SOL) on the part of students and lecturers alike with far reaching consequences on educational process. The studies also reveal challenges in the establishment of equivalences for students and staff from diverse backgrounds.

4.7 Global Higher Education Harmonisation

The theme of harmonization in this study was above all, motivated by the observation on its prominence at global levels. In recent years, Higher education is undergoing an unprecedented development in international cooperation. Such cooperation initiatives are evident in the recent formation of regional and global networks with the cases of the Bologna Process comprised of forty-five European countries, similar processes between Latin American and Caribbean countries and also recently in the CEMAC zone of Africa. The trends point to the necessity for formation of unified systems of HE termed “Higher Education Area” (Bologna Declaration 1999; Mexico Communiqué 2005; Libreville Communiqué 2005). What seems to be the common strategic perspectives for achievement of such cooperation and integration initiatives has been the necessity to address various structural divergences between systems to overcome obstacles to student, teacher, researcher mobility. To the effect, greater readability and comparability between the degree structures seem to be the roadmap to the mentioned goals implying the reduction of their existing

diversities through harmonisation. Cognizant of the Cameroonian bicultural system in the harmonisation of the French and Anglo-Saxon traditions of higher education, the researcher was interested in the variations in the current concept of harmonization and its surrounding discourses and complexities. The Bologna Process was illustrative and thus provided a framework for conceptualization of global HE harmonisation in relation to the national case study. Various scholars seem to agree on the notion that the new impetus of harmonization in higher education at global level is embedded in various political, economic and cultural conceptualizations of globalization as well as their practical implications.

Increasingly, there is a multiplicity of issues that stem today from the advent of globalization and their spillovers to states which challenge the nation state's capacity to unilaterally achieve its policy objectives without cooperation of others. Kalvemark and van der Wende (1997) contend that the BP corresponds to systemic sustained efforts aimed at making HE more responsive to requirements and challenges of global societies, economy and the labour market; a way of taking control of globalization and responding to its challenges. Politically, the quest for harmonization features in Bologna process as an instrument to facilitate mobility, cooperation and reduction of diversity which is contained in a broader rationale of European integration or unification (van der Wende 2000, Papatsiba 2006, Corbett 2004, Beerkens 2004). As per Abelson, it is a way of engaging universities in the process of making Europe (Abelson 2005).

Governance wise, it is perceived to be a framework to facilitate multi-actor or multilevel governance of Europe's systems (Papatsiba 2006; Witte 2006). Similarly, other scholars observe that it is a process accompanying the growing importance of international world systems or transfer of certain social arrangements (authority over politics but also higher education) (Beerkens 2004). With reference to Maassen or Neave, if higher education integration signals a "vertical shift" of some responsibilities (upward) to supranational bodies, involvement of external actors or a change in its "referential basis" (Neave 2003; Maassen 2003) there is the necessity of commonly determined frameworks and goals deemed achievable through harmonization.

Other scholars opine that such global arrangements have been influenced by the necessity to respond to competition requirements in the labour and business markets which generally lead organizations, cooperating to compete (van der Wende 2000, Beerkens 2004). Beerkens (2004) observes that nations have been bound to cooperate to act more strategically towards the global knowledge economy. He opines that such global competition from the labour markets and their

responding cooperation initiatives in higher education are diminishing the power of governments to discretely set qualifications or accreditation criteria. Other opinions hold that with globalization for markets in higher education, universities have been bound to form alliances with each other to protect themselves from hyper competition and reap the benefits of collective actions but also to generate new opportunities for the exchange of students, resources and information (Beerrens 2004, 27). Also, the fact that the global economic competition are seen to be knowledge-driven magnify policies in the knowledge sector thereby leading to heavy reliance on HE, particularly in the areas of workforce development, applied research and technological transfer (Marginson & van der Wende 2006; Barrow 2003). The relationship of HE as backbone of knowledge and global economy explains the rationale for the coordination of certain aspects of higher education being moved vertically to supranational levels.

Higher education integration at the European level would seem to have also been influenced by the rationale for social cohesion, the European “sense of shared community”. Froment opined that a close attention at the happenings at the level of education and “especially higher education” would be indispensable for building Europe and improving social cohesion among Europeans (Froment 2003, 28). According to Papatsiba the integrative activities in European HE follows the necessity for mobility embedded in an EU leitmotiv of “European dimension” in education which stresses the reinforcement of ‘European identity/citizenship, to increase awareness of common socio-political issues and to enhance knowledge of historical and cultural aspects of Europe’ (Papatsiba 2006, 101). Above all, competition and the increase in the attractiveness of European higher education as a rationale of the current integration drive features prominently as a response to globalization in what has been termed as governments’ adaptation to international competition (Berlin Declaration, 2003; Beerrens 2004; Papatsiba 2006, van der Wende 2003). Such competition-related concerns have been at the background for harmonisation of qualification which can be seen to strategically exist in two folds: first to render qualifications readable, comparable and thus competitive in the entire or global higher education landscape. Secondly, by improving the employability of graduates as the qualifications simultaneously link intellectual power to employability and are readable and comparable to potential employers. As much as the demand and necessity for cooperation, competitiveness and mobility in higher education increase, so do the necessity for trust and transparency between systems. Such phenomena have led to an increase in demand for transparency, comparability of quality, credits, certification and degrees. The transparency demands are increasing prompted by the multiplicity of online providers in HE.

Beerens (2004, 19) contends that such circumstances impose the necessity for HE not to be benchmarked on national norms only, but on common international frameworks.

4.8 The French and British systems of higher education: Cross National Analysis

In a view provide greater clarity on the topic, it was deemed appropriate to undertake a cross-national examination of the original French and British systems of higher education whose allusions were expected to validate the generalizations that were anticipated from the case-study. From a historical perspective some differences can be discerned from the two systems in their systems' structures, rationales on higher education, ensuing cultures, structures, protocols and steering mechanisms as well as interpretations on various trends. While the Anglo Saxon system of HE recently moved from binary to a unitary structure, it has been impossible to place the French HE system within the five structural categories such as the university-dominated, dual, binary, unified and stratified system (Kyvik 2004, 394-395). Scholars hold different views about the French system. While Jallade (1992) contends that it is a fragmented system, Scott (1995) describes it as stratified and according to Teichler (1998) it a "Multitier" system. Following Clark's classification of academic systems Great Britain is of the "multi public system: Multi sectors while France has been and is still a striking example of the "single system - multi sectors" (Clark, 1983, 54-57).

The French system of HE has been long characterised by strong and centralized state control (Clark 1983; Ben-David 1977, Amaral et al., 2002). Ben-David (1977, 17) asserts that the centralized nature of French HE is historically founded in the original intentions of the French reformers which viewed the privileged groups and institutions as the enemy and not the state. Since HE was initially reserved for civil service careers and patterned accordingly, it seems obvious that the strong involvement of the state could not be averted. On the contrary, the Anglo-Saxon model was based on the fact that higher education was too important to be left to the political whims of the nation state (Amaral et al 2002, 281). Whereas historically, the British system was much more liberal higher education-oriented, the French system traditionally favoured expert or specialized education (Ben-David 1977; Fox & Weize 1980; Clark 1983; Rothblatt 1993). According to Clark's triangle of coordination, while France is located along the triangle leg that depict "state authority" and "Academic Oligarchy", Britain is found between "Academic Oligarchy" and the "Market" (Clark

1983, 143). While Britain HE is “market” oriented as a steering mechanism, higher education in France still remains largely public.

Initially, more institutional autonomy was retained in the British system and to an extent, inter institutional coordination with the case of the University Grants Committee (UGC) which performed very important system’s functions (Clark 1983, 119). But recent phenomena amongst which growing cost of HE, changing governmental perspectives and massification seem to have turned the locus of power from institutions to state with the abolishment of the UGC whose pattern of funding assured greater institutional autonomy to a government-controlled University Funding Council (UFC) and various quality assurance agencies. In the UK there seem to be a deliberate strengthening of market and state steering approach to HE through the introduction of fees and determination of thresholds by the central government as per the White Paper of 2003 (ENQA, 2005). This mix seems to be a stroke of balance in the current UK heating debates about HE as a public good versus faculties as market oriented enterprise (OECD 2006, 22). French HE still remains largely public and centralised. Amaral et al (2002) speculate that this tendency in France is likely to remain the same in the near future. In the UK there are structural debates as per the white paper, that HE may eventually be split into teaching and research institutions with the government concentrating research funding in smaller number of universities leading to a two tier or differentiated HE system (ENQA 2005). In France discussions continue about straggling mainstream university Faculties and the well endowed Grandes Ecoles (OECD 2006, 22).

One of the major historical trends in French HE has been its adaptation to the Bologna Process notably in the degree structure and credit system with both Britain and France as signatories. Some studies revealed differences in the two countries’ approaches in the implementation of the BP. The French degree structure was previously composed of several cycles and intermediate certificates. Following the Bologna Process, university level degree structure in France has been changed from 2 years to 3 years leading to the *Licence* corresponding to 180 ECTs for the first stage. The second cycle is standardized to 2 years after the Licence termed *Master Recherche* or *Professionnel* corresponding to 120 ECTs. The third cycle corresponds to Doctoral studies obtained after at least three years of intensive research under the supervision of a thesis Director and a successful defence (IAU, 2004). Despite the fact that the global trends towards harmonisation of degree structures was moving in the direction of the United Kingdom’s system of HE, the ENQA report on the UK implementation of the BP observed that the recent changes in UK HE have largely been oriented

towards national than wider European or international agenda. For instance, there have been controversies on the length of the first cycle since there exist in the UK a multiplicity of programmes that do not fit the 3+2 or 4+1 schemes for the first/second cycles. Also several debates surround the development of student progress versus the European diploma supplement prescribed by the BP which is seen as duplication of efforts since time and money is already spent putting in place a transcript and personal development planning system in the UK.

4.9 Policy Implementation in Higher Education – (Multilevel Analysis)

Higher education biculturalism is examined in the study as a policy outcome or implementation of the government policy of national integration with harmonization as a reconciliatory strategy for the systems' divergences in the bicultural system. The study drew from Gornitzka (1999, 14) a pragmatic definition of a 'policy' where it is seen as a 'public statement of an objective and the kind of instruments that would be used to achieve it'. In order to ascertain the authenticity of a mechanism as government policy, Gornitzka (1999, 14) opines the necessity of delineating the backgrounds and nature of each identified policy issue and then describing with reference to specific general characteristics. She finds the importance of an examination through various aspects of policy content amongst which the policy problem, objectives, understanding the normative basis (values and beliefs underpinning a particular policy), policy instruments (means employed to arrive at the objectives) as well as the linkages (degree of coherence and consistency) in the policy. Furthermore, Gornitzka (1999, 13-14) observes certain dilemmas in arriving at a definition of policy as well as making a difference from when it ceases from being policy formulation to policy implementation. Such distinctions may even become more empirically difficult when adjustments are continuously effected on the policy. She opines that such definitions could be discerned where policy can be divided into stages culminating to parliamentary decisions and various instances, texts of high magnitude or crucial decisions. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) on their part interpret policy as a hypothesis, and programmes being the conversion of the hypothesis into government action, the degree of the predicted consequences being implementation.

Various reform implementation studies in Europe, led some scholars to conclude the necessity of multilevel approach in analyzing policy and reforms implementation in higher education (Gornitzka et al 2005; Enders & et al 2003). The scholars acknowledge that the real work of higher education takes place in classrooms, libraries and laboratories and not in board rooms and council chambers”

(Amaral et al, 2002). According to Gornitzka et al (2005, 53-54), such studies should examine the policy object from implementation to policy interaction as well as the various institutional interests in the government policies. Referring to Enders et al (2003, 6), different layers of the policy process are of principal interest, with key questions being how they interact, adapt and conflict with each other and subsequently influence the overall implementation process. The researcher found the importance of the framework in describing the implementation of the government policies in Cameroon higher education. The choice of the multilevel approach was explained by the bottom heaviness of higher education and the fact that it takes a mid level position to the 'bottom-up' and 'top down' implementation analysts in higher education. The framework was appropriate in examining the relationship between structures and actors, bottom-up and top-down initiatives and in establishing the missing links between the levels and actors as well as the effectiveness of the harmonization policies. The policies were therefore analysed from the perspectives of superstructure (system), enterprise level and understructure (basic unit) and then focus on the complex interrelationship between the levels.

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

Considering the importance of methodology to any scientifically conducted study, this chapter describes the various investigative practices and techniques which were employed in the study. It also describes the roadmap to the data in relations to the analyses and conclusions that featured from the study.

5.1 Analytical Perspectives

Three guiding principles from the analytical perspectives following the literature review facilitated the collection of the data and the researcher's decision on the units and levels of analysis: First, the cross-national or cultural examination in the preceding chapter was employed in analyzing the harmonisation process in Cameroon. It necessitated the systematic utilization of comparable data and literatures from the two original French and British systems with focus on each system as object of analyses. It was indispensable in establishing the generality of the findings and validity of interpretations which were to be derived from the national case study. It was also consistent with the theoretical framework in relation to "cultures" or 'differences' in national HE cultures. This cross cultural examination gave rise to the constant-comparative method according to which the differences in the two subsystems were to be analysed. This method necessitates multidata sources with a characteristic that the formal analysis begins early in the study and it is almost completed at the end of the data collection (Bogdan & Biklen 1992, 72).

Secondly, the "multi-level framework" in higher education policy implementation guided the analyses of the harmonisation policies as an implementation of the policy of biculturalism or "national integration" in Cameroon. The researcher took a mid level approach in examining how the policy transcends up and down the educational system and institutions or how top down or bottom up policy initiatives were reflected on the various strata of the system. The relationships between the structures and actors were equally relevant for assessment of the harmonisation policies on the two subsystems such that the missing links and interrelationships could be established. Various aspects of the policy content such as the policy problems, objectives, normative basis and policy linkages as per Gornitzka (1999, 17-22) were examined in the study. The multilevel framework in policy analyses thus dictated the levels, units, respondents and elements of analyses that were targeted in the study. Finally, the Bologna process presented the frame of reference for veritable integration and harmonisation in HE through which the researcher was enabled to examine the

variations in the concept of harmonisation in relation to the Cameroonian experience. Its related literatures were relevant in establishing generalisation on the complexities of HE harmonisation

5.2 Research Design

The methods and conduct of the research were dominantly qualitative. Amongst some fundamental characteristics which some scholars highlight as pertaining to qualitative research are that it usually has a natural setting as the source of the data, the researcher being is the key instrument, it is descriptive and the data are analysed inductively (Bogdan & Biklen 1992, 29-31). It was those principles that guided the conduct of the study. The choice of the qualitative research method was based on the flexibility of its associated instruments and processes of data collection and analysis. Qualitative research gives room for flexibility and provides structures that enable uncovering of unexpected results, new ideas and categories (Marshall & Rossman 2006; Silverman 1993; Bryman 2004).

The study was therefore framed as a system or country case study of HE harmonisation. The country in question was Cameroon wherein its inherited French and Anglo-Saxon traditions are run in one educational system. The rationales for the choice of a case study were three folds. The Cameroon HE system was viewed to provide a setting, practical example or experimental ground for harmonization in general, harmonisation challenges that could specifically be attributed to the French and Anglo-Saxon traditions, and for the Cameroon national context. In other words, certain harmonisation issues from such a case study was deemed to reflect certain conceptual and practical issues in HE harmonisation in general (bicultural or multicultural) systems, specificity of the French and Anglo-Saxon traditions and the Cameroonian context itself. As a case study, it was necessary for the researcher to concentrate on the natural setting (Cameroon).

5.3 Area of the Study

The empirical part of the study was carried out in the Republic of Cameroon in Africa in November 2006. Cameroon is an elongated triangularly-shaped structure located at the armpit of the African map. It is situated between West and Central Africa and contains an area of 475,440 sq km with a total boundary length of 4,993 km (3,103 mi). Its borders extend from Lake Chad to the extreme end of the Gulf of Guinea between latitudes two degree north and longitude nine degrees

east and sixteen degrees East of the Greenwich Meridian (UNESCO, 1995). According to the 2005 census, its population was estimated at about sixteen million and eighteen (16,018,000) persons which placed it as number 59 in population among the 193 nations of the world. Its capital city is called Yaounde.

Before acquiring its independence in 1960, Cameroon had been colonized by the British and French for almost half a century leading to the inheritance of the respective colonial traditions in their various sectors of national life, languages, educational practices and institution. When the two Cameroons reunited in 1972, the two peoples came together with their respective inherited colonial traditions, education being conspicuous. Today, Cameroon is divided into ten provinces, eight being dominantly Francophone (French-speaking) and two, Anglophone (English-speaking) provinces of about seventy-one and twenty nine percent of the total population respectively. Cameroon is a bilingual country with French and English as its two official languages besides other local languages which amount close to three hundred. The Cameroon educational system is comprised of two educational subsystems, the French-speaking and English-speaking subsystems operating under a unique Ministry of Education created in 1957. It has one Ministry of Higher Education which coordinates systems policies for the entire system, comprised of six state universities and other private, professional and technical postsecondary institutions.

5.4 Levels of study

Following the multilevel approach to policy implementation adopted in the study as well system characteristics, the harmonisation issues were analysed at the three main levels of the higher education system: the system level, institutional/enterprise and understructure or basic units of the institutions. The existence of the unique Ministry of Higher Education in Cameroon provided the systems framework for the harmonisation analysis. Three out of the six State Universities provided the institutional framework for harmonisation experience at the enterprise or University level. These were the universities of Yaounde I, Buea, Dschang. The understructure of the Universities provided the arena for examination of the harmonisation issues at the basic units of the systems and their inherent educational practices.

5.5 Target of respondents

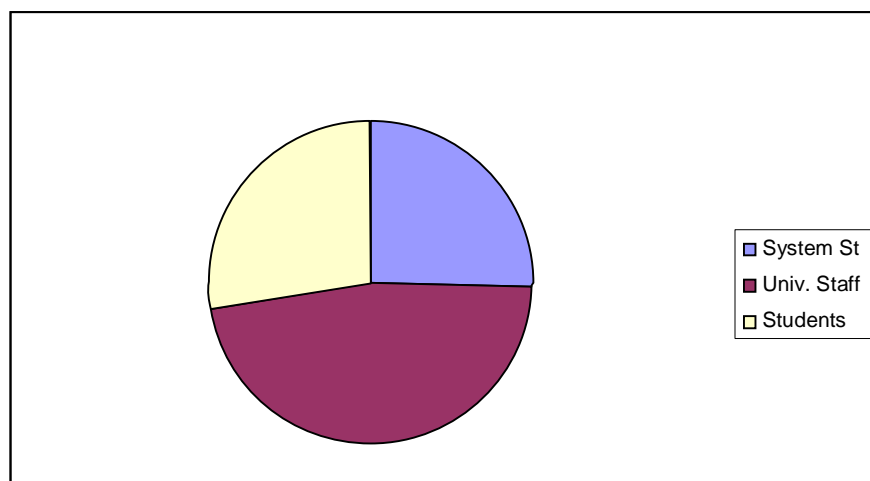
From the onset a population of about eighty (80) persons had been targeted from various mentioned levels of system comprised of system administrators (Ministry staff), University administrators, lecturers and students of the three universities. Since the Ministry (system) and university

administration was composed of an “academic oligarchy” it was deemed as a duplication of effort to conduct the interview with a separate category as “university teaching staff”, as previously envisaged in the preliminary target. Thus, ‘teaching’ and ‘administrative’ staff were grouped into one category. This was because in the coordination pattern that is characterised by an “academic oligarchy”, the ministry or university administrators doubled as professional university lecturers whom the researcher considered qualified to respond in both capacities. An advantage was taken of the dual capacities of the administrators such that the interview questions were revised accordingly and the number of respondents reduced to sixty (60) persons. Of the sixty, 10 persons turned down the request for interview appointment with various excuses like tight schedule, temporary absence etc. Some which had been requested by e-mail and phone calls before the departure of the researcher from Europe to Cameroon. Of the remainder, some targeted respondents who had accepted to respond to the interviews failed to attend the interviews due to unforeseen circumstances. Some of the interviews, especially with the students, had been conducted as impromptu (without appointment). Overall, forty-three (43) persons responded to the interviews from the Ministry of Higher Education, three Universities as presented on the table and figure below:

Table 3: Respondents of the Study

Level	Respondents
System (MINESUP)	11
Enterprise/Universities Administrators	20
Students	12
Total	43

Figure 4: Population of the study



Two factors account for the limited size of the population of the study: First, the systems' and university administration was characterized of what Clark (1983, 143) termed as 'academic oligarchy' where the administrators of the system were found to be university teachers themselves. The respondents therefore provided their experiences in dual capacities as lecturers and administrators. Secondly, the broad-ended nature of the semi-structured interviews gave room for the respondents to maneuver in breathe and length of responses. This rendered the interview exercise time-consuming due to the elaborate responses of some interviewees but which of course provided more clarity on the topic.

5.6 Sample of study

The sampling was guided by criteria which the researcher had formulated to ensure that at each level or category, the sample reflected the different educational cultures and linguistic backgrounds in the bicultural system. This implied that the sample had to be cautiously constituted of respondents of French and Anglo-Saxon educational backgrounds at the various levels or categories such that their experiences and views on the influence and impact of the opposite tradition or their harmonization issues were proportionately represented. The aim of this mixed composition was to avoid the possibility of the result and analyses being biased by one educational tradition. In the study the linguistic or educational background of the respondents did not anyway imply geographical background because it turned out that there were some respondents from a particular Francophone or Anglo-phone geographical origin with an opposite educational background (Francophones with Anglo-Saxon educational training and vice-versa). Also, there were situations where the respondents had training from both traditions which placed the researcher at a difficult position to determine the category of the respondent. However, since this category was in a minimum, the language with which the respondent employed in the interview (which conveyed proficiency) or his or her dominant pre-university tradition helped to determine the classification. Overall, the two educational backgrounds were represented in the sampling as follows:

Table 4: Systems' backgrounds of Respondent

No.	Level	French	Anglosaxon
1.	Ministry of Higher Education	6	2
2.	University Administration/lecturers	12	11
3.	Basic Units (students)	7	5
Total		25	18

Similarly, certain criteria were formulated to target the universities for the interviews. The criteria were premised on the assumption that the cultural typology or identity of the University determined the degree to which the different traditions were influential on the universities' policies. Consequently they were perceived by the researcher not to experience the impact of two traditions (Biculturalism) or their harmonisation challenges in similar manner. Three Universities (the ministry excluded) were chosen for the interviews based on the cultural or traditional identities below:

Table 5: University Identities of the respondents

No.	Name of University	Cultural Identity	Respondents
1.	University of Yaounde I	Bilingual	16
2.	University of Buea	Anglo-Saxon (Monolingual)	14
3.	University of Dschang	Francophone (semi bilingual)	2
Total			32

In all the above universities, cultural and linguistic balance were respected in the composition of their respective samples. The next criteria which guided the sampling were the necessity to target respondents whose previous educational or linguistic background was contrary to current university tradition to which they belonged. This is because it followed the national policy of national integration that any Cameroonian who meets the basic entry and linguistic criteria of any of the universities deserved to be admitted, irrespective of geographical background or language of origin. Consequently, it becomes a tradition that students of one educational tradition are found undertaking their higher education studies in the next tradition. This approach was applied especially on the undergraduate students whom the researcher sampled. For instance, the researcher concentrated the interviews on Francophone undergraduate students in the Anglo-Saxon university and Anglophone student in the dominant French bilingual universities. In the Anglo-Saxon University only Francophone students were interviewed with the purpose of finding the cultural and linguistic impact of their current university tradition on their studies. Overall, 6 students of Anglophone background were interviewed in the (bilingual) University of Yaounde I and equally 6 Francophone students in the (monolingual Anglo-Saxon) University of Buea.

5.7 Instruments/Methods of Data Collection

As indicated above, the study employed a qualitative method of data collection which consisted of the content analysis of semi-structured interviews, review of national policy documents and various literature on the case study and the current trends in global higher education harmonisation. Since

the study was aimed at observing how nationally compatible or incompatible the French and Anglo-Saxon cultures co-existed in Cameroon, the study concentrated on elements of the two university traditions that were of national concerns or policy issues. Three sets of instruments were used.

Firstly, semi-structures interviews were used for the analysis of the experience of the ministry and institutional administrators, lecturers and students on the interaction between the two traditions and their impact on harmonisation. The rationale for the use of the semi structured interview was based on its flexibility. Since the respondents in Cameroon belonged to the French and English-speaking backgrounds some of which were not proficient in English, the interview questions were translated from English to French. Two versions of the semi-structured interviews of thirty one (31) questions existed in English and French (Appendix A and B).

Secondly, primary materials comprised of original policy documents at the system and institutional levels on the various joint and separate policy options in Cameroon were reviewed. The various documents included, Presidential Decrees, Ministerial “Arrêtés” for the system and Decision, Memoranda and Service Notes on the institutional levels. Some of the documents had also been indicated by the respondents as they made references during the interviews.

Thirdly, the review of some primary and secondary documents (official text and publications) especially on the Bologna Process in Europe enabled the researcher to build the conceptual framework as well as acquire a focus on global HE harmonisation. The review provided the bases for examination of the conceptual variations in higher education harmonisation with respect to the case study’s.

5.8 Data Analysis

Considering the multiplicity of issues in any national system of higher education, one of the challenging tasks in the study was the necessity to sort out aspects of common concerns between the French and British subsystems in the Cameroonian bicultural system to provide the focus of the analyses. Also, those aspects were necessary to be identified for the systems’ differences to be discerned and their significance on the harmonisation policies examined. To the effect, the conceptual framework which stressed systems’ differences with respect to beliefs, cultures and technical structures (Clark 1983; Ben-David 1977) was employed. The various aspects and issues raised in the theoretical framework were operationalised and broken down into manageable units or subtopics as follows:

1. Structural organization and steering
2. Language
3. Degree structuring
4. Assessment and grading
5. Career policies
6. Curriculum standardization
7. Admissions backgrounds
8. Interuniversity collaborations

Worth reiterating from the conceptual framework are Clark's assertions that the symbolic sides or the systems' differences were to be easily discernible from the various technical, structural and organizational aspects of systems (Clark 1983, 73). His assertions corroborate with Ben-David's on the notion that systems differ in their perceptions on the shapes and characters of institutions (structures), the structures determining coordination (steering) (Ben-David 1977; Clark 1983). Ben-David (1977, 28) had observed system differences in organizational structures, dependence on government, curricular and emphasis placed on them. Clark (1983, 49 & 96) also articulates on the differences in systems' beliefs on access (admissions), specialization, employment and research with each system arriving at its own definition on the clustering of knowledge as well as sequencing (curricular issues, degree structures and related process). Language as a vehicle of systems' cultures and processes was exceptionally added to the concepts and issues raised in the conceptual framework. The bilingual university system in Cameroon which depicted the differences in the systems' origins as well as some of its related issues (highlighted in the literature review) suggested the necessity of such inclusion. It was going to be important in examining the related linguistic issues that emerge from multicultural higher education systems.

Also, in addition to the assertions of the authors (Clark 1983; Ben-David 1977) on the differences in definitions on knowledge clustering and sequences which were operationalised as degree structures and grading systems, their importance was buttressed by the concepts on the global phenomenon of HE harmonisation. The literatures on global drive towards harmonisation or integration in higher education suggest that degree structures and grading systems constitute some of the technical and crucial areas of systems' diversities which can significantly affect systems' integration. With the drive in the 21st century towards the formation of unified systems or integration in higher education (as highlighted in chapter 2) the necessity to address the various structural divergences between systems has been seen as being crucial. The above explain why, the earliest moves in the integration processes target the adoption of a common or comparable degree structures and credit systems..

Lastly, from a practical perspective, it was also important to examine how the technical, structural and organization differences in the French and British subsystems in the Cameroonian context would affect the joint conduct of the primary processes (teaching and research) which explain the inclusion of item eight (Interuniversity collaborations). It was based on those concepts in the literature review and ensuing research aspects that the interview questions were formulated and the interviews conducted (Appendix A and B).

When the interviews, which had been retained in a tape recorder and instant notes, had been completed, they were combined to the contents of the policy document for analyses. The contents were qualitatively analysed along the above eight research items. Since the semi-structured interviews were broad ended, some categories emerged which the researcher patterned along the identified elements, as related. The approach employed in analyzing the backgrounds of the pedagogic, cultural, structural organization and steering mechanisms in the French and Anglo-Saxon systems were largely historical especially with respect to the traditional French and British systems. It seemed probable that due to recent and global trends, notably triggered by massification, shrinking funding, changes in governments' perspectives on higher education as well as globalization, various changes and adaptation have been undergone in higher education systems. The changes were perceived to render the comparative analysis difficult since some of the traditional characteristics were expected to have been altered overtime. The historical approach was therefore deemed reliable and safer in analyzing the traditional differences in the two subsystems from the perspective of the contextual foundations and rationales.

CHAPTER 6: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

This section presents the data which were retained from the interviews and review of policy documents in the HE harmonisation study on Cameroon. The information on the sub-systems' differences and their implications on their system's harmonisation were analysed along the research items which equally guided the setting of the interview questions and document reviews (Appendix A and B).

6.1 Structural integration and steering

This area focused on the views and experiences of the policy makers on the structural reforms of 1993 in which the previously disjointed and autonomous university establishments were incorporated into the main university.

The respondents disclosed that the 1993 reforms introduced new elements and models to the system's structure which seemed to challenge the traditional pattern in which the system was previously steered. The innovations were said to have produced a new unitary structure in which the former disparate establishments (schools, centers, and institutes) were integrated. The responses varied around the structure being a blend of the traditional French structure with the British, German or American system since it integrated research to the professional institutions within a unified university system. What ever was the source of the unitary structure, it boiled down to the fact that it was an adjustment which imposed a new structure and steering mechanisms whose adaptation was challenging to policy makers and administrators. The theoretical framework of the study had revealed that differences exist on perceptions and conception on what the higher education system should be and the way it should be structured. Cultures or belief about higher education determine the structure of the system and in Clark's terms beliefs constraining structures or vice-versa (Clark 1983, 95-96). Ben-David (1977, 34) observed based on such traditions that systems differ in their perceptions on the shapes and characters of institutions. Since the educational system in Cameroon originated from the French and Anglo-Saxon system with different philosophical and social foundations, there existed traditional differences in practices, educational and cultural backgrounds which conditioned the views of the policy makers and by implication, differences in the way the system should be structurally organized and coordinated.

Asked on the impact of the new structure to steering of the system especially with hierarchies and seemingly stratified institutions within the new unified university system: Respondents observed that by incorporating the fragmented institutions into the university it consequently diluted the identity, autonomy of the establishments leading to misunderstandings on steering on the part of policy makers, administrators and sometimes students. Administrators and even students from those professional centers and institutes still seemed to perceive their institutions as being prestigious, autonomous and meant for specific functions through which they were expected to be recognised. The responses pointed to conflicts of authority and encroachments which stem from misinterpretations on the notion of autonomy between Rectors/Vice-Chancellor as the boss of the unified university structure and Deans and Directors of the university establishments. The misinterpretations were said to be especially reflected on vote holding on which the degree of such autonomy can be easily noticed. Some cases on the constant necessity of the intervention of the umbrella structure (MINESUP) through various circulars to clarify on the decentralized management of the university within the unified structure were cited. For instance, the meeting of University Rectors and Heads of Establishment which held in 1999 and recently, a presidential decree of 2005 termed “*Governance Manageriale*” which reiterates the management competences.

Following the reforms, one finds establishments within the University institutions which conspicuously depict their peculiar identity and autonomy sometimes even beyond the university as per their original foundations, conceptions and missions. The endowed autonomy of such establishments sometimes render a harmonious steering of the university or system difficult. The cases in point are professional schools like IRIC, ESSTIC and ASTI etc in the Universities of Yaounde II and Buea respectively which seem to pursue their initial missions, maintain selectivity in their admission with very strong professional missions, and international characters and identities. The scope of activities of such institutions are sometimes parallel to those of the university under which they are placed. Such steering may become even more difficult when one considers a case like the University of Buea conceived in the Anglosaxon tradition which according to its tradition reflects greater institutional (university) autonomy as against hosting an institution like ASTI originally conceived in the French tradition in its peculiar identity, autonomy and missions.

The creation of the Anglosaxon University of Buea as per the 1993 reforms which seems to have legitimated the existence of two subsystems in the country’s higher education sector also brought

further implications for harmonisation at the system level. Respondents observed that the different university traditions condition harmonisation to be limited only to elements of national policy issues and not on the university traditions and practices. They observed that it was practically difficult for policy makers to steer bottom issues or most issues that concern the basic units at the system level. The system was said to be actually differentiated into two subsystems whose policies had to reflect their specificities and foundations. The interviewees stated that even if there were to be some harmonisation of bottom issues at the policy or system level, it indispensably required the participation of the institutional experts themselves. Such reasons could partly explain why the system or national ministry was characterised by an academic oligarchy as well.

Significant differences can be discerned in the institutional steering of the two university systems some of which seem to pose problems of comprehension at the system or national policy level. Within the two subsystems, there exist equivalent structures in similar hierarchical orders which do not seem to be performing similar functions. A case in point is the position of the Registrar and Secretary General in the Anglo-Saxon and Francophone Universities respectively. As it was the case with the notion of autonomy between establishments and the university enterprise as a whole, similar variations exist between universities of the two systems on perspectives about their relationships with the government (ministry). These perspective differences lead to conflicts of competences between the university instances of decision making and the state's. The Anglo-Saxon university perceives an almost final decision in its senate and council resolutions which sometimes conflicts with perceptions at the ministry level especially in situations where the decisions are appreciated from the French perspective at the ministry level.

Also the case of the "*Conseil d'Administration*" being the equivalent structure for the council that existed in the Anglo-Saxon system wherein the University authorities (Rectors) render account of their activities and use of finances and budget projections did not seem to fit with some governance perceptions of the Francophone University tradition. Until 2005, the notion of the "*Conseil d'Université*" in the Francophone Universities as similar structure for University Council in the Anglo-Saxon University were not the same especially with regards to the presiding personality. In the Francophone Universities, the Rector himself doubled as the "*Président du Conseil d'Université*" (Chairpersons of the Council) which implied that the Rector was the manager of the University and also supervisor. On the other hand, the chairperson of the Anglo-Saxon University council has been the Pro-Chancellor who is different from the Vice-Chancellor. Perhaps the

rationality in the former structure in the Francophone universities could be explained by the centralized nature of the system since there was a further super structure (the Ministry/Minister) to whom the Rector rendered accounts or another perspective from which greater authority was devolved to the Francophone university authorities.

The two types of universities also differ on various aspects of operations on common educational policies and perspectives on finances which sometimes conflict with system level perspectives in terms of cultural experiences. The initial spirit in which the University of Buea (Anglosaxon) was created and its ensuing strategic plans convey a greater degree of self regulation through the generation of commensurate finances or fund raising. However, such strategies do not seem to fit the French perspective whose foundational philosophy favours centralization with funding being borne by the state. Such Anglo-Saxon perspectives sometimes conflict with across-the-board government policies and perspectives. In its early years, attempts by the University of Buea to introduce an extra annual development charge of 20000 FCFA were halted by the government despite the fact that some parents had shown the willingness to pay the extra amount for the university's development projects (ADEA/WGHE 1999, 18).

The admission system in the fundamental Francophone university which seemed to have been emulated from France as per its 1968 reforms is based on the loose selection criteria, though entry into professional schools is still characterized of tighter selective entrance examination. Ben David (1977, 39) noted following the restructuring of the French system in 1968 that admissions into the fundamental university became very much liberalized. In its perception and assumption of autonomy the (Anglo-Saxon) University of Buea runs a selective admission based on cut-off points into the main university. The notion of quality assurance in both systems has not been the same. While to a certain extent, there is the insistence of lecturers' assessment by students in the Anglo-Saxon University, the procedures have faced resistance in the Francophone universities whose perspectives do not agree with the idea of being assessed by students. The different institutional perspectives face severe challenges especially when they meet with mono-cultural administrative experience at the system level.

6.2 Bilingual issues (Languages)

This sub-heading focused on the bilingual policy in Cameroon. The researcher was interested in the extent to which the problem of language imbalance which was tackled in the 1993 reform had been solved and also the linguistic implications of the bicultural (bilingual) model to the educational processes.

Unlike in the Canadian and Belgian contexts of bilingualism which has been termed by linguists as “state bilingualism”, Cameroon opted for “individual bilingualism” upon the reunification of the French and British Cameroons in 1972. The bilingual policy was aimed at rendering its citizens proficient in both official languages (French and English). Proponents of “individual bilingualism” like Professor Bernard Fonlon observed that although Belgium and Canada were old in the bilingual tradition, their citizens were largely monolingual. He argued that it was going to be unrealistic or rather unwise for Cameroon not to take advantage of the colonial heritage to create a strong bilingual state that reflected in citizens.⁴ He envisioned a system where any child who goes through the educational cycle would be capable of speaking in both French and English or whose proficiency should be advanced at the university level such that the individual could effectively follow the courses in both languages.⁵ These opinions were strongly embedded in the broad political goal of national integration. As Anckar (2000, 499) opined in the case of bilingualism in Finland, the higher education system may not be an appropriate testing setting for broader national goals due to its specificities and complexities. Anckar (2000, 499) cautions that wherever there are minority groups, linguistic issues need to be treated with attention in HE since it is the vehicle of

⁴ La grande majorité des Canadiens et des Belges sont restés monolingues. Un État bilingue ne suppose donc pas nécessairement des individus, des citoyens bilingues. Mais pour nous, au Cameroun, ce serait une méconnaissance des avantages qui s’offrent à nous et un manque regrettable d’idéal que de nous contenter d’avoir créé un État bilingue.

⁵ L’objectif que nous devons viser doit être un bilinguisme individuel grâce auquel chaque enfant qui suit le cycle de notre système d’éducation sera capable de parler l’anglais et le français.

knowledge and even cultures. By the way, enrolment into higher education is above all personally motivated because of the monetary and non-pecuniary benefits that accrue from it which outweigh any external objectives. The “Human capital” and related theories suggest that it is personal motives that drive individual demands for higher education. Broader national socio-political objectives may simply result as externalities of individual interactions and knowledge acquisitions.

Some scholars have argued that the “individual bilingualism” in Cameroon seemed to have been unrealistic especially in the educational setting and its related primary processes. Jikong (2004) attributes most of the weaknesses in ‘individual bilingualism’ as part of the national educational policy to its disregard of certain aspects of language planning. He argues that because of economic considerations which lay behind language planning, the inappropriate language policy in Cameroon higher education has over the years, made several victims. The interviews revealed that the victims have been largely the Anglophones since the system is dominantly skewed towards the French tradition and language. An analyses of some literatures (Mbassi 1983, 285; Jikong 2004) suggests that the bilingual policy in Cameroon ignored a very critical element of language planning which is to ascertain that the various languages within a polity are non competitive. Jikong (2004) opine that with individual bilingualism, everybody is involved with the consequences that follow. Scholars have cautioned the tendency of an inappropriate language policy impinging on some fundamental human rights and freedom, the philosophies of equal ‘opportunities and rights’ which equally apply to the use of languages (Baker 1993).

It was in the spirit and implementation of the national bilingual policy in Cameroon that the defunct University of Yaounde which started in the 1960s was assumed to function. It became the first testing grounds for the bilingual policy which determined its specific identity as a bilingual University. In addition to being a university where students could follow their lectures in both languages, its architects perceived a bilingual type of the University of Louvain, of “two universities in ‘one’ where Dutch and French are the languages of instruction.”⁶ System and institution wise, one of the main problems in Cameroon higher education has been that of maintaining language balance to the extent that it satisfactorily responds to the educational needs of the students and/or, it is consistent with their pre-university linguistic backgrounds. In the defunct

⁶ Normalement une université bilingue est une université dans laquelle un étudiant peut suivre des cours dans chacune des langues à son gré. C’est en fait une double université comme c’est le cas de l’université de Louvain où le néerlandais et le français sont les deux langues d’enseignement.

Bilingual University of Yaounde the programmes were dominantly taught in French. This situation created problems of access, increased drop out and reduced the success rates of the Anglophone students. One respondent disclosed that in his days as Law student in the University of Yaounde, there was no English-speaking lecturer. Such linguistic problems increased the frustrations of the Anglophone students. In the years preceding the reforms, most Anglophone students were compelled to travel for studies in nearby Nigeria or abroad in western countries, if affordable. In an attempt to alleviate the language difficulties which grew with political undertones, the UB was created in a monolingual Anglo-Saxon tradition. Evidence of the language difficulties is that immediately after the reforms, a good number of candidates for teaching positions in University of Buea came from Nigeria. Some qualified Anglophone Cameroonians from abroad who had preferred to remain in the civil service voluntarily requested to teach in the University of Buea after its creation.

Most respondents unequivocally refused when asked if the language difficulties in the system had been satisfactorily resolved with the creation of the University of Buea. Their arguments were based on the changing character of the system and student demands which required commensurate adjustments. They contended that the problems were exacerbated by surging number of candidates for admission into the English-speaking university and programmes. Results of the 2005 General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advance level were indicative of the persistence of such language difficulties as follows:

Table 6: Enrolment of English-speaking candidates into University of FOL (UB)

Year	No Sat for G.C.E	No. pass (> 2 papers)	%	No into Univ of FOL (% into Univ. of FOL (UB)	Remainder
2005	19991	11.147,	55.76%	1839	16.49%	83.61 % (9308)

Source: *Cameroon G.C.E Board (2005), UB (2006)*

Based on its capacity, the University of Buea in that year admitted only 1839 freshmen (16. 49%) from the bulk of 11.147 who passed the GCE in two and more papers and who might have been looking forward to study in their first official language (FOL). This implies that 9308 (83.61 %) of English-speaking high school graduates were bound to spread to the other dominantly French-instructed universities in the Second official language (SOL) or went abroad. Besides, of the 1839 freshmen that were admitted into UB, about 15% were said to be Francophones since they certainly met its language requirements for admission.

Anglophone student respondents in the University of Yaounde I revealed that since most of their courses and studying materials were in French (their second language), their performances were negatively affected in comparison with their Francophone classmates. They added that they did not find most of their lecturers proficient in English (lecturers' SOL) which lead to some arbitrariness when they are assessed with their classmates who receive lectures in their FOL (French). The students observed that the whole process was cumbersome since most often, they had to translate notes before reading and at times, the translated notes may not carry the appropriate substance required by the teacher as per his educational tradition or the stylistic devices of the discipline. Policymakers and teachers who were interviewed on this issue revealed that the greater burden in such bilingual system lied on the students who are expected to be bilingual. Some respondents were categorical on the issue that bilingualism can be hardly pursued to its logical conclusion in Higher Education. The teachers also observed that it was not easy to assess the students in a language which was second to their academic language. Conclusively, both teachers and students are hardly proficient in the use of their SOL in the teaching-learning process.

Issues of interference on the students' academic languages were also reported in cases when the language of instruction is the FOL for both teachers and students as reflected in their essays. These were in cases where the English-speaking students are assessed in English-taught courses. This led to the observation that the students' first language was being negatively affected as well. That seemed to be a natural linguistic phenomenon since the students were using English with French at the background or vice-versa, in addition to their local dialect and Pidgin English (one of the Lingua Franca). Jikong (2004) observed problems with the language and substance to be acquired. He cites the *Maîtrise* thesis of Alice Njeck on Anglophone students in the National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM) which revealed that the students are hardly satisfied with their SOL (Jikong 2004). This constituted a serious impediment for access to certain professions. Considering that the Cameroon system of higher education was public service or profession-oriented with selective entrance examination, it was disadvantageous to candidates who were compelled to use their SOL in the exams and even when admitted. Consequently, they were deprived of access to the professions through the HE system. Studies by Yila Dora is also cited to have revealed the misleading consequences of wrong translation in Public Service Examinations (Jikong 2004)

Responses of the Francophone students in the UB indicated that their use of the English language (being their SOL) did not pose any major challenges to their education because of several factors. They explained that despite the existence of other French Universities, it was their choice to seek admission to the Anglo-Saxon university which provided enough motivation for them to study in English. Secondly, their admission was based on their having met an extra language prerequisite, an Intensive English Language course offered by the University of Buea. Thirdly, some students revealed that they also benefited from the monolingual character of the university being the consistent use of one (English) language and its cumulative effect on their proficiency. Certain difficulties were cited which were based to a greater extent, on methodological and cultural differences. The students also pointed out problems which were connected to language interference, the effect of studying in English with French at the background. The UB lecturers observed that the academic languages of the Francophone students were weaker but they were however, bound to pay more attention to the knowledge substances which they required during assessment. Above all, no straightforward answer could be given on the linguistic impact on the performances of the Francophone students at the University of Buea viewing that some of its best overall graduating students have been Francophones.

It can be asserted that the bilingual university system in the years preceding the reforms functioned to the detriment of Anglophone Cameroonians with many missing educational and professional opportunities. The current trends in relation to the effects of the language imbalance in the bilingual university system reveal that access and language difficulties are becoming more of general concerns than for any particular subsystem. There is a considerable expanding number of Francophone students in Cameroon who may want to undertake studies in English but who may not be provided such opportunities in the UB due to its limited capacity. This demand may be explained by the seeming imperialistic status of the English language in recent times, further mobility prospects in the English-speaking systems and normally when there are attractive job-tailored programmes in the UB and other English-speaking universities.

It must also be said that individual bilingualism has recorded a good degree of success. Quite a good number of Cameroonians who go through the educational system are flexible in both languages and have a wider choice to study in the English and French-speaking worlds. Two Anglophone Anthropology and “Bilingual” students in the University of Yaounde I who were interviewed revealed that despite their Anglophone backgrounds and the existence of UB in their

FOL, they had opted to study in the University of Yaounde dominantly in French because they felt their programmes choices were more advanced in that institution. In some of the bilingual universities whose programmes are predominantly taught in French, there exist departmental differences on the use of the two languages. A good proportion of the Law syllabus in the University of Yaoundé II such as “Tort” “Equity” “Family” and “Business” laws are taught in English which could equally pose similar difficulties to Francophones. Seldom would state officials today, require translators to treat routine files and other matters in the SOL. Recently, graduates of the Advanced School of Translation and Interpretation (ASTI) in Cameroon are no longer as solicited as before, which question the future role of translation and suggest that French and English bilingualism has gained grounds in Cameroon.

As laudable as the bilingual policy was to lead Cameroonians to perfect bilingualism, it fell short in its implementation in HE viewing its economic implications and massification which might have escaped the wisdom of the policy makers. The challenges from the study suggest the lack of the necessary instruments in enforcing the policy. Respondents observed that the bilingual university system was expensive to maintain especially in a massified system. They stated that it required heavier budget packages to finance the logistics to facilitate instruction and the different cultural issues that emerge from the use of SOL. Amongst the logistic aspects, were the need to employ or train lecturers in the both languages, construct language laboratories, translation costs and immersion classes. On grounds of the above, one can assert that Cameroon adopted bilingualism the ‘hard way’, which pays off more in its aftermath than in its educational process. Individual bilingualism would seem to be a better option for effective bilingualism when achieved but it seems to go along with a lot of sacrifices, interference and loss of educational opportunities due to its stringency.

6.3 The system of degree equivalence

This subheading focused on the implications of the subsystems’ diversities on the harmonisation of the degree structures and how they affected certain national system’s objectives such as mobility, readability, comparability and consistency.

Prior to the 1993 reforms, there dominantly existed in the Cameroonian system of HE, one tradition according to which the University of Yaoundé and the centers and institutes had been conceived, which corresponded in structure and content to that of the French University system. Due to certain

inconsistencies, several reflections and attempts emerged as far back as the 1970s on the adoption of a national simplified or unified degree structure. The Anglo-American two tier system had been perceived to be a simple and appropriate degree structure that could respond to the national concerns for readability, comparability, and mobility between the two university systems. The necessity later intensified especially for system coordination with the creation of the UB in the Anglo-Saxon tradition whose simplified structure further illuminated some of the inconsistencies in the diverse and multiple qualifications in the system. However, the attempts to adopt a common degree structure always met with several challenges, controversies and resistances until recently in 2006 when the “système LMD” (Licence, Mastère, Doctorat) corresponding to the Bachelor, Master, PhD was adopted to go operational from 2008 (MINESUP, 2006).

What seemed to have prevailed as a policy option was a system of degree equivalence for the two systems. *The researcher was interested in the difficulties and controversies that surrounded the system of equivalence on the two degree structures.* The policy makers observed that it was never easy to establish the equivalences across the systems because the structures stemmed from different systems, pedagogical foundations, weighting traditions and rationales. The differences in the systems’ origins were said to consequently lead to divergent conceptions on the constitution of a national degree structure. Clark (1983, 49) observed that each system arrives at its own definition on the clustering of knowledge as well as sequencing. Based on the Arrêté No. 99/055/MINESUP/DDES of 16 November 1999 some of the equivalences in the two degree structures in Cameroon are as follows:

Table 7: The French and Anglosaxon degree equivalences in Cameroon

No.	French	Anglo-Saxon	Professional	Duration
1.	Diplôme d’études Universitaire Générales (DEUG)	-	Diplôme d’Etudes Universitaires Professionnelles	+2
2.	Licence	Bachelors	Licence Professionnelle	+1 (3)
3.	Maîtrise	-		+1 (4)
4.	DEA	Masters	DESS	+1 (+2) (5)
5.	Doc de 3eme Cycle	-	-	3
6.	Doctorat d’Etat	PhD	-	-

Due to the several intermediary degrees in the French tradition, not all their equivalences existed in the Anglo-Saxon structures. It was a characteristic of the French tradition in Cameroon that each specified duration of studies (one to two years) be sanctioned by a certificate to report the

difference in extra period of studies. The French degree differentiation or sequencing would seem to reflect the Human Capital and related theories (Arrow 1973; Becker 1994; Weiss 1995; Canton & Venniker 2001) on the ‘signaling’, ‘filtering’ ‘screening’ or information role higher education is perceived to play such that the differences can be certified and reported to various knowledge users, as the needs arise. This school of thought who advocated the numerous certificates even seemed to find the Anglo-Saxon-American degree structure to be too simple and more oriented towards the academic profession which may not be the only direction for university graduates.

Due to its intermediary nature, the *Maîtrise* in Cameroon suffered from several inconsistencies to find its standard within the Francophone degree structure (itself), as well as equitability and comparability with other systems’ qualifications when the Master degree was employed as a yardstick for postgraduate degree after the *Licence* or Bachelors. It was subjected to several adjustments and readjustments, forward and backward as a two-year degree programme plus a thesis, to one year without thesis after the ‘Licence’. At times, its introduction and implementation were hardly uniform. At certain moments it was deemed to be the direct equivalence of a two-year Master degree which was to an extent, more justifiable when its duration was 2 years (after Bachelors) plus a thesis. When its duration was stepped down to one year, there was the erroneous tendency of equating it with the two-year Masters. It was only later when the DEA became the established equivalence for the two-year Masters *that the Maîtrise* could be standardised as being inferior or lighter to the two-year Masters degree since it took one years less than the DEA. Some conservative policy makers preferred that the DEA be directly translated into the English tradition as Advanced Postgraduate Diploma which did not exist in the Anglo-Saxon structure, than a straightforward equivalent appellation as Masters. There had been tendencies to classify both the one-year *Maîtrise* without thesis and the 2 year Masters when referring to common degree requirement for certain national programmes. It was not unusual to read from recruitment and admissions advertisements that “candidates should hold at least a Masters or ‘*Maîtrise*’ in disregard of their differences in contents, weights and duration of studies, if such advertisements were made at the time the *Maîtrise* was one year without thesis.

It was never clear if the basic degree requirement for Ph.D admission for francophone candidates in the Anglo-Saxon University was the DEA or Doc de 3eme C. Since the Doc de 3eme C did not have equivalence in the Anglo-Saxon structure, both were qualified for Ph.D admission, though with significant differences in their system. Such admissions should have been unfair for holders of

the Doc de 3eme C if admitted with Master Degree Holders (MDH) since the Doc de 3eme C was already a doctoral level certificate. At certain moments, the Doc 3eme C candidates began the Ph.D programme from crash. In others, it was the arbitrary decision of the supervisory department or personality to determine the level at which the candidates began. It was a matter of dispensation that Doc de 3eme C candidates were either returned to research or redid certain theoretical courses. On the other hand, there have been tendencies (when its superiority to ‘Masters’ is recognized) that when the Doc de 3eme C candidates compete with the MDH for Ph.D admission, they are given priority when the ‘Masters degree’ is the legitimate system’s basic qualification for Ph.D admissions. And also a forgone conclusion when holders of the Doc de 3eme C compete with a DEA which also qualifies for such admission as the established equivalence of the ‘Masters’. It also becomes misleading when duration of studies are taken as the main criteria for benchmarking equivalences as the case might have been with the Ph.D which was previously perceived to be inferior to the Doctorat d’Etat since it took a shorter duration of studies.

On grounds of the above, one observes that the establishments of equivalences across different systems become subjected to arbitrary interpretations, assumptions and approximations. Under such circumstances, it becomes difficult for the system to maintain policy consistency on the degree structures. Even if administrators of the HE system could easily arrive at a systematic conclusion on the equivalences, it was more confusing to employers and other stakeholders. Some respondents noted difficulties of classification and advancement at the Finance and Public Service Ministries and even within the university systems. There was the tendency that graduates with statutory degrees could be classified with intermediary ones to the unjust benefit of some and disadvantage of others.

It was interesting to investigate the rationale for the recent adoption in Cameroon, of the “système LMD” (Licence, Mastère, Doctorat) of the 3+2+3 Degree Structure which corresponds to the ‘BMD’ (Bachelor, Master, Ph.D). The relation of the recent reforms to the Bologna Process was also questioned. Respondents who were chosen from francophone policy makers were clear and straightforward in their expressions, “parce que c’est la mondialisation” (because of globalization). It is a characteristic of globalization as per Manuel Castell’s perception that actions in one locale can come to have significant consequences for distant others (Castells, 2000). Global developments especially through the Bologna Process can be seen to be reshaping the degree structures in the former European colonies. It coincidentally occurred that since most European countries are

adapting to the Bologna process, degree structures of their former colonies were equally to be reformed accordingly to avoid the risk of losing mobility and comparability (among other factors). UK and French adaptations can be very significant for the case study's adaptation and most of Africa. The Cameroon reform in degree structures could be observed to be driven by trends which overlap at sub-regional and regional levels; as a CEMAC and Francophonie African country which are in the process of adopting the two tier degree structures. The *Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie* was cited to have taken a supranational lead in sensitizing the former African colonies within which HE cultural entity they belong

6.4 Teaching qualifications and promotion:

It was important to note from a good number of the respondents that it was in teachers' recruitment and promotion criteria that harmonization policies in Cameroon HE have been largely successful where common and across-the-board policies or standard requirements are being implemented by both subsystems. The apparent success in this aspect is not unconnected to the strong involvement of the professionals (the academics) in the policy formulations and evaluation processes through the CCIU. The strategy seemed to have involved establishing equivalences for recruitment qualifications, ranks and equitable promotion criteria for both subsystems. Following Arrêté No.03/0050/MINESUP/DDES of 30 July 2003 the rank equivalences and promotion criteria in the Cameroon HE teaching corps are summarized as follows:

Table 8: Equivalences for University Teaching ranks and Promotion Criteria

No.	English	French	Qualification	Duration (TE)	Publications	Additional Criteria
1.	Assistant Lecturer	Assistant	Doctorate Degree Holder (DDH)	1	1	Pedagogic, Scientific and Administrative Reports.
			Non Doctorate Degree Holder	2		
2.	Lecturer	Chargé de Cours (cc)	Must be DDH before qualify to next rank	4	6 (or 4 & a book)	“
3.	Associate Professor (AP)	Maître de Conférences (MC)	“	4	4+ +CSK or a book , NIAC Dissertations supervised	“
4.	Professor	Professeur	“			“

TE: Teaching Experience

SCSK: Significant contribution to scientific knowledge

NIAC: National and international academic activities.

Prior to the current policies, there existed several challenges in harmonizing the teaching qualification as well as ensuring coherency from diverse backgrounds which correlated with most of the challenges in the harmonisation of the degree structures (stated above). The ADEA/WGHE report pointed out difficulties in establishing equivalence and application of respective decrees which stemmed from the diversity in the qualifications and the tenacious influence of the inherited traditions (ADEA/WGHE 1999, 4). It was at a certain moments argued that the Doctorat d'Etat was superior to the Ph.D. Since the Ph.D stemmed from a simpler structure taking as less as 8 years (3+2+3) and the Doc d'Etat as many as 10 to 12 years (BAC + 10 years and above), it led to the perception that the Ph.D was lighter in training. The policies gave preference to the Doc d'Etat as standard teaching qualification and the Ph.D could only be equated to the Doc de 3^{eme} C whereas both qualifications were terminal in their respective systems. From the 1970s it took Ph.D holders (both Anglophones and Francophones who returned with qualifications from English-speaking-Universities) a lot of petitioning for the system to arrive at a logical conclusion on the equivalence of the terminal degrees.

The inherent differences in the qualifications also created to the system certain equity challenges on promotion. Promotion to certain ranks favoured teachers from particular backgrounds than the others. Teachers who had degrees from countries other than France smoothly entered the ranks of Lecturer and Associate Professor (equivalent of Assistant Professor in the American system) but had difficulties in attaining the final rank of Professor. On the other hand, teachers with French qualifications could easily accede to the various ranks. In the early years, the recruitments were subjected to foreign conditions (predominantly the '*Concour d'agregation*' or '*Inscription sur les listes d'Aptitudes Françaises*') (ADEA/WGHE 1999, 4). The imported conditions rendered the accommodation of qualifications from English-speaking Universities difficult since the criteria predominantly reflected the French system. Also, the promotion policy did not seem to favour a certain category of French-speaking teachers dominantly from the French University system as per the nature of the teaching, institutions and qualification. This category included teachers in Professional Schools. Since their qualifications were more production than research-oriented and did not require a terminal degree (Ph.D or Doctorat), they found difficulties in meeting general requirements for promotion.

As part of the general implication of two higher education traditions that ran through all aspects of the system, language inconsistencies contributed in the difficulties that were faced in the implementation of the decrees. Even in a situation whereby a clear policy had been established, there was the tendency that the policy might not carry the same meaning in the tradition across and may convey only monolingual or cultural experiences. Differences stemming from terminological interpretations of teaching ranks between the two traditions equally abound today. For instance, the French system seems to be more generous in the award of ranks and titles in the teaching corps. In the last (but one) echelon of the academic ranks in Cameroon, the Maître de Conférences (equivalent of Associate Professor) is already called ‘*Professeur*’ (Professor) when he/she has not yet attained the rank of Professor by virtue of requirements he/she has to meet. This may be in accordance with the French tradition which categorises the last two Professorial ranks as “Professeur I et II”. On the other hand the Anglo-Saxon system in Cameroon insists on the Associate Professor being called ‘Doctor’ and not already as Professor. Similarly, there is the tendency to call holders of Doc de 3eme C holders as ‘Docteur’ since it is also a doctoral level qualification in its original system. Also it could be observed in the Cameroonian system that differences in the last two echelons of the academic ranks are very marginal in terms of functions and workloads. The Associate Professor (Maître de Conférences) and Professor seem to perform almost the same teaching and research functions which perhaps justifies the French precipitated appellation of the MC as ‘*Professeur*’. Consequences of wrong appellations across university traditions when erroneously applied may not be minimized since such hierarchies usually reflect differences in expertise, experience and remunerations.

6.5 Workloads and Evaluation

This area focused on the implementation of the 1993 reforms on the weighting of programmes. It had been observed that the modular credit system which was adopted in the 1993 reforms was being implemented differently and with difficulties in the universities (WGHE 1999, 11). The researcher was inspired to find out the extent of horizontal and vertical mobility of students from one system to the other following the differences in grading systems. Asked on the possibility that within a particular degree programme, a student from a Francophone University could carry over already acquired credits from one semester or level to the next in the Anglo-Saxon University and vice versa, most of the responses indicated that the degree of portability and transferability was very low and nearly impossible at times. They observed that when such transfers have been made, they have

been based on discretionary or arbitrary evaluations due to lack of systematic criteria for the establishment of the equivalences. The respondents pointed out issues which seem to be the effect of the differences in the degree and weighting structures, evaluation methods and contents.

The two university subsystems in Cameroon differ in their programmes' weighting methods. The Francophone Universities operates on a Modular system, a "module" being a group of two to five courses (*Unités de Valeurs*) (*UV*). The University of Buea operates on a "Semester Course Credit system' whereby courses are evaluated in terms of course credits. In an attempt to harmonise the two different evaluation systems, the conversion rate of 'one UV' was adopted as the equivalent of 'three credits' in the Anglophone system as follows:

Table 9: Credit equivalences in Cameroon

No	French	Anglo-Saxon (Equivalence/Interpretation Across)
1.	Module	Module (Group of Credits)
2.	Unité de Valeur	3 Credits

Source: UB Syllabus (2003)

Some misunderstandings were pointed out to persist about the modular and semester course credit system. The modular system has been seen to be too general and broad, since it operates on an aggregate and compensatory average scheme. In the semester course credit system, student are considered to have earned credits when they have actually passed the course, whereas in the aggregate modular system, students can be considered to have validated a module even if they might have failed in certain "*UV (s)*" but compensate in another. Simply put, with the modular system it is possible to fail and pass the module. One respondent observed with the example of an Engineering programme that a student who fails in the core Engineering course or *UV* but earns a higher average that compensates for the failed one may not be considered as a good Engineering student in a semester course credit system or actually to make a good Engineer. The differences in the weighting methods tended to raise question of transparency, quality and mutual suspicion on the programmes.

Respondents also pointed to the likelihood of misinterpretations on the numerous terminologies in the bilingual grading system some which do not seem to convey the same pedagogical meanings across traditions. For instance, with reference to Arrête No.06/055/MINESUP/DDES of 23 January

1998,⁷ “module” misleadingly gives the impression that it stands for “a course” in the UB whereas it is a group of UVs (courses). ‘Filière’ in the Francophone University tradition may not carry the same pedagogic meaning for the Anglo-Saxon system since it could equally refer to ‘subject’, ‘field’, ‘branch’ ‘programme’ ‘domain’, depending on the context. As such, the establishment of equivalences can be marred by difficulties in arriving at the definition which a particular pedagogic term conveys in its original weighting system.

In the course of the study, some difficulties had been observed to be faced by students of the Bilingual or French university systems in obtaining admissions into the postgraduate cycle (Postgraduate Diploma and Masters) in the (Anglo-Saxon) University of Buea. Some of the difficulties were attributed to the unimaginably low and unequal degree averages to the G.P.A of 2:50 that is required for the postgraduate admissions in the Anglo-Saxon University. Respondents observed that the degree requirements for Postgraduate Studies into the University of Buea could easily be met only by the alumni of that University. To the researcher, this raised a question of upward mobility between the two traditions and to other English-speaking Universities in general. It was germane to find out if the difficulties were related to the differences in the grading systems/scales. The following explanations were obtained:

The University of Buea was said to peck its minimum Bachelors’ degree requirement for Postgraduate (Diplomas and Masters) Admission at a G.P.A of 2.50 (Second Class Lower Division) whose equivalences in the French system is 12.00 Average (60%: ‘Assez Bien’) based on which students from both backgrounds can be qualified for postgraduate admission. Student respondents explained that students from the other Francophone Universities hardly earn the “Assez Bien”, Average of 12 (60%) to meet up with the equivalence. They explained that most often, their final degree averages are skewed around 10 and below 12 on 20 which qualify them only for the “*Passable*”, equivalence of the “Pass Degree” in the Anglo-Saxon University. They explained that those who earn above 12 averages could be estimated only at about 15% of the graduating class. Viewing the qualified 15% for Postgraduate admissions into UB also depended on whether the qualified candidates had intentions to pursue postgraduate at all, or especially at the UB. Besides,

⁷ Les enseignements dispensés...sont organisés en filières, Cycles et niveaux. Chaque niveau est composé de modules constitués d’Unités de Valeur (U.V.) Une unité de valeur est un ensemble d’activités de formation portant sur une partie d’une discipline, et de volume horaire compris entre quarante cinq (45) et soixante (60) heures. Elle constitue l’unité de formation ou d’enseignement.

they also had to meet other requirements such as proof of English language proficiency. The low averages of the Anglophone students in those bilingual or dominant French tradition universities who could meet the language requirement into the Anglo-Saxon university were equally attributed to the difficulties in the French language. The students stated that in the aggregate modular or average system it was difficult to obtain a good final average. The observations were confirmed at the UB whose respondents stated that such discrepancies have been constantly met at its postgraduate admission boards. They respondents revealed that as a state university they had to reconcile some of such system's discrepancies to include the students from the francophone universities. They did so by stepping down the equivalent average requirements, applying extra criteria such as work experience or simply accepting a higher midlevel certificates (Maîtrise). Other respondents observed that the low averages of the students from the francophone universities could simply be explained by the teachers' concept on grading and assessment. One student respondent at the University of Yaoundé stated that *"it appears the Francophone perception on HE is that not everybody can pass a course. The lecturers are very stingy with marks. Hardly do I hear that 50% of the students validate a UV during a first sitting"*.

The above assertions may corroborate with certain opinions which disagree with the notion that everybody who enrolls in HE must find it easy to pass and graduate, in which case HE would not be serious in the true sense of it. The students revealed that the parsimonious manner in which the Francophone lecturer grade render it difficult for them to meet degree requirements for Postgraduate admissions to other (especially the English-speaking) Universities. Such parsimonious grading systems were said to limit the students from competing for foreign scholarships and disfavoring specifically the Anglophone students from pursuing further studies, in case they intended to continue in their FOL. One responding alumni and former lecturer of the Bilingual University recounted that most of them who left the Bilingual University of Yaounde had to take placement tests in the Anglo-American or English-speaking Universities abroad. Language requirements generally exacerbated the problems of the Francophones to such English-speaking universities, in addition to the difficulties in meeting the equivalences.

While the responses seem to point to difficulties in the modular system and evaluation scheme employed in the French University system in Cameroon, several scholars have underscored certain inherent problems in the convertibility and transferability of scores from one university system to the other especially to the Anglo-Saxon system. According to Sullivan (2002, 73) transferred grades

do not reflect similar levels of achievements to that which each university tradition assumes. Other Scholars point specifically to certain vagaries especially in convertibility to the Anglo-Saxon grading system. Karran (2005, 10) highlights problems in trying to calculate percentage equivalences which can act as a common denominator and the use of percentage scale which does not provide details about the span of different grading categories. Hornby (2003, 431) opined that the use of percentage scale leads to inequalities that are difficult to justify. A cross examination of the Ministerial order No.02/0149/MINESUP of 28 November 2002 (contained in UB syllabus, 2003) and Arrête No.06/055/MINESUP/DDES of 23 January 1998 leads to the exact percentage conversions between the Francophone and Anglo-Saxon university systems in Cameroon as follows:

Table 10: Grade conversions in the Cameroonian HE systems

Anglo-Saxon Tradition			French Tradition		
G.P.A on 4	%tage	Evaluation	French (Av. On 20)	%	Mention
3.50-4.00	87.5	First Class	16	80	Très Bien
3.00-3.5	75	2 nd Class Upper Division	14	70	Bien
2.5-3.00	62.5	2 nd Class Lower Division	12	60	Assez Bien
2.25-2.5	56.	3 rd Class	?	?	-
2.00-2.25	50.	Pass	10.00	50	Passable

From the above table, it can be observed that the percentage conversions between the Anglo-Saxon and French traditions in Cameroon are inexplicably unequal in some of the classifications. Most of the authors seemed to agree on the notion that the British grading system was quite atypical with the use of aggregate percentage scores rather than grades to determine degree classification. Karran (2005, 7) observes that direct translation of any grade description into English can fail to accommodate other national, cultural and academic nuances associated with the grades. There also occur difficulties in defining where the pass/fail cut off irrespective of method of grading which trigger arbitrariness in such systems. According to the French and British traditions, the cut off for the First Class Honours is 70 while in France the cut of for the ‘Excellent’ grade is between 16 and 18 which might not correspond to the British in terms of percentage equivalence (Karran 2005, 4). Also, some inexplicable disharmonies emerge in the combine use of number of credits and Grade Point Average to determine graduation point at the University of Buea which signal inherent problems in the implementation of the Anglo-American Course Credit and Honours system at the said university. With reference to Article 27 of Ministerial order No.02/0149/MINESUP of 28 November 2002 which stipulates the use of Grade Point Average (2:00 on 4) and number of credits (90 and above) to determine qualification for the award of a degree, it constantly occurs that at

graduation points some students are inexplicably stock up in a situation where they meet the required credits within the graduation limit (of 6 semesters and above) but fall short of the G.P.A of 2:00 on 4:00. Under such circumstances it only requires a special graduation committee to arbitrary grant dispensations on such cases.

6.6 Admissions Backgrounds

This area sought to find out how the secondary qualifications and backgrounds affect harmonious proceeding in the teaching learning process. Responding lecturers revealed that the different high school backgrounds and qualifications impact on the teaching-learning processes in the Cameroonian Universities, most of which could be attributed to the cultural differences from the secondary school systems. These differences were said be conspicuous especially in the bilingual Universities where English and French speaking students sit to receive the same instruction and even to an extent in the monolingual UB which today admits a good proportion of Francophone students. The nature, subject range and scope of the two different high school certificates were said to be of significance to the differences in achievement levels of the university students.

The Baccalaureat (BAC) in Cameroon is sanctioned by a general average system for a wide range of high school subjects (as much as 12 subject), the Anglophone General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advance Level pass is graded on a scale of A-E and requires a pass from 2 papers to a maximum of 5 papers. It implied that the subject studies was much more concentrated (or somewhat specialized) for the Anglophones at the high level than the Francophones such that differences can be observed when students of the two backgrounds meet in the same University programme. For instance, in a University History programme the achievement level of a student who passed in two to three papers at the GCE including History could be different from those of Francophone who pass the BAC in a wider range of subjects. Such differences were also based on the fact that some programmes syllabuses build on the previous studies or are designed with the assumption that certain basics must have been acquired by the student from previous studies or the high school. The respondents revealed that such differences in levels of achievement varied with programmes. Student from one background were said to be more or less achieving in certain university programmes than their classmates of the other. Student respondents in the Faculty of Science of the Universities of Yaounde and UB revealed that it was an open secret that Francophone students were more performing than the Anglophones in the Mathematical and physical sciences.

Similarly, some lecturers in the University of Yaounde I pointed to such higher levels of achievement for the Anglophone students in the Chemical and Biological Sciences. Normally admissions for Chemistry and Biology students was based on their having passed in Biology or Chemistry at the high school within a fewer subject range which implied that their previous concentration on those subjects were greater. The Francophones' performance in the Physical and Mathematical sciences could also be explained by the positive implication of disciplinary interactions since the the categorization of the high school programmes are based on subject affinity termed 'BAC "A, B, C, D"'. For instance if a student wished to undertake Physics, he was bound to take it along with Mathematics even if Mathematics wasn't his or her original choice. Respondents at UB underscored the relevance of such categorizations for francophone admissions in the English system since their high school certificates portrayed less subject concentration.

The interviewees also revealed that the two student groups portray differences in learning approaches and methodological applications in certain disciplines. The case of some topics in Mathematics like "*Functions*" was quoted whereby, the two student groups may take different procedures to arrive at the same and appropriate answers or sometimes different but correct answers. Differences in the contents of certain high school syllabi and respective approaches were also quoted to be of significance to the differences. In Mathematics the Francophones were said to have a different content which emphasises statistics and a lot of use made of functions and the Anglophones, more quantitative. Similarly some respondents stated differences in the emphasis on language teaching. The Francophone lecturers were said to emphasize grammar and the Anglophones, a more communicative approach which the students reflected as well. Several respondents observed that in other subjects the Anglophones were more prone to the use of practical experiences and the francophones more apt in theoretical applications.

6.7 Curriculum Standardisation

In this subsection, the researcher sought to find out from the system policy makers *how the curricular or contents are standardized across the two HE traditions such that at the end of each level or programme the students should be expected to have attained similar level of achievements or educational outcomes.*

Most of the respondents revealed that since the universities were endowed with autonomy which transcended down to the basic units with different pedagogical foundations, curriculum and

contents harmonisation was rendered difficult at the broad national or system level. They stated that those were areas of the system which were deliberately left to operate within the two subsystems. They said when ever, there have been attempts to harmonise the curricular they were faced with different content structures as per the traditions of the universities, with the tenacious influence of the British and French systems. What was said to be the policy option was to ensure some degree of programmes comparability as established by the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) of 1999 but which was not being pursued as recommended. However, they revealed that at the central level, such comparability was being handled by an Ad hoc Programmes Homologation Committee at the ministry which holds once in three years. Their responsibilities were said to limited be to ensuring that a certain minimum and specific content are met in the programmes. For instance, that in History, there should be obligatorily a module or course in “Cameroon History”.

Programmes uniformity, contents and curricular were seemingly out of the policy options. The interviews pointed to the fact that curricular issues and various pedagogical practices conveyed certain cultural differences and practices from the British and French traditions which were beyond policy makers at systems level to coordinate except within the respective subsystems and respective basic units. Certain contents, curricular, knowledge sequence and methodological issue were said to have their roots or foundations as far back as primary school such that they needed to be kept separate in the respective subsystems for the sake of consistency with previous studies.

6.8 Inter-university Collaborations

Viewing the recent intensification of inter-university cooperation between systems of HE, the researcher sought to examine how some of the issues highlighted in the study would affect or apply to certain collaborative activities between the French and Anglo-Saxon University traditions in Cameroon. The concept of ‘joint degree’ between Universities of different HE systems was employed to assess the degree of such academic collaborations. *Asked on whether it was possible for the Universities to teach and award joint degrees in the respective languages and academic traditions,* three sets of opinions could be retained. The first two diverged on the issue of joint degrees at the undergraduate levels and some convergence could be noted on Postgraduate studies:

The first set of respondents opined that joint degree programmes between the two traditions were possible at all levels of the higher education system. They cited the example of Law programmes in all the Cameroonian Universities whose syllabus was determined by the bijural (French and Anglo-

Saxon) legal system of the Country and was to be taught by lecturers in the respective traditions and languages. By the nature of such programmes, language difficulties and traditions differences seemed to be insignificant since it was a deliberate curricular obligation to impart knowledge of the two Law traditions in the students. This group contended that joint degrees have traditionally existed in Cameroon between the two subsystems and have been expert or specialty-driven and based on curricular needs. Though Cameroonian lecturers belong to one University tradition as permanent staff, it is a natural phenomenon that they shuttle on part time basis between all the Universities as the syllabuses necessitated.

The group equally based its arguments on the irrelevance of bilingual proficiency on joint degree programmes in Cameroon. They did not see the languages as a handicap to joint degrees in the Cameroon bilingual higher education system. They argued that bilingualism was a fluid concept because it comprised of several aspects; understanding, speaking, writing. They felt that if a student has mastered his or her first language and can either understand, speak or write in second language, he or she was capable of coping in the bilingual system (even bilingual for the purpose) especially as in Cameroon, the student has the choice to write or express himself in the language he masters best (the FOL). The student did not need to be equally and excellently proficient in both languages, which according this group, should have been almost impossible. By virtue of the implementation of the bilingual policy which emphasizes the teaching of the second language in previous (primary and secondary school) levels, Cameroonian students and staff being obviously proficient in their first language were exposed to speak, write or at least understand the second language.

The second opinion pool did not see the feasibility of “established” joint degrees in Cameroon, especially at the undergraduate level. They based their skepticisms on the technical and administrative difficulties that could be involved in operating such programmes in the French and Anglo-Saxon traditions amongst which the apparent inconvertibility of the two credit systems, the disparities in the two degree structures, the methodological variations in certain disciplines, incoherency in contents and structures between the two traditions and inherent implication of the language difficulties. This set of opinions pointed to the fact that the main problem of harmonisation in Cameroon has been purely cultural with existing differences in disciplinary perception, conceptions and foundations coupled with significant influence of the British and French traditions.

All the respondents seemed to agree on the fact that joint degree programmes were feasible at the postgraduate, especially the doctoral levels with the example of the sciences viewing that students have often done course work in one university system and completed research in another as expert needs obliged. The cases of mixed team of supervisors was cited who could be indispensably seen in defense panels expressing themselves in their respective languages irrespective of whether the student is of the same linguistic background, with the student equally free to respond in one of the languages which he or she finds easier. These arguments were premised on the fact that the necessity for expertise increased the more students go up the academic ladder which ignored language difficulties and tradition differences. Secondly, it based on a good portion of post graduate work being self-directed and requiring a certain degree of maturity, autonomy and initiatives which should have been acquired from the previous levels. On the grounds of such operations, the Cameroon Ministry of HE runs a “Student Mobility Programme” which is limited to Postgraduate Levels.

On how the two systems differences affect research collaborations, the opinions of the respondents did not differ from those of numbers one and three, which was that systems differences were minimal at the research levels of the academic system and staff and student collaborations in research have been predominantly discipline-based. *The researcher was going to find out what happens when a mixed team of Francophone and Anglophone researchers or academics have to carry out and publish their research findings.* The respondents revealed that several work have been done by such teams and such differences have never been paid attention to due related maturity factors (which equally militate in favour of joint postgraduate degrees) above as well as the dominant subject driven nature of research collaboration. Cameroonians were said to publish their articles in French or English journals and some respondents noted that the trends were moving towards English journals irrespective of whether they were English or French-speaking Cameroonians. However, certain respondents cited problems on divergent perceptions on the administration and concentration of university research and differences in methodological approaches. The divergences corroborated with the assertion on the existing variations between systems on the integration of research into teaching, their differentiation, degree of interdependence with regards commitment to specialized knowledge or general education, or the primacy of research and teaching (Clark, 1983, 49). For instance, Germany, Britain and the Americans often had the long Humboltian tradition of assigning research to universities as an integral part of professorial roles. On the other hand, the French system considered that the university test and teaches and that

research requires the support of different structures of academies, institutes and center (Clark 1983, 98). Methodologically Francophones in Cameroon (according to the interviews) were said to be generally prone to theoretical research or applications than Anglophones who employed life or practical experiences. The interviewees also pointed out some marginal differences in publication styles, citation patterns and references etc. However, to the respondents such differences in publication patterns did not seem to be of much relevance because they opined that if one has to publish in a particular journal or tradition, he or she is bound to respect the style sheets. The Journal of the Cameroon Academy of Science (JCAS) did not seem to find major difficulties from such systems differences. With the JCAS, French and English-speaking Cameroonians simply submit their articles in the language of their choice provided the articles are accompanied by technical translations of the abstract. The editor sorts out reviewers by expertise and language.

Even if joint degrees was unnoticeably practiced as a natural characteristic of a bicultural system as the first and third opinion pools suggested, the degrees are usually or still conferred by single university within which tradition the student originally enrolled. Their feasibilities and challenges would be more conspicuous (perhaps providing a different picture) if they are formalized and established to be conferred by the several Universities involved. Also it boiled down to the fact that the feasibilities of formal joint degrees were hampered by several technical differences from the French and Anglo-Saxon traditions, viewing that within one national system which supposedly required fluid mobility, arguments one and three were limited to programmes and levels.

6.9 The Case Study and Global Higher Education Harmonisation - Conceptual Similarities

Following the conceptual framework of the current global harmonization in higher education, as articulated in chapter two, it would be germane to examine how the case study experience would conceptually relate to the global phenomenon, from the point of view of certain practical rationales and challenges. In the entire situation, the involvement of different educational traditions may not be overemphasized. This places the centrality of the concept of “diversity” which triggers the harmonisation process and also constitutes its greatest challenges. Thus, from the perspective of the tradition and cultures in higher education harmonisation, the concept remains the same, irrespective of the context, scope and scale that characterize the current initiatives. In Cameroon, the reduction of such diversities has been central for the sake consistency and coherency, comparability, mobility and readability between the French and English inherited higher education traditions

Harmonisation emerged in Cameroon educational system as a strategy to facilitate the coexistence of two systems of HE and also accompanying the broad rationale for national integration and cohesion. Given the political fragmentation upon the reunification of the British and French Cameroons in 1972, national cohesion became a premodial objective. Reunification had brought together two cultures which were driven apart by language, legal practices, systems of education in all its forms and practices (Tchombe 2001, 12). The national education Law No 98/004 of 14th 1998, reaffirms the option of “biculturalism” in which strategy the system is organized into the English-speaking and French sub-system. The law reemphasizes the necessity for the strong coexistence between the two systems but specifies the notion of “each preserving its specific method of evaluation and award of certificates”. Harmonisation in Cameroon therefore became a valuable strategy to ensure the coexistence of the two subsystems by reconciling some of their divergences or, as an instrument accompanying the national policies of ‘biculturalism’ or ‘bilingualism’. It was equally deemed as a way of engaging higher education or the universities in the unification process.

Irrespective of other sociopolitical and economic and cultural undertones that may be associated with various objectives for HE harmonisation, most harmonization ventures would find convergence on the practical perspective for which they are geared. For instance, its basic pragmatic purposes have been to facilitate cooperation and functioning between systems. In Cameroon, it also grew out of practical necessity; to facilitate coordination, horizontal and vertical mobility and credit transfer between the French and English university subsystems which appeared to be impeded by diversities in their structures, procedures, programme contents and steering mechanisms. The differences in those two university traditions triggered the constant need for trust, transparency, readability between the structures and mechanisms. Also, in a higher education system like Cameroon’s with two systems’ foundations, traditions and (degree) structures, potential employers are hardly in position to make valid comparisons. There has been a need to render both systems’ (degree) structures in Cameroon comparable and readable to employers and various knowledge users and connecting their intellectual strengths to employment.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Following the research items or sub-topics in chapter four, this chapter presents a stocktaking analysis of the findings on the harmonisation case study. The research questions of the thesis had been to find out how the cultural diversities in the French and Anglo-Saxon traditions of higher education affect their harmonisation in the national system. Secondly, the study was also going to investigate the rationale of the joint or separate policies in the system. Based on the two questions, certain conclusions and suggestions emerged as follows:

7.1 Analysis of the findings and suggestions

The discussions on systems' structures pointed to the resilience of traditional autonomous structures (as per their foundations) to structural adjustments that leads to their integration within a unified framework. The inclusion of the traditional French establishments (schools, centers, institutes) in a new unified university system in Cameroon revealed differences on the steering perceptions leading to identity and authority conflicts as reflected on interpretations on issues such as vote holding, accountability, and various aspects of operations. Following the emergence of the new system's structure from the 1993 reforms, the study pointed to the tendency of the unified university perceiving a stronger institutional autonomy for the whole university with regards to outside trends and institutions, whereas the traditional French notion favoured the autonomy of the faculty establishments vis-à-vis the entire university.

Systems steering of the two subsystems revealed the challenge of possessing policy makers or administrators with both cultural experiences. Different bottom up policies were said to meet with mono-cultural experiences at the system level or top-down or across the board policies contradicting or meeting with bottom resistance. The above challenges suggest that harmonized or integrated systems require policy makers with multicultural experiences in the traditions of the systems involved. The study also led to the assertion that the bottom heaviness of HE systems, traditions differences and foundations limit the range of policy issues that have to be coordinated at integrated policy levels or the top.

The existence of the French and Anglo-Saxon subsystems in Cameroon conveyed their simultaneous linguistic implications through its accompanying bilingual university pattern. Higher Education integration and harmonisation would always seem to imply integration, cooperation and

interaction of participants from diverse horizons and languages with which the cultural diversities of the higher education systems have traditionally been identified. Under such circumstance, the use of extra or additional languages becomes a phenomenon leading to a new bilingual or multi character of universities. As systems integrate in the 21st Century, universities becoming more bilingual or multilingual, there would seem to be the indispensability of university systems addressing issues stemming from new linguistic and cultural characters of universities on the teaching-learning process considering that it has traditionally taken place within specific sociological frameworks with respective cultures. The study suggested one of the greatest impending difficulties to such integration and cooperation ventures being that of finding common and satisfactory media of instruction and communication that respond to the educational goals of the diverse participants. It raised the very difficult task of maintaining language balance and dealing with the cultural issues that stem from the use of additional languages. Also, there would be the need for proper attention to the economic and logistic implications of the use of additional languages considering that bilingual education require addition budget packages and its policies difficult to maintain.

The Cameroonian context indicated that the indiscriminate use of a second or extra language of instruction in higher education is characterized by several impediments. Such limitations include: their inefficiencies in knowledge transmission and acquisition, problems of access to certain institutions and programmes (and by implication strategic limitation to certain professions), arbitrary evaluations and assessments, wrong comprehension and translations. In such a bicultural model of higher education, as would obtain even in multicultural settings, language could become a unifying factor as an outcome of the interactions of the participants but only to the extent to which it satisfies the parties involved. It is tantamount to constitute a divisive factor when it is incapable of meeting such basic educational objectives of the parties involved. The findings point to the impending necessity of integrated or harmonised system paying attention to language planning and examination of relevant cultural issues.

The current situation in the case study suggest the necessity for the Cameroon government adopting a series of measures to ensure language balance in the system which may include: 1) Increasing the number of English- speaking universities to respond to the educational needs of the almost 85% of Anglophone high school graduates and the increasing number of Francophones who may not be admitted to the University of Buea due to its limited capacity. 2) Broadening the infrastructures and

programmes capacities of the existing English-speaking universities. This seems to be in progress, viewing the recent creation of the Faculty of Medicine and the impending Faculty of Technology at UB. 3) Increasing the number of English taught programmes in the other five universities especially in the attractive business, marketable and professional ones. 4) Strengthen the emerging private universities with English-taught programmes. 5) Strengthen bilingual capacity-building and second language intensive programmes for the university teaching staff and students.

Despite the controversies and resistances that surrounded the harmonisation of the degree structures in Cameroon, it was interesting to note that the three cycle degree sequences termed 'Système LMD', corresponding to the Bachelor, Master and Ph.D, has finally been adopted in Cameroon, and would be operational from 2008 (MINESUP, 2006). The recent reforms lead to the conclusion that they have been driven more by global than national trends. However, such reforms would seem to be of greater significance in addressing the national concerns on degree readability, comparability and mobility between the university traditions. The findings point to the fact that the existing system of equivalences which seemed to be the sole harmonisation strategy for degree structures was however, marred by several limitations. Amongst some of its vagaries were: the lack of qualification equivalence across the two university systems, lack of systematic and consistent criteria in the establishment of equivalences, inconsistencies in maintaining equivalences, arbitrariness stemming from wrong approximations, poor translations and interpretation of degrees. Such limitations also rendered the mastery of the equivalence difficult to employers and various stakeholders. The new simplified structure termed "Système LMD" being adopted in most of Francophone Africa within which Cameroon also responds to regional concerns for mobility, comparability and readability and various HE quality requirements. This is because most of African systems of higher education have traditionally identified with the British and French linguistic and cultural entities.

In the study, most of the difficulties that were said to be encountered on harmonisation of teachers' qualifications in the higher education corps correlated to those in the harmonisation of degree structures. The challenge correlations suggest that harmonized degree structures should respond in future, to other national and global concerns on the shortcomings of the various methods of equivalences that have traditionally been employed for teaching recruitments in most systems. This is because since teaching recruitments into most higher education systems have been dominantly expert-driven, most university systems have traditionally had to employ various methods on their

harmonisation. As such there would seem to be the high probability that the discrepancies of the various methods of equivalence would be limited with the adoption of more comparable degree structures at national and global levels. A case in point was the difficulties in arriving at the equivalence of terminal degrees between the two dominant French and British systems in the case study which should be resolved with the advent of more comparable and readable degree structures.

Following the drive towards harmonisation of degree structures, some of its outstanding challenges could also be observed in the case study which may include integrating, translating or equating previous intermediary French qualifications in Cameroon into the new and simpler structure since all equivalences did not exist for both subsystems and viewing that their holders cannot be recycled. Other concerns being raised in relation to the bicultural system which reflect similar challenges in the global context. The challenges center around the capacity of the simplified (Système LMD or BMD) degree structure responding to the diversities of higher education needs some of which seemed to have been leading or responded to by the diversity of qualifications which existed in the French tradition. There are debates as to how certification demands of drop outs can be fairly responded to in the simplified degree structures considering economic circumstances that may determine the successful completion of a degree programme. Certain schools of thought still hold that the French intermediary qualifications like DEUG, Maîtrise, and Doc de 3eme C were likely to respond to such circumstances. Similarly, scholars in Europe have questioned the capacity of the simple or harmonised qualification structures responding to the diverse issues, needs, student population, learners and professional exigencies with phenomena like adult or lifelong learning that characterize the current higher education landscape (Froment, 2003; van der Wende, 2003). There still remain arguments as to how degree programmes like 'Nursing' whose professional nature require sufficient course and clinical sessions, would be compressed to fit within the three year duration as any ordinary degree programme. The above issue professional exigencies challenge the harmonized structures' capacity for flexibility and compatibility. van der Wende (2003) opines that such challenges still call for more sophisticated credit transfer systems.

The final adoption of a common degree structure in the case study along the existing pattern in the Anglophone university subsystem signals the necessity for repackaging the contents or syllabuses of the former Francophone university degree structure along the simpler degree sequences. There would seem to be the necessity for adjustments in the internal structures, weighting systems and related practices that lead to the qualifications. The study revealed that problems of readability and

comparability in the degree structures correlated with or stemmed from similar challenges in the two grading systems. Such discrepancies suggest commensurate reforms in internal structural processes that lead to the qualifications. The diversities in the two grading systems pointed to inexplicable and unjustifiable inequalities stemming from inconvertibility which consequently hinder horizontal and vertical mobility, transferability and portability of workloads. It presented similar problems stemming from equivalence or approximation challenges between the two grading systems. Such limitations may imply the absolute necessity for adoption of a unified grading system to render the workloads of the two university traditions in Cameroon, more comparable. A more comparable grading system should facilitate appraisal of students' academic profiles and lead to greater transparency between the university traditions. It should limit the mutual suspicion that surround the 'Module' (Average) system and the 'semester course credit system' of the Francophone and Anglo-Saxon university systems that were pointed out in the case study. Such comparable workloads could be mirrored and adapted from the British and French implementation of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) as their common mobility currency since they owe the origins of the Cameroonian degree structures. However, as much as there seem to be the dire need for more comparable or unified grading systems, some scholars caution the likelihood that an introduction of a unified grading system and its uniform application is tantamount to infringe on academic freedom (Karran 2005, 13). This perspective holds that grading and assessment should take account of certain fundamental academic freedoms that pertain to the course master. Similarly the adoption of the "Système LMD" and commensurate common grading frameworks in Francophone Africa would solve the problems that stem from the different French and British grading systems on higher education in Africa as well as facilitate quality assurance from a regional perspective.

The findings also revealed the significance of system's pre-university differences in curricular cultures on achievements in certain degree programmes, irrespective of other factors. This could be evident from the differences in levels of achievements in certain university programmes which depended on the systems' differences in breadth and emphasis in certain disciplines at pre-university levels. The group and single subject ranges of the BAC and GCE respectively were particularly significant to the differences in students' achievements in certain disciplines. The students from the respective systems were said to carry over different learning, methodological practices and approaches as well as content into the university. The two student groups were characteristically known to portray identical differences in the mastery of particular disciplines. For

instance, Francophone students in the (Anglo-Saxon) University of Buea were said to be more proficient in the physical and mathematical sciences and related programmes, irrespective of the difficulties they were assumed to face in the use of second language. Such differences were attributed to the inputs they received from the high school. The above suggested that as international cooperation and integration in higher education gains prominence, systems' pre-university cultural or curricular backgrounds in certain academic programmes are of particular significance to the teaching-learning process especially with the growth of joint degrees, exchange and various programmes of multicultural character.

In the case study, differences in the British and French systems seemed to be less significant on research collaboration. This was attributed to the self directed nature of research work and the fact that its collaboration was seen to be driven to a greater extent, by expert or subject orientation which renders other factors irrelevant. As such, the academics or researchers from the two subsystems did not find a lot of difficulties of interaction and impediments to the conduct of research work that based on the systems' structural, organizational and linguistic differences. Apart of previous challenges in the establishments of equivalences, the current standard or across the board criteria in the teaching recruitment and promotion policies in Cameroon seem to suggest that the French and British system's differences are less significant on their harmonisation and the educational processes.

7.2 Contending Forces around Higher Education Harmonisation

Based on the case study experiences and issues on global higher education integration, it can be contended that HE harmonisation is surrounded by various complexities that would characteristically impact on its agreements and limits such as 1) "cultural diversity" which naturally challenges "integration" that drives the processes 2) "homogenisation skepticism" or "cultural protectionism" and 3) "differentiation" which is necessitated by the cultural diversities and needs of higher education.

Diversity stems from the differences in sources, beliefs, traditions and cultures from which systems and their respective structures and mechanisms have been conceived. Clark (1983, 95) highlighted the fact that HE beliefs, structures and cultures have traditionally had their principal attachment to the national system as a whole. National systems of HE have been traditionally determined by their

social foundations and so turn to be expressions of the specific social agreements and historical contexts within which they are conceived. Papatsiba (2006, 93), attributes such complexities in the European case (the Bologna Process) to the independent nature by which each higher education systems in Europe have traditionally developed. Above all, the higher education as per Foulong (2005) is one of the most conservative sectors. As per Holta (1995), it has usually been a “national infrastructure”. In certain cases, an arm of the government and vehicle of national cultures, inheritance, identity and development. As much as there are different systems of HE, so do curricular and pedagogic practices.

In analyzing the recent harmonisation reforms in Europe, some scholars (Musselin, 2005; Papatsiba, 2006) seem to unanimously agree on the simple logic that reforms do not take place in a vacuum but against the background of inherited traditions. The scholars attribute the uneven nature of the implementation of the Bologna Process reforms to the resilience of the national higher education cultures and structures. Papatsiba (2006, 94) refers to Tauch who indicates through some national case studies that the implementation of the Bologna Process in Europe has been faster in certain countries where it concentrated on matters deemed particularly urgent from a national perspective (the national interest). Such diversity-related issues become compounded when considering the logic as per Musselin hypothesis that ‘converging solutions and orientations’ to which harmonisation ventures are geared are ‘supposed to answer similar problems’.

Due to systems’ perceptual differences harmonization also becomes highly susceptible to cultural protectionism which characterise the traditional conservatism in HE and thus exacerbating its diversity-related challenges. In the context of the case study, French and British educational traditions almost conveys French and British presence, identity, cultures, traditions and post-colonial cooperation such that their harmonisation was said to be at times, seen to be tantamount to the disappearance of some of the systems’ elements. There are also homogenization skeptics who become sensitive on the likelihood of homogenization of content, export of policy and management discourse or the consequences of macdonaldisation or academic colonization (Beerkens 2004, 24). The harmonisation situation in Cameroon was not uniformisation but there was the tendency that the Anglophones usually saw this attempt as a process of assimilation (Tchombe 2001, 20). On the other-hand, certain aspects of the Anglo-Saxon HE traditions in the case study which could be perceived to be more advantageous and facilitative to the system seemed to have been usually impeded by cultural protectionism, developing sometimes into ‘Anglophobia’, (the fear of being

overshadowed by the minority tradition) and consequently distorting objectivity. A case in point is the two cycle degree structure, système LMD' (Licence, Mastère, Doctorat) being adopted today following international pressures whose debates dragged on with resistance since the 1970s in the country. There are also situations where traditions that pertain to the majority can be interpreted or imposed as being the quality.

There also emerges, another school of thought which advocates differentiation either for its own sake or within the harmonized framework. This situation challenges the extent to which convergence should be affected, limit of the convergence and the extent of differentiation as well. Froment (2003) cautioned in the European situation that as long as the tendencies favoured convergence towards a unified architecture of HE, it was not necessary to go too far in reducing the diversity. This notion is based on the need to respond to the diverse issues and learners that characterize the current higher education landscape. Divergences in educational processes also compound the complexities of harmonization. For instance, harmonization of degree structures and credit system inevitably implies to some of its parties, the repackaging of contents and curricular as well as readjustment in the teaching learning process.

7.3 Perspectives

Despite the causal relationship between higher education integration and harmonization, the case study suggest that in its practice HE harmonisation would seldom be effective if it is conceived from narrow definitions or interpretations. The complexities and bottom heaviness of higher education, as well as the differences in foundations and traditions limit the extent to which harmonisation can be accomplished and the number of such issues. HE harmonization would seem to necessitate greater and broader holistic approaches, which take into consideration systems' cultural, foundation differences and also the need for agreements between top layer reforms and bottom educational practices or goals.

The case study pointed to a frame of mutually-reinforcing policy options or various angles from which harmonisation was arrived at in the Cameroonian context, depending on the functions they were to serve and how the options responded to the educational processes and goals in the subsystems and the entire system. In some aspects, it involved establishing parallel equivalences for both subsystems, comparability being the paramount objective. This was depicted in the

equivalence of the two degree structures and grading systems. In other aspects, it actually involved deliberate differentiation: differentiating or keeping certain aspects and structures of the systems separate to reflect their inherent diversities, specificities and foundations of the subsystems, educational coherence being the main goal. The example with content, curricular and certain pedagogic issues suggested. In certain areas, uniform or across-the-board criteria were combined with a system of equivalence. The recruitment and promotion criteria in the teaching corps provided such evidences. The fourth facet comprised of cross-substitution: where elements, structures or aspects that are deemed to facilitate the functioning of the system within both subsystems are transferred from one university tradition to the other. It is a characteristic of such bicultural system that what is perceived to be genuine in one tradition could be applied on another university system

Following the complexities which surround higher education harmonisation, its various entities or participants would usually have to arrive at their definitions with respect to the common interest of the parties involved. As concerns the European higher education integration initiatives, certain opinions hold that harmonisation should entail identifying common elements of unity, with the spirit coming from the systems itself (Froment 2003, 30). Similarly, a conclusive stage seemed to have been arrived at in Cameroon that there cannot be total harmonization in higher education due to cultural incompatibilities in the inherited educational traditions and the need for educational coherency within the subsystems. The harmonization has to a greater extent been limited to, or succeeded more in structural issues. HE harmonization then becomes a marriage of systems' convenience, or 'unity in diversity', based on how it serves the joint purposes for which it is geared and equally agree with systems' basic objectives and educational processes. Systems' specific cultural characteristics or their "symbolic sides" would inform effective policies on higher education harmonisation on their limits and extent of educational adaptability.

References

- Abelson, M. (2005). A Europe of Knowledge and the Civic Mission of the Universities. Paper presented at the Third Conference on Knowledge and Politics, University of Bergen, 18-20 May.
- ADEA/WGHE (1999). Reforming a National System of Higher Education: The case of Cameroon. World Bank, Washington DC.
- Amaral, A., Magalhães, A. (2002). The emergent Role of External Stakeholders in European Higher Education Governance", in Alberto Amaral, Glen Jones and Berit Karseth (eds.), *Governing Higher Education: National Perspectives and Institutional Governance.*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers..
- Amaral, A, Jones, G. & Karseth, B. (eds.) (2002). *Governing Higher Education: National Perspectives and Institutional Governance.*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Ankar, O (2000). University Education in a Bilingual Country: The Case of Finland. *Higher Education in Europe*, 25 (4), 499-506.
- Arrow, Kenneth J, (1973). Higher education as a filter. *Journal of Public Economics*, 2 (3), pages 193-216.
- Baker, C. (1993). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism*. Clevedon, Avon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- Barrow, C. W. (2003). Globalization, trade liberalization, and the higher education industry. In S. Aronowitz & H. Gautney (Eds.), *Implicating empire: Globalization & resistance in the 21st century world*. New York: Basic Books, 229-254.
- Becker, G. (1994). *Human Capital: A theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with special reference to Education*. 3rd Edition. New York. Columbia University Press for National bureau of Economic Research.
- Beekens, E. (2004) Ch.2 'Globalization And Higher Education, Global Opportunities and Institutional Embeddedness'. *Higher Education Consortia in Europe and South East Asia* ss 7-28,261-274,CHEPS.
- Ben-David, J, (1977). *Centers of Learning: Britain, France, Germany, United States*. An Essay prepared for the Carnegie Foundation on Higher Education, New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Bogdan, R.C. & Biklen, S.K. (1992). *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods*, 2nd Ed, Allyn and Bacon.
- Bryman, A. (2004). *Social Research Method.*, 2nd Ed, Oxford University Press.
- Canton, E. & Venniker, R. (2001). Economics of higher education. In *Higher Education Reform: Getting the Incentives Right*. Enschede: CHEPS, 35-51.
- Corbett, A. (2004) The forces for the creation of international relationships between universities and the Bologna Process. Paper presented at the First international Eurodocs conference, Paris, 24-26 June. Available online at <http://eurodocs.sciences-po.fr/en/conference/2004/anne-corbett>.
- Castells, M. (2001). Universities as dynamic systems of contradictory functions. In Johan Muller, Nico Cloete and Shiren Badat (eds). *Challenges of Globalisation*. South African Debates with Manuel Castells, Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 206-224.

Castells, M. (2000). *The Rise of Network Society*. Blackwell Publishing Limited.

Clark, Burton. (1983). *The Higher education system: academic organization in cross-national perspective* Berkeley:University of California Press.

De Boer, H & Goedegebuure. (2003). *New Rules of the Game? Reflections on Governance, Management and System Change*. In File, J. (ed.) *Real-Time Systems. Reflections on Higher Education in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia*, 209-231.

Echu, G (2004). *The Language Question in Cameroon*. *Linguistik online* 18, 1/04, Available at http://www.linguistik-online.de/18_04/echu.html

Enders J. & et al. (2003). *Higher Education Policy Formulation: A framework for Case Analysis*. Paper prepared for the *CHER 16TH annual conference "Reform and Change in Higher Education: Renewed Expectations and Improved Performance?"* Porto 4-6 September 2003.

ENQA. (2005). "The United Kingdom: Quality Convergence Studies" ENQA available at <http://www.enqa.eu/files/UK%20self-evaluation%20document.pdf>

EURIDICE (2000). *Two Decades of Reforms in Higher Education: 1980s Onwards: France, National Description*. Eurydice, European Unit. Available at www.euridice.org.

Fox, R. & Weisz, G. (1980). *Introduction: The institutional basis of French science in the nineteenth century* in R. Fox and George Weisz (eds): *The organization of science and technology in France 1808-1914*, 1980: Cambridge University Press, 1-28.

Froment, E (2003). *The European Higher Education Area: A new Framework for the Development of Higher Education*. *Higher Education in Europe*, 28 (1), 27-31.

Furlong, P. (2005). *The British Higher Education and the implementation of the Bologna Process: an Interim assessment*. *Politics* 25 (1) 53-61.

Gornitzka, Å. (1999). *Governmental Policies and Organisational Change*. *Higher Education* 38, 5-29.

Gornitzka, Å., Kyvik S., & Stensaker B. (2005). *Implementation analysis in higher education*. In Å. Gornitzka, M. Kogan, & A. Amaral (eds.) *Reform and Change in Higher Education – Analyzing Policy Implementation*. Springer, 35-56.

Gornitzka Å & Maassen, P. (2000). *Hybrid Steering Approaches with Respect to European Higher Education*. *Higher Education Policy* 13, 267-285.

Holttä, S. (1995). *Problems and Challenges to African Universities in the 1990s*. in Kokkala, H. (ed) *1995 Education Pays Off*. Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Hornby, W. (2003). *Assessing Using Grade-Related Criteria. A Simple Currency for Universities. Assessment and Evaluation, Higher Education in Europe*, 28 (4), 435-453.

IAU (2004). *Cameroon - Education system*. <http://www.unesco.org/iau/onlinedatabases/index.html>

Jallade, J-P. (1992). *Undergraduate Higher Education in Europe. Towards a comparative perspective*. *European Journal of Education* 27, 121-144.

Kalvermark, T. & van Der Wende, M. (1997). National Policies for Internationalisation of Higher Education in Europe (Stockholm, National Agency for Higher Education).

Karran, T. (2005). Pan European Grading Scales: Lessons from National System and the ECTS. Higher Education in Europe 30 (1), 5-22.

Kyvik, S. (2004). Structural Changes in Higher Education Systems in Western Europe. In Higher Education in Europe 29 (3), 393-409.

Maassen, P. & Cloete, N. (2002). Global Reform Trends in Higher Education. In Nico Cloete et al (eds.) The Transformation of Higher Education. Global Pressures and Local Responses in South Africa.' Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 13-58.

Maassen, P. (2003). Shifts in governance arrangements: An interpretation of the introduction of new management structures in higher education.' In Amaral, A., Meek, L. and Larsen, I.M. (eds.) The Higher Education Managerial Revolution? Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 31-55.

Maassen, P. and van Vught, F. (1994). Alternative Models of Governmental Steering in Higher Education. An Analysis of Governmental Steering Models and Policy Instruments in Five Countries. In Goedegebuure, L. & van Vught, F. (eds). Comparative Policy Studies in Higher Education. Utrecht-LEMMA, 35-63.

Marginson, S. & van der Wende, M. (2006) Globalization and Higher Education. Paris: OECD/CERI.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. (2006). Designing Qualitative Research 4th (ed). SAGE Publications.

Martin, A. (1997). Report on the Demand for Primary Education in Cameroon, 1980-1995. World Bank Study.

Musselin, C. (2005). Change or Continuity in Higher Education Governance. Lessons Drawn from Twenty Years of National Reforms in European Countries' in (Ed) Bleiklie, Ivar and Henkel M. Governing Knowledge: A study of Continuity and Change in Higher Education. A Festschrift in Honour of Maurice Kogan, 63-79.

Neave, G. (1998). The Evaluative State Reconsidered. European Journal of Education 33, 265-284.

Neave, G (2003). The Bologna Declaration: Some Historic Dilemmas posed by the reconstruction of the Community of in Europe's systems of higher education. Educational Policy, 17 (1), 141-164.

Ngoh, V, J (1987). Cameroon 1884-1985. A hundred Years of History. Navy Group Publication.

Ngwana, T.A (2002). The implementation of the 1993 Higher Education Reforms in Cameroon: Issues and Promises. Case study. Available at www.chet.org.za/papers.asp .

Njeuma, D. et al, (2003). African Higher Education: An International Reference Handbook (Damtew Teferra and Philip. G. Altbach, eds., Indiana University Press, 2003), pp. 215-223 available at http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe/inhea/profiles/Cameroon.htm

Njikong, S. (2004). Official Bilingualism in Cameroon: A Double-Edged Sword. Alizés No. 19. Available at <http://www2.univ-reunion.fr>

OECD (2006). Higher Education in Changing World. By Barbara Ischinger, Directorate of Education, In Observer, No.5.

- Osborne, D and Gaebler, T. (1992). *Reinventing Government*. Reading MA: Addison- Wesley.
- Papatsiba, V. (2006). Making Higher Education more attractive through student mobility? Revisiting EU initiatives in the context of the Bologna Process. *Comparative Education* Vol. 42, 93-111.
- Peters, B. Guy (2001). *Changing States, Governance, and the Public Service*. In: B. Guy Peters, *The Future of Governing*, 2nd Edition. Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1-23.
- Peters, B.G (1999) *Institutional Theory: The New Institutionalism*. London: Continuum.
- Pressman, J.L. & Wildavsky, A. (1973). *Implementation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Purser, L. (2000). *The Bilingual University*. *Higher Education in Europe*, vol XXV No.4.
- Scott, P. (1995). 'Unified and Binary systems of Higher Education in Europe'. In Burgen, A ed. *Goals and purposes of Higher Education in the 21st century*. London. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, pp 37-54.
- Rothblatt, S. (1993). 'The limbs of Osiris: liberal education in the English-speaking world' in S.Rothblatt and B. Wittrock (eds): *The European and American university since 1800, 1993*: Cambridge University Press, 19-73.
- Silverman, D (1993) *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analyzing Talk, Texts, Interactions*, London, SAGE Publications.
- Sullivan, K. (2002). Credit and Grade Transfer with the European Socrates Programme: Unity in Diversity or Head in Sand. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education in Europe*, 27 (1) 65-74.
- Tchombe, T.M. (2001). *Structural Reforms in Education in Cameroon*. Unpublished policy paper.
- Teichler, U. (1998). The changing roles of the University and Non University sectors of Higher Education in Europe. *European review* 6, 475-487.
- UNESCO, (1995) *Report on the State of Education in Africa: Education Strategies for the 1990's: Orientation and Achievements*. UNESCO.
- UNESCO, (1995). *Report on the State of Education in Africa, Strategies for the 1990s: Orientations*.
- van der Wende, M. (2000). The Bologna Declaration: Enhancing the Transparency and Competitiveness of European Higher Education. *Higher Education in Europe*, 25 (3), 305-310.
- Weiss, A. (1995). Human Capital vs Signalling Explanation of Wages. *Journal of Economic perspectives*. A journal of American Economic Association 9 (4), 133-155.
- Witte, J. (2006). *Change of Degrees and Degrees of Change*. PhD dissertation. Enchede: CHEPS.

Official Texts and Reports

Arrêté No.03/0050/MINESUP/DDES of 30 July 2003 stipulating recruitment and promotion criteria for the Higher Education Teaching Corps in Cameroon.

Arrête No 99/055/MINESUP/DDES of 16 November 1999 stipulating conditions for the organization of teaching programmes and Evaluation in the Cameroonian State University.

Arrête No.06/055/MINESUP/DDES of 23 January 1998 organizing the teaching and evaluation of programmes in the Faculties of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences at the University of Yaounde I, Cameroon

Berlin Communiqué (2003) 'Realising the European Higher Education Area, Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education in Berlin on 19 September 2003.

Decree No.92/074 of 13 April 1992 Transforming the University Centres of Buea and Ngoundere into State Universities.

Decree No.93/026 of 19 January 1993 Creating the State Universities in Cameroon.

Decree No.93/034 of 19 January 1993 to organise the University of Buea.

Decree No. 2005/383 of 17 October 2005 to define guidelines on financial management of the Cameroonian State Universities.

Decree No. 93/027 of 19 January 1993 providing common guidelines on the operations of the States in Cameroon

Libreville Communiqué (2005) "Declaration on the Creation of Heads of State of the CEMAC Zone on the creation of a Research, Higher and Profession Education Area' 11 February 2005.

Ministerial Circular No. 05/0005 of 17 October on the functioning of the state universities in Cameroon

Ministerial Order No.02/0149/MINESUP of 28 November 2002 to define regulations governing the award of degrees in the Faculties of the University.

Resolutions of the First Council of Higher Education, Scientific and Technical Research, 1974, Cameroon

University of Buea Syllabuses (2003).

2003 Statistical Yearbook of Higher Education in Cameroon, MINESUP, Cameroon

2004 Statistical Yearbook of Higher Education in Cameroon, MINESUP, Cameroon

Official Website of the Cameroon Ministry of Higher Education: www.minesup.gov.cm

TITLE: Harmonization Challenges in Higher Education: Case of the French and British Bicultural System in Cameroon.

Introduction: *Due to its French & British colonial backgrounds, Cameroon runs a bicultural educational system. The French & British HE/University traditions are run in a single national system.* This interview seeks to identify how the use of the 2 traditions⁹ affects coordination consistency and quality in the HE system, which elements are mostly affected and their strengths. **Please, relate responses to reasons for certain policy options, documents, difficulties, advantages & complementarities.**

A: System (structural) issues

1. What in your opinion is the structure of the HES in Cameroon? Degree of Institutional convergence/divergences/hierarchies.
 - b. What purposes does inclusiveness, exclusiveness or stratification serve the system? How adapted are the institutions to the various missions and purpose of HE in Cameroon?(as institutions for TRS or specific purpose)
2. Before, most professional Schools in Cameroon existed almost as independent HEI, what was the purpose for including them in the university structure as per the 1993 reforms?
 - b. How has their autonomy or identity been affect/maintained? What advantages or difficulties do they currently pose to university coordination?
3. How does the system's structures & coordination reflect the use of bicultural HE traditions? a. What difficulties do the tradition differences pose to system coordination & QA?
4. What are the differences in university steering mechanisms & structures within the 2 traditions of HE? Which of the structures are more favorable for institutional autonomy? How does it impact on system coordination?
5. What structures exist for institutional and programmes quality assurance. What differences exist in the QA mechanism within the 2 universities traditions? What difficulties do they face in relation to the double tradition?

B. Language

6. What challenges does the use of two languages (bilingualism) pose to system coordination and the teaching learning process?
7. One of the reasons for creating the UB was to solve "the problem of language imbalance". Do you think this problem has been solved?
 - b. How objectively balanced is the language situation. How was this problem manifested in the system? How has it changed or is still being manifested today?
8. How are lecturers and students affected by the use of two languages or second language? What are curricular, methodological implications of bilingualism? How does the use of second language affect student performance and access to HE?

C: Degree structure:

9. What are the current equivalences of the Francophone & Anglo Saxon university degrees? What criteria have been used for the equivalences?

10. What changes have preceded the current degree structure as far as you can remember? What were the difficulties of harmonization? How have the inconsistencies been resolved in the new structure?

11. How may an adoption of one degree structure and credit system for e.g. following the Bologna model of BMD degree structure facilitate coordination of such issues in Cameroon and with what challenges?

12. The harmonization of degree structure and credit constitutes some of the main issues in the Bologna Process. b. Is there any relationship between the recent measures on degree structure (LMD) in Cameroon & the B.P?

D: Recruitment Qualifications and Promotion policies

13. Also, certain equivalences exist for academic ranks, recruitment qualifications across the English and French traditions. What are these equivalences and criteria. What were/are the arguments for establishing these equivalences?

14. What have been the difficulties posed by teachers qualifications from the French and Anglo Saxon Background and in which areas to the integration or harmonization of the system. Where and how do background differences exist in the recruitment and promotion policies.

15 How objectively balanced/harmonized are recruitment and promotion criteria?

16. What are the emerging issues from CCIU which could be attributed to the existence of the 2 traditions, background qualifications e.g. Research intensive and academic and applied degrees?

17. Do you find any differences in terms of the functions of teachers of equivalent ranks from the two traditions? (Teaching load, level of supervision and other functions?)

E: Student Workloads (Credit Transfer, Grading system & Evaluation)

18. The 1993 University reforms adopted a Semester Course Credit Systems. What accounts for the adoption? How successful has its implementation been since then?

19. UB syllabus adopts the conversion rate of 3 credits = 1 “unites de valeur”. How has that been arrived at?

20. There seems to be some established equivalence for the G.P.A and Average systems of Evaluation o across the English & French traditions. How comparable are they?

21. What is the degree of credit portability/ Transferability or cumulateness from one tradition to the other? How possible is it that a student from a francophone university can transfer from the same level to the same/ next level/ semester to UB and vice versa.

22. It seems very few Licence graduates are hardly eligible for admission to the PGDE, M.A/Sc of UB (without proof of further competence/skills) .

a. What accounts for the low grades or discrepancies?

b. How connected is the situation to biculturalism and use of language? Weighting? Selection procedures? Added advantage in monocultural/lingual system? Content differences? Inconvertibility?

23. How related are the difficulties to the teaching, learning and grading regimes? Is it obvious that the Licence graduates would perform poorly if the requirement is unequally stepped down?

24. Does the above situation confirm the hypothesis that “students in mono cultural/lingual universities, perform better? What advantage has the UB graduates in the above grading situation?

F: Admission backgrounds

25. What are the impacts of the different secondary school backgrounds/system to the teaching learning-learning process? (Especially in a mixed Francophone-Anglophone degree programme)

G: Curriculum Standardisation

26. What are the methodological and curricular implications of the double backgrounds?

27. How similar are the university programmes in terms of content and structures? What difficulties is the student going to face?

28. How are credits, contents & structures standardized within the system to ensure similar achievements or skills across the traditions? What difficulties do the standardization processes face? (Policies & reforms)

29. What are the difficulties and advantages of the use of double HE traditions to national curriculum design?

H: Interuniversity Cooperation (Joint Degree and Research

30. How possible is it that the UB & the other universities can teach and award a joint degree? What difficulties would be faced by the students, the lecturers or coordinator of such programmes in relation to the 2 traditions?

31. Much research work has been carried out by mixed groups of both Francophones and Anglophone researchers:

a. What difficulties usually emerge in the research coordination or collaboration which are related to backgrounds differences. e.g Language, research cultures and methods.

b. How do the differences affect research productivity and efficiency, publications, editorial work, thesis writing and supervision?

c. How do HE research and editorial policies in Cameroon address background differences?

d. In which areas would the research work be easier and difficult?

Les défis de l'harmonisation dans l'Enseignement Supérieur : Le cas du model biculturel Français et Britannique au Cameroun.

Introduction : *Le Cameroun pratique un système d'éducation biculturel vu qu'il a été colonisé par les Français et les Anglais. Les traditions d'ES Français et à la Britannique se passent dans un seul système national Le présent entretien cherche à déterminer l'impacte de la diversité entre les deux traditions sur la politique d'harmonisation dans l'ES au Cameroun. Veuillez établir les rapports, entre les réponses et raisons pour les options politiques, documents, difficultés, avantages et complémentarités, s'il vous plait*

A: Structure et Gouvernance

1. Quel selon vous, est la structure du SES au Cameroun ? Degré de la convergence / divergence institutionnelles / hiérarchies.
 - b. Quels est l'importance du concept de l'inclusion, l'exclusion ou la stratification pour le système ? Comment sont ces institutions adaptées aux différentes missions et buts de l'ES au Cameroun
2. Avant, la plupart des écoles professionnelles au Cameroun existaient comme Etablissements ES indépendantes ; pourquoi ont-elles été incluses dans la structure universitaire suites aux réformes de 1993 ?
 - b. De quel manière leurs autonomie ou identité a été influencée ou conserver ? Quels avantages ou inconvénients posent – elles aujourd'hui en ce qui concerne la coordination universitaire ?
3. Comment la structure du système et la coordination reflètent l'usage des traditions biculturelles de l'ES ? Quelles difficultés posent les différentes traditions sur coordination du système.
4. Quelles différences existent dans les mécanismes de pilotage universitaires et les structures au sein des 2 traditions de l'ES ? Lesquels de ces structures sont plus favorables à autonomie institutionnelle ?
5. Quelles structures veillent sur l'assurance de la qualité au niveau institutionnel et au niveau de programmes ? Quelles différences existent dans le mécanisme de l'AQ au sein de deux traditions universitaires ? Quelles difficultés rencontrent t-ils vis-à-vis la double tradition ?

B. Langue

6. Quels défis posent l'usage des deux langues (bilinguisme) au système et à l'enseignement ?
7. L'une de raisons à l'origine de la création de l'UB était celle de résoudre « le problème de déséquilibre en matière d'usage de la langue. » Est –ce que ce problème a été résolu, selon vous ?
 - a. Est-ce que la situation de la langue est objectivement équilibrée ? Comment se manifestait ce problème dans le système ? Est –ce que la situation a changé ou comment est elle encore manifestée aujourd'hui ?
8. De quelle façon sont les enseignants et étudiants influencés par l'usage de deux langues ou une deuxième langue ? Quelles sont les implications du bilinguisme au niveau du programme scolaire et de la méthodologie.

C : Structure de diplôme

9. Quelles sont des équivalences actuelles des diplômes francophones et anglo-saxons au Cameroun? Quel critère a été utilisé pour les équivalences ?

10. . Est qu'il y a eu selon vous des changements quelconques avant le présent structure de diplôme ? Quelles difficultés ont été rencontrées au niveau de l'harmonisation ? Comment les inconsistances ont été palliées dans la présente structure ?

11. Comment une adoption d'une même structure de diplôme pourrait faciliter la coordination de telles questions au Cameroun, accompagné de quels défis ?

12. L'harmonisation de structure de diplôme et de crédit est parmi les questions majeures du Processus Bologne. . Est ce qu'il existe un rapport entre les dernières mesures sur la structure du diplôme (LMD) au Cameroun et le PB ?

D : Recrutement, Diplômes et critères de promotion d'enseignants

13. De même certaines équivalences existent pour des grades académiques dans les deux traditions. Quelles sont ces équivalences ? Quels étaient/ sont des arguments en faveur de ces équivalences ?

14. Quelles ont été les difficultés posées par les diplômés des enseignants issus des cultures françaises ou anglo saxonnes au Cameroun ?

15. Comment sont les critères de recrutement et de promotion objectivement équilibrés et harmonisés.

16. Quels sont les questions émergentes de CCIU qui pourraient être attribuées à l'existence de deux traditions, les diplômés issus d'horizons différents ex : des diplômés de recherche, académiques et appliqués ?

17. Est ce qu'il existe selon vous des différences dans les fonctions des enseignants du même grade issus de deux traditions ? (Heures de cours, niveau de supervision et d'autres fonctions ?)

E : Méthode d'évaluation et système de notation

18. Les réformes universitaires de 1993 ont adoptées un Système semestriel des unités de cours capitalisables. (SCCS) Pourquoi ce système a été adopté ? Quel taux de réussite a été enregistré depuis son adoption ?

19. Le programme de UB adopte le taux de conversion de 3 crédits = 1 unités de valeur. » Comment cela a été arrêté ?

20. Il semble exister une équivalence établie pour ces deux systèmes d'évaluation ; G.P.A et Système de Moyenne dans les deux traditions ? Comment peuvent ils être comparés ?

21. Est ce qu'un étudiant d'une université francophone peut s'inscrire à UB dans le même ou prochaine niveau / semestre et vice versa ?

22. Il paraît qu'un très faible nombre de licenciés répondent aux critères d'admission pour les PGDE, M.A/SC de UB pour des raisons diverses ? Qu'est ce qui est à l'origine des faibles notes ou dissemblances ? Comment la situation est elle liée au biculturalisme et l'usage de la langue ? Coefficient ? Procédures de sélection ? Avantage supplémentaire dans un système monoculturel / monolingue ? Les différences de contenu ? Non convertibilité ?

23. Quel est le rapport entre ces difficultés et l'enseignement, l'apprentissage et la notation ? Est-ce que c'est évident que les licenciés vont enregistrer les mauvais résultats si cette condition est tempérée de manière déséquilibrée ?

24. Est-ce que la situation présentée ci-dessus valide l'hypothèse que « les étudiants dans les universités monoculturelles et monolingues peuvent enregistrer une meilleure performance ? Quels avantages ont les diplômés de UB dans ce système de notation ?

F : L'impacte des cultures/ système d'enseignement secondaires

25. Quelles différences pouvez-vous identifier dans les cultures d'étude étudiantes qui facilitent la maîtrise de certaines disciplines et quelles sont leurs implications au niveau du programme d'étude ?

G : Méthodologie et programme d'étude

26. Quelles sont les implications au niveau de la méthodologie et du programme d'étude de double cultures ?

27. Quelles sont les similitudes dans les programmes universitaires en terme de contenu ? Quelles difficultés pourront rencontrer l'étudiant quittant d'un système universitaire à l'autre dans le même programme ?

28. Comment sont standardisés le contenu et la structure des programmes pour l'acquisition des aptitudes semblables dans les deux traditions ? Quelles difficultés rencontrent le processus de standardisation ? (Politiques et réformes) ?

29. Quels sont les avantages et inconvénients de l'usage de double traditions de l'ES à la conception du programme d'étude national ?

H : Coopération académiques (Diplôme Conjointe) et Recherche

30. Est-ce que c'est possible que UB et les autres universités puissent enseigner et conférer un diplôme conjoint ? Quelles difficultés pourront rencontrer les étudiants, les enseignants ou le coordonnateur de tels programmes dans les 2 traditions ?

31. Des groupes des enseignants francophones et anglophones ont fait des travaux de recherche ensemble :

a. Quelles difficultés d'ordre culturel (issus d'horizons différents) se posent au niveau de la coordination de la recherche ou la collaboration.

b. Comment ces différences affectent la productivité et l'efficacité de la recherche, les publications, la rédaction, la supervision des mémoires ?

c. Comment les politiques de recherche et de rédaction de l'ES au Cameroun perçoivent les différences culturelles ? Dans quels domaines le travail de recherche pourrait être facile ou difficile ?