



Investigating the Relevance of Higher Education Assessment Approaches on the Employability of Graduates in Cameroon

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Abstract: The rising unemployment rate across countries in the world have attracted global attention. In the Cameroon context, several measures have been put in place to remedy the situation with results far below expectation. It is for this reason that this study set out to examine the relevance of the Higher Education Assessment Approaches in fostering employability in Cameroon. To achieve this objective, two research questions were formulated to guide the study. The study was carried out in two-state universities of the English-speaking regions of Cameroon. The sample for the study consisted of 300 students and 120 lecturers. Primary Data was collected using close-ended questionnaires and was analysed using regression techniques such as the structural equation modelling (SEM) approach with the maximum likely hood estimation technique. The critical ratio was used to test the significance of the hypothesis and the overall results revealed that, assessment approaches have a significant positive effect on graduate employability from the student's perspective but a significant negative effect from the teacher's perspective. The study recommended that; higher education institutions should improve on the usage of their current assessment approaches as this is vital in enhancing graduate employability in Cameroon.

Keywords: Assessment approaches, employability, Graduates, Higher Education, Relevance.

INTRODUCTION

Employability of graduates is considered a major focus for the global existence of higher education recently (Ponge, 2013). This is because, the higher education institutions in the world today are considered as the bedrock for development and transformation of the societies. One key element in these institutions that is vital for their employability agenda is the assessment approaches of these institutions. The reason is, learners are likely to pay higher attention to what they know will be assessed in the exam and to master it effectively (Saifi et al, 2011). Therefore, the assessment approaches in these institutions is a vital instrument which if properly handled can help higher education institutions achieve their vision of graduate employability

However, this has not been the case especially in the Cameroon Context where the higher education assessment approaches have been criticized for failing to produce graduates that can effectively integrate into the society. According to Mohammadou et al (2016) the assessment approaches used in higher education institutions in Cameroon are dominantly the paper and pen test. This usually takes the form of summative and formative evaluation which were largely captured from indigenous and colonial education (Fokong, 2018). According to Ertmer and Newby (2013) this approach is a passive process that adversely influences learning and can lead to the formation of grades without the formation of skills. Formative assessment occurs continuously throughout the course (Saifi et al, 2011) while summative is at the end of the course or phase of instruction (Boud & Falchiko, 2007).

Gibson and Shaw (2011) observed that, examples of summative assessments include unit tests, exams such as semester exams, final presentations, and thesis. These are dominantly the assessment

approaches used in Cameroon's higher education institutions which according to Guike (2019) do not involve other abilities of the learner. Most students therefore graduate with good grades but little or no skill to demonstrate thereby facing difficulties of transition from school to work (Gronlund, 2006).

The assessment approaches are therefore criticized for leaving out important skills that can contribute to students' employability in the society. The paper and pen tests mostly used in higher education institutions in Cameroon produce graduates with high grades but not high skills (Guike, 2019). This is because, more and more students have continued to focus on marks and not on acquiring employability skills to integrate into society (Carless & Boud, 2018). Therefore, while most employers are looking for skills possessed by the graduates, most graduates are looking for higher grades in schools to present to these employers (Mohee 2019). This has created a gap between graduate training and graduate integration into the labor market. The result of this gap is high level of youth unemployment in the country as a World Bank report (2008) shows that, youth unemployment in Cameroon stood at 12.5% of the population. A good number of these youths are graduates from higher institutions seeking employment opportunities in the society. Prisca (2016) supported that, the unemployment rate in Cameroon among people with Bachelor's degrees is 15.7% and 10.4% for those with master's degrees. Moreover, the growth and employment strategy paper which is a recent policy document guiding higher education in Cameroon stipulate that, youth unemployment reflected 13% of the population while underemployment is at 75.8% in the country. These statistics speaks volume and has far reaching implications for a country like Cameroon which has an agenda of emergence in 2035 coupled with a high youth incline population.

Moreover, several strategies in promoting employability in the country such as the introduction to entrepreneurship, and the three-year emergency youth plan are still to yield the desired results (Oben, 2021). This is because, most graduates from higher education institutions in Cameroon continue to alienate themselves in front of government offices and other enterprises requesting for jobs showing signs of being inadequately prepared for the labour market (Agborbechem, 2016). Other graduates are forced to take up jobs that do not correspond to what they studied in school, travel abroad or just keep waiting for a long time hoping to find a job (Tumbuh, 2020). This clearly shows that, there is a gap between what is assessed in schools during their training and what is expected in the job market in the country as further highlighted by the national development strategy paper (2020) which is the most current developmental plan of the country. It is this gap that provoked the researcher to investigate the relevance of higher education Assessment Approaches in enhancing the employability of graduates in Cameroon as this is the bond of contention and focus of this study. The following research hypothesis was suggested to guide the study:

H1: There is no significant effect of higher education Assessment Approaches on graduate employability in Cameroon from the student's perspective.

H2: There is no significant effect of higher education Assessment Approaches on graduate employability in Cameroon from the teacher's perspective.

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretically, this piece of research work utilises the Howard Gardner's (1983) Theory of intelligence and the Garry Becker's (1964) Human capital theory. The theory of multiple intelligence states that, learners possess multiple intelligences that can be nurtured and strengthened. That is, intelligence is multidimensional and so learners differ in their attributes, knowledge, and skills that can be developed individually or corporately to solve problems relevant to the society. Intelligence according to Gardner (1983) is a bio-psychological predisposition that can be encouraged by the natural environment while intelligence is defined as the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are a consequence of a particular cultural setting or community. These intelligences according to Gardner (1999) will not evolve or grow to their full potential unless they are developed intentionally.

The theory of multiple intelligence is based on several assumptions. Firstly, it assumes that, one form of intelligence is not better than another, they are equally valuable and viable although different cultures are biased towards and against certain types of intelligences (Gardner, 1983). Secondly, each person is smart to varying degrees of expertise in each of the bits of intelligence, stronger in some ways and less developed in others. Thirdly, each person possesses different intelligences and can develop each intelligence to an adequate level of competency especially if given the appropriate encouragement and enrichment. Furthermore, the theory assures that, bits of intelligence are usually working together in complex ways such that no intelligence exists by itself (Gardner, 1983). Lastly, there are many ways to be intelligent within each category of intelligence so there is no standard set of intelligence in a particular area.

Practically, the multiple intelligence theory is very helpful in the assessment approaches of higher education institutions in several ways. Firstly, the assessment approaches in higher education institutions should try to involve or assess the different abilities and intelligences possessed by learners so as to help them gain employment since no intelligence is superior to another, then all of them should be given due attention during assessment sessions in higher education institutions. Moreover, testing or assessing these intelligences is good but developing them is better. So higher education institutions should tailor their assessment approaches towards developing these bits of intelligence to their maximum level.

To reiterate Gardner's theory, Becker's (1964) human capital theory argues that, quality education has a direct or indirect impact on employability due to the knowledge and training obtained at school. This means that, education and training have a crucial part to play in promoting the needed labour. As Douns (1994) puts it, schools should provide the foundation which can promote the development of a more skilled and productive labour for independence. This can be done by tailoring their instructional strategies to the needs of the job market.

According to Becker (1964), the human capital is the knowledge, skills, information, and health of individuals. He believes that, it is this human capital that increases the productivity of a person in all tasks, though possibly differentially in different tasks, organizations, and situations. To him, although the role of the human capital may be quite complex, there is a sense in which we can think of it as represented by a one-dimensional object such as the stock of knowledge which is directly part of the production process. The human capital theory therefore calls for quality instructional strategies, to develop human capital which will contribute greatly to graduate employability.

Assessment Approaches in Higher Education

According to Brown (1995), assessment approaches in higher education refer to a related series of measures used to determine a complete attribute of an individual student or a group of students. Boud and Falchiko (2007) advance that, assessment approaches in higher education are those approaches that must be used as a means of imparting lifetime skills to the learner. This is because, since the learners mostly focus their attention on what will be assessed and how it will be assessed, the higher education instructors should also focus their attention on transmitting lifetime skills through the assessment approaches (Yambi, 2020). This means that, assessment approaches in higher education are not approaches that should focus on content only but approaches that enable the students to imbibe professional work abilities and become able to contribute to the growth of the society. Boud and Falchiko (2007) believes that, for this to happen, the assessment approaches in higher education should involve effective practicals, hands-on activities, creativity, and effective internships. All these can promote graduate employability in higher education institutions.

Boud and Falchiko (2007) also argue that, assessment approaches in higher education are approaches that must be sustainable. To them, assessment approaches in higher education are simply processes of informed judgment. That is, informing the capacity to evaluate evidence, and appraise situations and circumstances accurately so as to draw sound conclusions and act following this analysis. This means that, the focus of sustainable assessment is not just for the students to pass the assignment criteria but to help that student pass the recruitment criteria and succeed in the labour market upon graduation. However, in the context of this study, the assessment approaches

refer to the methods used by higher education instructors to measure the ability or competencies of graduates. This ability usually speaks volumes about the employability situation of higher education graduates.

Employability of Graduates.

The Confederation of British Industry (1999) says that, the employability of graduates refers to the possession by an individual graduate of the qualities and competencies required to meet the changing needs of employers and customers and thereby help to release his or her aspirations and potential at work. Watts (2006) puts it a little differently when he argues that, Graduate employability is focused on graduates being capable of getting and keeping fulfilling work. This means that, his emphasis is not just on work but on fulfilling work. More comprehensively, he considers graduate employability as the capability of graduates to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realize their potential.

According to Watts (2006) what makes a graduate employable is the possession of soft skills and the ability of graduates to use or present those skills to employers effectively within the context in which they seek to work. However, it should be noted that, the employability of graduates is not the same as employment. It is rather what makes a graduate worth employing (Lowden et al, 2011). It is used here to refer to the graduate readiness or preparedness for the world of work. Below is a conceptual diagram showing the structural relationship between higher education assessment approaches and graduate employability.

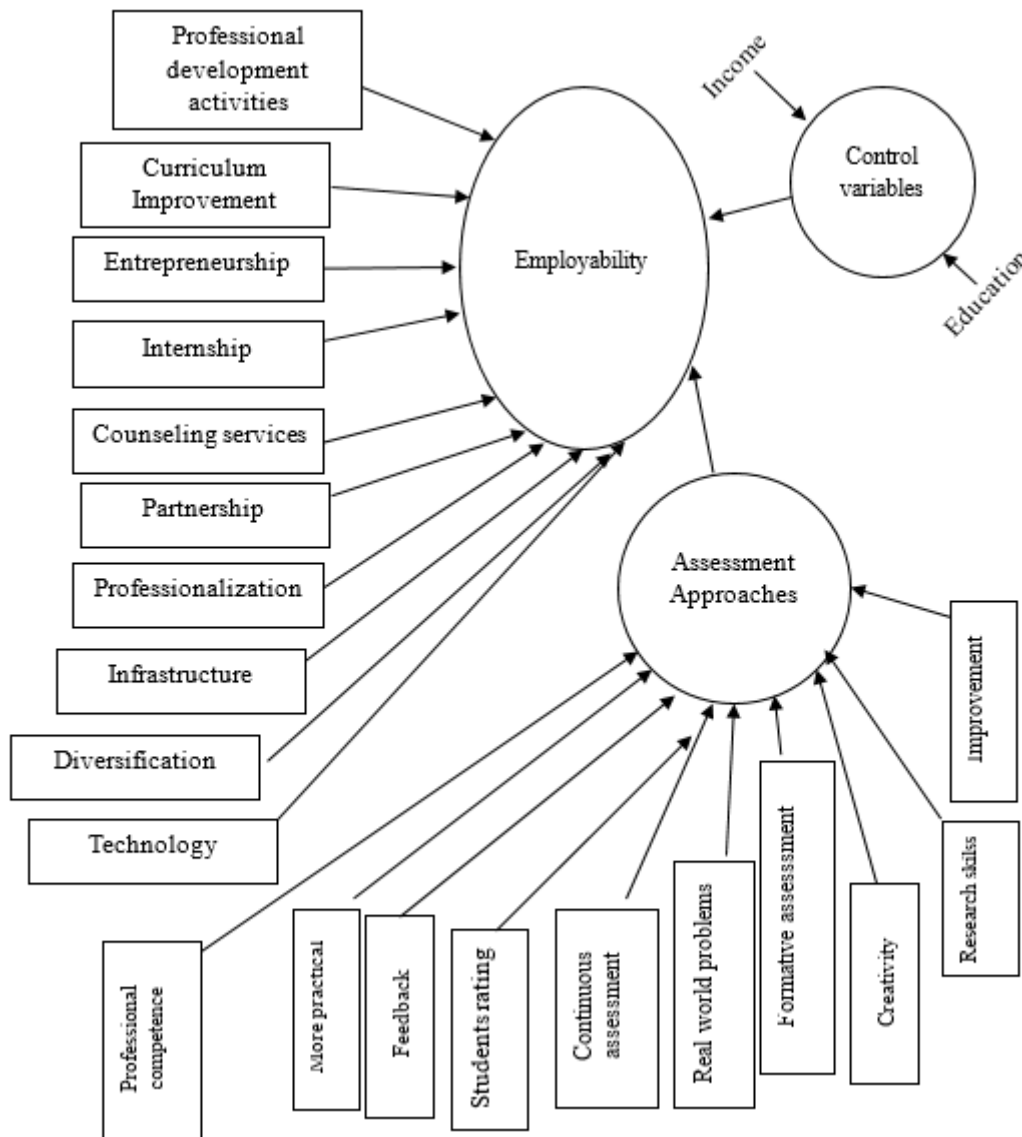


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study
 Source: Researchers, 2024

According to Figure 1, Assessment Approaches is the independent variable and have a direct effect on graduate employability as showed by the arrow linking Assessment Approaches circle and graduate employability circle. Assessment Approaches is defined by; More practical work, Immediate Feedback, Professional competence, Students' rating, Continuous assessment, Real world examples, Formative assessments, Creativity, Research Improvement. Graduate employability is the dependent variable in the diagram captured by key indicators such as entrepreneurship programs, professional development activities, effective collaboration between higher education institutions and industries, quality infrastructure, internship programs, and effective specialization and professionalization of courses. The arrow linking the circle of control variables and graduate employability circle show the direct effect of the control variables of income and education on graduate employability as seen in Figure 1.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Teachers of higher education can assess students understanding through asking questions or providing opportunities for students to demonstrate or explain what they have understood. Going by this statement, Cassidy (2006) carried out a study to identify peer assessment as a potential strategy for developing employability skills in higher education. The objective of the study was to examine – from a student's perspective – the process of introducing peer assessment into higher education teaching programs to promote graduate employability. The study assessed students' attitudes towards both being assessed by and assessing other students' work in relation to employability.

Data were gathered from a sample of undergraduate students following a structured peer assessment exercise and the findings revealed that, peer assessment if introduced in higher education will equip students with a complete repertoire of employment-relevant skills. Many students were willing to accept peer assessment as an element of their course for their smooth school-to-work transition. It was therefore recommended that; peer assessments should be introduced in higher education institutions with a focus on developing employability skills and alleviating one's sense of responsibility.

In a related study, Ajawi et al (2020) worked on aligning assessment with the needs of work-integrated learning. The challenges of authentic assessment in a complex context. The study was aimed at exploring the relationship between students' placement experiences and accompanying assessments to see if these assessments can be aligned to employability skills or are in the context of producing employability skills of learners. The research team used a quantitative approach and the participants included 14 female students from two Australian universities. The students were from four disciplines: such as education, health, law, and psychology. Data collection was done through a semi-structured interview. During the interview, participants were asked to give a picture of the placement exercise and to evaluate the aspects of the placement exercise that was captured in their assessment.

Moreover, the interview intended to find out whether the workplace experience and skills of participants are what was assessed in school or whether such skills can be incorporated and improved upon in the assessment exercise. The data were analysed using a thematic framework analysis and the results revealed that, there is a misalignment between assessment approaches in higher education institutions and the labour market skills. In other words, the method and content of what is assessed by most higher education institutions are largely different from the employability skills needed in the job market.

In agreement with this, Lethi Viet & Bouilheres (2020) researched on authentic assessments to prepare students for employability skills at the University of Nottingham. The study was qualitative in nature using interviews as a means of data collection. The sample was 180 final-year undergraduate students of the Department of Management and Accounting. Data analysis was done using a thematic content analyses approach and the results indicated that, authentic assessments help students develop key workplace skills such as communication, teamwork, and analysis skills thereby making them job market ready. Higher education institutions were called upon by this study to give attention to authentic assessment approaches to promote graduate employability.

In Spain, Maina et al (2022) investigated the use of an e-portfolio assessment strategy to showcase students' employability skills in the case of a master's in education and ICT at the Oberta de Catalunya University. The study aimed to contribute to reducing the skill gap by identifying generic and disciplined specific employability skills that employers require and supporting graduate students in showcasing them through an e-portfolio assessment system when preparing for employment. In achieving this objective, a pilot study with a sample of thirty participants, 3 teachers, and seven employers was conducted at the open university of Catalunya. Students took part in a micro-credential process that encouraged inquiry, reflection, and integration to help them demonstrate key employability skills while teachers accompanied and guided students by providing formative feedback, summative assessment, and micro-credentials.

The students also submitted a 3 to 5 minutes' video testimonial discussing their experiences articulating the skills and the contexts in which those skills were developed. They recorded the video using the STAR method, a structured set of responses to behaviour- based interviews that takes into account the specific situation, task, action, and the outcome while the employers were to write recommendations for students who successfully articulate their employability skills. The findings of the study revealed that most students were able to identify and demonstrate their employability skills for both their teachers and employers thereby increasing their chances of being employed. The employers appreciated the e-portfolio using a student assessment scale.

Saher et al (2022) also investigated the effect of traditional versus authentic assessment approaches used in higher education on the productivity of learners. The innovation of the study was that traditional assessment approaches which assessed and measure the degree of knowledge acquired were observed to be dominant in higher education while authentic assessment which focuses on how the student can apply the knowledge received in a real-world setting was observed to be on a low year in higher education institutions (Barley 1998; karim et al, 2018). With this in mind, the study was intended to check if these assessment approaches have any impact on graduates' employability. The research team employed both qualitative and quantitative research designs to achieve the objective with the use of questionnaires and interviews for data collection. The sample size consisted of 234 participants involving 157 undergraduate students, 52 educators, and 25 postgraduate students who were all selected through a simple random sampling technique from the Arab university. Data analysis was done with the use of a descriptive analysis technique and the one-way ANOVA and the results show that, both the traditional and authentic assessment approaches if used effectively can improve graduate employability skills.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed the survey research design. Geographically, the study was conducted in the two-state universities of the English-speaking regions of Cameroon. The population of the study was made up of all students from the University of Buea, The University of Bamenda, and their lecturers. The target population of the study consisted of students of the faculty of social and management sciences of the University of Buea, the faculty of Economics and management sciences, and their lecturers (full-time). The accessible population was made up of all final-year undergraduate students of the faculty of social and management sciences of the University of Buea, the Faculty of Economics and management sciences of The University of Bamenda and their lecturers (full-time) in the regions. The number stood at 1789 students and 444 lecturers. According to the krejcie and Morgan (1970) table, 420 respondents were deemed appropriate as the sample size for the study. It consisted of 300 students and 120 lecturers. Purposive sampling was used to select the schools or faculties to participate in the study. The choice of these schools was because the researcher believes that, their services are highly expected to meet the demands of most economic operators, especially in the regions. The proportionate sampling was used to get the number of respondents from each region to participate in the study. With this technique, 50 percent of the respondents from each region were selected for the study given a total of 150 students from the University of Buea, 150 students from The University of Bamenda, 60 Lecturers from the University of Buea, and 60 Lecturers from The University of Bamenda. Simple random sampling

was used to get the students to participate in the study. Ballot papers were designed with a yes and no inscription on them during the process of meeting the students. The researcher went to a class of final-year undergraduate students of the faculties concerned with the study. The objective of the study was explained to the students to get their interest and voluntary participation. Thereafter, the ballot papers were presented to them and any student who picked yes was considered to participate in the study. This was to give each respondent an equal chance to participate in the study. As for the lecturers, due to the difficulty involved in knowing who is full-time and who is part-time, the snowball sampling technique was used to get the full-time lecturers to participate in the study. With this method, the few full-time lecturers that were identified were asked to link the researcher to other full-time lecturers who were then contacted to participate in the study. Primary data was collected mainly with the use of closed ended questionnaires. The questionnaire was constructed in conformity with the research questions and designed to collect data from the teachers and students. A 7-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree was used to rate the responses of the respondents. The reliability of the instrument was tested for internal consistency using the Cronbach alpha technique and the reliability coefficient stood at 0.893. This indicates that, the instruments were reliable while content validity was obtained using expert judgment. Here, the instruments were given to experts to determine issues of appropriateness, ambiguity, and relevance in ensuring content validity.

Method of data analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data collected. For descriptive statistics, frequency counts, percentages, and multiple responses set were used which aimed at calculating the summary of findings for each variable where applicable.

Hypotheses Testing.

The hypotheses were tested using the maximum likelihood estimation technique of the structural equation modelling while the Amos software (2022) statistical package was used to do the regression analysis. To capture the relationship between higher education Assessment Approaches and graduate employability, the educational production function model was used in this study. This model captures clearly the relationship between input and output in the educational sector effectively. The input in this context is the assessment Approaches of higher education institutions while the output is the employability of graduates who have been exposed to these assessment approaches. The model is specified below.

Model specification

The model for this study is based on the work of Saher et al (2022), Brawley (2009), and Karim et al (2018) as they argued that, authentic assessment approaches if used effectively can improve graduate employability. Assessment approaches [ASAP] is an exogenous construct while graduate employability is an endogenous construct [GEMP]. The model is specified as follows.

$$\text{GEMP} = \theta_1 \text{ASAP} + \theta_2 \text{EDU} + \theta_3 \text{Incom} + \mu \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

ASAP stands for Assessment Approaches in equation (1) captured in terms of continuous assessment, formative assessment, professional competencies in the assessment, feedback from the assessment, solving real-world problems, research skills, creativity, and students' rating of the assessment approaches. θ_1 captured the magnitude of the effect of Assessment Approaches on graduates' employability. The coefficients θ_2 , and θ_3 captured the magnitude of the effect of education and level of income on graduate employability respectively. The parameters can either be positive or negative. The random component of the estimation is captured using the structural error term (μ). In other words, the structural error term captured both the random effect and unobservable variables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question One: What is the effect of higher education Assessment Approaches on graduate employability in Cameroon from the student's perspective?

To answer this research question, data on Assessment Approaches was collected from the students, and the results are presented as follows.

Table 1: Summary statistics Results of student's questionnaire items related to assessment approaches and graduate employability.

S/N	ITEMS	Response options/percent						
		SD	D	MD	U	MA	A	SA
28	More practical's and real-life examples are used to prepare students for the job market	22(7.3)	48 (16.0)	20(6.7)	7(2.3)	20(6.7)	32(10.7)	89(29.7)
29	feedback or corrections are provided to students to facilitate student's employability	26 (8.7)	25 (8.3)	30 (10.0)	5 (1.7)	66 (22.0)	86(28.7)	57(19.0)
30	Professional competencies are taken into considerations when assessing students	31(10.3)	42 (14.0)	23(7.7)	18 (6.0)	50(16.7)	90(30.0)	46(15.3)
31	The rating of students at the end of the semester is critical for their work readiness	25 (8.3)	32 (10.7)	26 (8.7)	7 (2.3)	34 (11.3)	83(27.7)	90(30.0)
32	The use of Continuous assessments enhances students' school to work transition	9(3.0)	38(12.7)	17(5.7)	9(3.0)	54(18.0)	86(28.7)	87(29.0)
33	Students are rated on their ability to solve real world problem	43(14.3)	64(21.3)	48(16.0)	16 (5.3)	61(20.3)	41(13.7)	26 (8.7)
34	Creativity which is critical in the job market is promoted when assessing students	31(10.3)	48 (16.0)	35(11.7)	14(4.7)	69 (23.0)	66 (22.0)	37(12.3)
35	Students are satisfied with the rating system in school for their future careers	61(20.3)	60 (20.0)	42(14.0)	17 (5.7)	47(15.7)	49 (16.3)	24(8.0)
36	Research skills are included in the assessment approaches which promote employability	22(7.3)	26(8.7)	29(9.7)	21(7.0)	47(15.7)	78(26.0)	71 (23.7)
37	The assessment approaches need to be improved upon for job market readiness	8 (2.7)	8 (2.7)	15(5.0)	11 (3.7)	0(0.0)	39(13.0) 102 (34.0)	103 (34.3)
	Total	278 9.9	391 14.1	285 10.2	125 4.5	448 16.1	650 23.35	630 22.6

Source: Computed by Author using SPSS Version 25, 2023

The data in Table 1 reveals that, the majority of respondents 62.1 % agreed that, the assessment approaches of higher education institutions have an effect on their employability. Interestingly, a significant majority of the respondents 103(34.3) believe that, even though the assessment approaches are important and contribute greatly to graduate employability, there should be improvement of the assessment approaches. The table also depicts that, of the 34.2 % of respondents that disagreed, 9.9 % strongly disagreed as opposed to 10.2 % that moderately disagreed. Specifically, 38(12.7%) of the respondents disagreed that, the use of Continuous assessments enhances students' school to work transition and 4.5 % of them were unable to assess their teacher's knowledge of student's conception.

Table 2: Student's Test result for Effects of ASAP on GEMP

	Hypothesis	Estimate	S. E	C.R.	Prob.	Decision
Teachers	GEMP ← ASAP	0.117	0.038	3.111	0.002	Significant

Source: Computed by Researchers using Amos version 21, 2023

Table 2 shows that assessment approaches have a significant positive effect on graduate employability according to the students. The finding implies that assessment approaches are important predictors of graduate employability. A 1% improvement in the assessment approaches used in higher education in Cameroon contribute to 11.7% of the variation in graduate employability. The significance of the effect of assessment approaches on graduate employability means rejection of the null hypothesis three in the study from the student's perspective which states that, assessment approaches do not have a significant effect on graduate employability. The perspective of the teachers on assessment approaches in higher education and graduate employability is presented in the table 3 below.

Research Question Two: What is the effect of higher education Assessment Approaches on graduate employability in Cameroon from the teacher's perspective?

To answer this research question, data on Assessment Approaches was collected from the teachers, and the results are presented as follows.

Table 3: Summary Statistics Results of Teacher's Questionnaire Items Related to Assessment Approaches and Graduate Employability

S/N	ITEMS	Response options /percentage							Total
		SD	D	MD	U	MA	A	SA	
28	More practical's and real-life examples are used to prepare students for the job market	4(3.3)	2 (1.7)	9(7.4)	3(2.5)	26(21.5)	52(43.0)	22(18.2)	
29	feedback or corrections are provided to students to facilitate student's employability	10(8.3)	7(5.8)	4 (3.3)	0(0.0)	33(27.3)	43(35.5)	21(17.4)	
30	Professional competencies are taken into considerations when assessing students	4(3.3)	14(11.6)	12(9.9)	5(4.1)	27(22.3)	39(32.2)	19(15.7)	
31	The rating of students at the end of the semester is critical for their work readiness	4(3.3)	8(6.6)	21(17.4)	0(0.0)	28(23.1)	35(28.9)	24(19.8)	
32	The use of Continuous assessments enhances	4(3.3)	10(8.3)	16(13.2)	0(0.0)	41(33.9)	34(28.1)	15(12.4)	

	students' school to work transition								
33	Students are rated on their ability to solve real world problem	8(6.6)	19(15.7)	12(9.9)	4(3.3)	34(28.1)	37(30.6)	6(5.0)	
34	Creativity which is critical in the job market is promoted when assessing students	4 (3.3)	4(3.3)	4 (3.3)	2(1.7)	32(26.4)	51(42.1)	6(5.0)	
35	Students are satisfied with the rating system in school for their future careers	8(6.6)	18(14.9)	20(16.5)	10(8.3)	21(17.4)	25(20.7)	18(14.9)	
36	Research skills are included in the assessment approaches which promote employability	8(6.6)	4(3.3)	2(1.7)	2 (1.7)	24(19.8)	60(49.6)	20(16.5).	
37	The assessment approaches need to be improved upon for job market readiness	4(3.3)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	21(17.4)	37(30.6)	58(47.9)	
	Total	58 4.9	86 7.29	100 8.5	26 2.2	287 24.34	413 35.02	131 11.11	

Source: Computed by Author using SPSS Version 25, 2023

Table 3 indicates that; the sample was dominated by respondents that agreed. Statistically, 70.47 % (24.34+35.02+11.11) of the teachers agreed that, the assessment approaches in higher education contribute to graduate employability while 20.69 % (4.9+7.29+8.5) of them disagreed. 2.2 % of them did not know whether the assessment approaches of higher education have an effect on graduate employability or not. Specifically, 60(49.6%) of the respondents agreed that, Research skills are included in the assessment approaches which promote employability. However, 21(17.4 %) of the respondents moderately disagreed that, the rating of students at the end of the semester is critical for their work readiness. The empirical results on the teacher's perspective of the effect of higher education assessment approaches to graduate employability is presented in the table 30 below.

Table 4: Teacher's Test result for Effects of ASAP on GEMP

	Hypothesis	Estimate	S. E	C.R.	Prob.	Decision
Teachers	GEMP \leftarrow ASAP	-0.228	0.069	-3.289	0.001	Significant

Source: Computed using Amos version 21, 2023

Table 4 shows that, assessment approaches [ASAP] has a negative significant effect on graduate employability in Cameroon according to the teachers. Technically, a 1% improvement in assessment approaches will instead lead to a 22.8% deterioration in the level of graduate employability. The presence of a significant but negative effect of the assessment approaches on graduate employability means rejection of the null hypothesis three in this study according to the teachers which state that, assessment approaches do not have a significant effect on graduate employability.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Investigating the Effect of Assessment Approaches of Higher Education on the Employability of Graduates in Cameroon from the student's perspectives.

The findings from this study according to the students reveals that, assessment approaches have a significant positive influence in predicting graduate employability in Cameroon especially in the English-Speaking regions of the country. This means that, a 1% improvement in the quality

of assessment approaches in higher education institutions will lead to an 11.7 % increase in graduate employability in Cameroon's higher education as observed in the data. This is in line with the study of Saher et al (2022) who investigated the effect of traditional versus authentic assessment approaches used in higher education on the productivity of learners. It was discovered that, authentic assessment approaches if used effectively can improve graduate employability. This is also in agreement with the work of Maina et al (2021) who investigated the use of an e-portfolio assessment strategy to showcase students' employability skills with the case of Master in Education and ICT at the Oberta de Catalunya University. The study confirms that, most students were able to identify and demonstrate their employability skills for both their teachers and employers thereby increasing their chances of being employed. This is also in conformity with the multiple intelligence theory of Howard Gardner which emphasizes that, the assessment approaches are very vital in influencing the development of multiple intelligences in learners if given the appropriate learning resources and enrichment. This means that, a good number of higher education institutions are encouraging their students through their assessment approaches to use all the bits of intelligence to solve a problem and improve on their employability according to the students.

Investigating the Effect of Assessment Approaches of Higher Education on the Employability of Graduates in Cameroon from the teacher's perspectives.

Contrarily to the students result, the findings from the teacher's perspective revealed that, the assessment approaches have a negative significant effect on graduate employability. This means that, a 1% increase in the use of these assessment approaches will lead to a 22.8% decrease in graduate employability. Moreover, the significance of these contrary results indicates that the assessment approaches are important to graduate employability but the negative coefficient suggests that they are poorly used in these schools according to the teachers. This calls for reforms in the current assessment approaches in higher education institutions in the country from the teacher's perspective. This result is in line with the study of Ajawi et al (2020) who worked on aligning assessment with the needs of work-integrated learning and concluded that, there is a misalignment between assessment approaches in higher education institutions and the labor market skills. In other words, the method and content of what is assessed by most higher education institutions are largely different from the employability skills needed in the job market.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It was discovered that, the assessment approaches of higher education institutions have a great influence on the employability of graduates from the students' perspective but a negative significant influence from the teacher's perspective. It was therefore concluded that, practical engagements, professional competencies, feedback, or corrections if implemented effectively during assessments of students in higher education, will promote graduate employability from the perspective of the students. However, as important as the assessment approaches are, indicated by the fact that it is significant, there seems to be a problem in the usage of these assessment approaches with regards to the employability skills of the graduates according to teachers' perspective. This suggests why, the more these assessment approaches are used, the lower the employability skills of graduates captured by the negative coefficient from the teachers' perspective. It was therefore concluded that, proper usage of the higher education assessment approaches in the country is necessary for graduate employability since both the student's and teachers' results proof that, assessment approaches are significant in predicting graduate employability in Cameroon. Based on the findings obtained from this piece of research work, the following recommendations were made:

Confirming from this study that the assessment approaches are positively significant and critical to graduate employability from the student's perspective, it is strongly recommended that higher education institutions should intensify the use of their assessment approaches and even develop new and effective assessment tools that can speed up graduate employability. This is because, students are likely to focus their attention on what is to be assessed, how it will be assessed, and when it will be assessed (Atem and Joseph, 2020).

Moreover, Concluding from this study that the higher education assessment approaches have a negative but significant effect on graduate employability from the teacher's perspective, it is strongly recommended that, even as Higher Education intensify the use of their Assessment Approaches, it should be tailored more towards professionalism, putting in more practical's and real-life examples with quality feedback or corrections provided to students to prepare them for the job market. This is because, the fact that these assessment approaches are significant shows that they are important to graduate employability but the negative coefficient especially from the teacher's perspective indicates that, the problem is not just the current assessment approaches in the Country but the way these approaches are used in higher education institutions. There should therefore be a thorough reform in the usage of the current assessment approaches in the higher education institutions of Cameroon especially in the English-speaking regions to promote graduate employability.

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