

Internal Quality Assurance Strategies in Assessment as Correlates to Students' Academic Performance in the University of Yaounde 1

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ABSTRACT

The thrust of this study was to examine the effects of the internal quality assurance strategies in assessment practices on students' academic performance in the University of Yaounde 1. The key internal quality assurance strategies under consideration were categorized under three broad categories: university test construction practices, university test administration strategies and university test scoring strategies. The study was influenced by the realization that the University of Yaounde 1 has not defined clear strategies to ensure fair, valid and reliable assessment practices and the seeming consequences on students' academic performance. Three research questions and hypotheses were postulated. The research design used for this study was the descriptive survey and correlational research design. The researcher used stratified random sampling to draw a sample of 20 out of 483 lecturers and administrators of the University of Yaoundé 1 and the simple random sampling to draw a sample of 381 students from the three faculties of the university from a population of 49590. Two self made questionnaires were used to collect data from the university lecturers and students of the university. Data collected were entered using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 to determine correlation and regression results. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means and standard

deviation and Spearman correlation coefficient was used to test whether there was relationship between the two variables. Based on the analysis, the following results were obtained. The university test construction strategies were found to have a significant effect on students' academic performance of students. Secondly, the university test administration strategies also showed a significant relation with students' academic performance. Thirdly, it revealed that the University test scoring strategies had a strong significant effect on students' academic performance. The study proffers far reaching recommendations to the lecturers and the administration of the University of Yaoundé 1 and to the Ministry of Higher Education, to in each capacity consider internal quality assurance strategies in assessment as the only gateway to the attainment of quality education because, so much quality teaching can be destroyed by poor assessment.

Key Words: test construction, test administration, test scoring, quality assurance, assessment

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Quality assurance is important in ensuring the effective educational advancement and by extension the economic development of any nation. There is a strong belief that education as an engine of growth in any country rests on the quality and quantity of its output. The environment at which the Cameroon public and private universities are operating is rapidly changing, yet the universities are seemingly facing inconsistent policy direction (Doh, 2015). Emerging trends, new economic challenges and diversifying expectations are not uncommon in today's higher education (Doh, 2015). The continuous increase in enrolment into Cameroon's universities in general and into the university of Yaoundé 1 in particular as well as the robust political ambition of the Cameroon government to emerge by 2035 require a better attention on the quality of Cameroon's higher education because one of the most important routes to emergence undoubtedly is education. The carrying capacities of the university which is the maximum number of students that each of this institution can sustain for qualitative education based on available human and material resources is ever in short supply, consequently demanding a rethink on how to readjust to maintain quality. Large class sizes will likely compromise quality in higher education in spite of the growing use of information and communication technologies. The large class sizes in the most of the departments of the University of Yaoundé 1 are therefore, a cause for concern and requires a study of this

magnitude to find out whether this presents a quality lapse and has an impact on the assessment practices as well as on the students' academic performance.

According to 2 of law no. 005 of 16th April 2001 to on the orientation of Cameroon higher education, the state of Cameroon assigned to the higher education a fundamental mission of producing, organizing and disseminating scientific, cultural, professional and ethical knowledge for the purpose of development. In line with this, the Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP) in view of ensuring and facilitating the implementation of the above law, set up guidelines and structures to guide university functioning including a directorate known as the Department of University Accreditations and Quality (DAUQ). Again, the government has also created the post of a Vice Rector in charge of Internal Control and Evaluation (VR-CIE). It is on the basis of this law and the follow up actions of the Ministry of Higher Education that Cameroon universities especially the University of Yaoundé 1 should set up internal quality assurance structures that could streamline strategies for monitoring and evaluation of the assessment practices, in view of achieving the mission assigned to them by the law. The stakeholders including the government, parents, employers and the general public expect students graduate from the university within the exact timeframe with good grades and with skills ready for the job market.

Unfortunately, the researcher has observed that the University of Yaoundé 1 has not established an internal quality assurance structure that can oversee, monitor and implement quality assurance in the university. What one finds that there are quality assurance cells in the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social sciences (FALSH) and Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (FMBS) only. Even, with these two, they are almost inexistent because they are ineffective and inefficient within their various respective faculties. Due to this, the university assessment practices leaves much to be desired as most lecturers seemingly lack knowledge on test development practices and are allowed to develop item that are based on the whims and caprices of the designer. Questions are developed in a haste and without any checks or moderation, yet those who collect the questions do not carry out any proof reading. There are no item banks where refined test item can be kept for future random use. During test administration, students write in overcrowded halls with fewer invigilators characterized by examination malpractices. The scoring practices are seemingly unfair and not scientific. It is evident that the best teaching strategies whereby effective teaching and learning processes are highly attained can be ruined by poor assessment practices, therefore care must be taken to ensure that assessment is effective.

The underperformance of students will mean that the skills required for the development of the society and emergence by 2035 are absent. It will also mean that the goals of education have not been achieved. When students perform poorly, they will not graduate on time or have enough time to proceed with furthering their education. In this direction, they will not perform well in their jobs. Poor performance at university is responsible for the high level unemployment in Cameroon because, those who perform well can create jobs for themselves without necessarily waiting for the state to employ them. When a student graduates from university and is unemployed, frustration, misery, criminality set in and the society is at risk. These affect the economic growth of the society and the nation at large. Therefore, without a clear and consistent internal quality assurance mechanisms, the university cannot achieve its role as the oldest bilingual university in Cameroon. The lack of or inconsistent quality assurance practices of the university may be responsible for this student underperformance. Then, the central question that comes to the researcher's mind is whether the absence of or the ineffectiveness of the university quality assurance strategies affects students' academic performance. Consequently, the researcher engaged in such a study to propose possible solutions to research objective and questions.

Research Objectives

The main objective of the study is presented under the main and specific objectives.

Main Objective

The main objective of the study is to investigate the effects of the internal quality assurance strategies in assessment on students' academic performance.

Specific objectives

1. To find out the effects of the university test construction practices on students' academic performance.
2. To establish a link between the university test administration strategies and students' academic performance.
3. To investigate the relationship between the university test scoring strategies and students' academic performance.

The Research Questions

Main Research Question

Do the internal quality assurance strategies in assessment affect students' academic performance?

Specific Research Questions

- Do the university test construction practices affect students' academic performance?
- Is there a link between the university test administration strategies and students' academic performance?
- What is the relationship between the university test scoring strategies and students' academic performance?

The Research Hypotheses

The General Hypotheses (GRH)

GRHa1 : There is a significant relationship between the internal quality assurance strategies in assessment and students' academic performance.

GRHo1: There is no significant relationship between the internal quality assurance strategies in assessment and students' academic performance.

Specific Research Hypotheses (SRH)

SRHa1: The university test construction practices have a significant effect on students' academic performance

SRHo1: The university test construction practices have no significant effect on students' academic performance

SRHa2: There is a significant link between the university test administration strategies and students' academic performance.

SRHo2: There is no significant link between the university test administration strategies and students' academic performance.

SRHa3: There is a significant relationship between the university test scoring strategies and students' academic performance.

SRHo3: There is no significant relationship between the university test scoring strategies and students' academic performance.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: The conceptual diagram which shows the connection between the key variables.

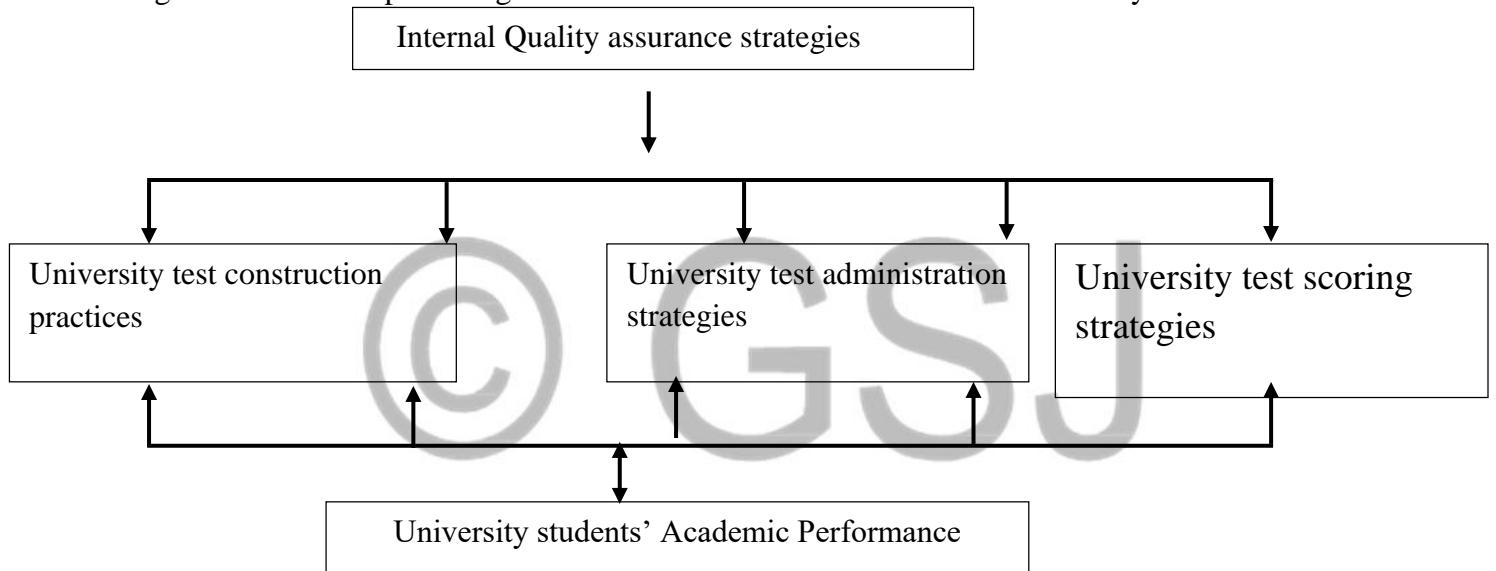


Figure 1 shows a representation of the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable (Source: The Researcher, 2022)

Empirical Framework

Harland et al. (2014) examined the effects of modern university assessment practices on Lecturers and students with a particular emphasis on the effects of high-stakes summative assessments on teaching and student learning at the University of Otago. The study defines high stakes summative assessment as grading student work when it is used to determine whether or not a degree is awarded. To determine whether the pilot results were replicated throughout the institution in various subject areas, the current study employed semi-structured interviews with a sizable

qualitative sample. Around the same time, the practice of evaluating students solely through final exams essentially vanished, and the majority of tertiary courses started using frequent summative assessments in addition to final exams throughout each semester as well as final exams. The effects of frequent internal assessment on student learning and teaching practice have not been given much attention in higher education and these drastic changes have remained unexamined. Given that some of the top assessment experts in the world have long noted that higher education requires modular educational outcomes, the lack of research into these issues is puzzling. The study expands on a pilot project that was carried out in 2011 and indicated that students were graded so frequently that it defined their entire school experience and created a number of difficulties for both teaching and learning. Even though it was known that certain practices were not ideal, teachers in the pilot project felt that they had little choice in how they were graded. It was shown that both Lecturers and students placed an undue emphasis on grades as reward for diligence. Because students were so dependent on grades, lecturers were unable to break the habit of assigning grades, and students would not work on an assignment unless a percentage grade was assigned. The issue with such an assessment regime is that it makes it much harder for the university to meet its learning goals, graduate profile, and to make sure all graduate attributes are met. Teachers felt constrained by a system and culture that prevented them from straying from frequent, high-stakes testing, even though they were aware of strategies that would promote deeper approaches to learning. Therefore, the link with the current study is evident in approaches to assessment in the university.

It is critical to use alternate assessment methods in order to understand student learning. Adedoyin (2016) conducted a quantitative study on how students at Botswana's BA Isago University perceived assessment practices in higher education institutions. A convenient random sample of 400 university undergraduate students was given a questionnaire designed on a four-point Likert scale about assessment practices. A total of 365 undergraduate students pursuing diverse degree programs answered the survey. Their answers were coded and subjected to an exploratory factor analysis technique, which can be accessed through the SPSS software. The factor analysis and descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were generated by SPSS software. To extract the perceived constructs on the concept of assessment practices at higher education institutions, the principal factor with iteration and the rotation method were both utilized. The factor analysis produced seven constructs with eight values greater than one. The findings showed how seven key ideas about assessment procedures were viewed. The seven main constructs were to: identify students' higher order cognitive/thinking abilities; offer helpful feedback for learning outcomes

that work for students; permit students to reflect on their own learning outcomes and have their learning outcomes evaluated by peers; employ various alternative modes of assessing learning outcomes; preserve quality control procedures in the form of assessment criteria ; adjust learning objectives through formal and informal evaluation techniques ; ascertain students' past knowledge before starting instruction. The study went on to find out if students' perceptions of assessment procedures in higher education are significantly influenced by their gender and faculty of study. It was discovered that students' perceptions of specific assessment practices were significantly influenced by their gender and the faculty of study. Higher education institutions would use all of these undergraduates' perceptions of assessment procedures to guide their evaluation of undergraduate students' cognitive capacities.

Question banks are used to increase the access to quality materials for assessing the students in institutions of higher learning. Chilivumbo (2015) states that in a paper presentation, an effective question bank that adheres to the learning-oriented assessment framework should support the learning-oriented assessment tasks and provide feedback to encourage student participation. In order to provide higher education institutions in Malawi with an information solution that can streamline these properties, the paper aims to develop a national network solution. The work conducted with the Department of Mathematics and Statistics and the Department of Language and Communication in the Applied Sciences and Education and Media Studies faculties, respectively, is documented in this paper. Information about the assessment creation and assessment artefact storage was gathered from these two departments through the study of existent literature, observation of processes and a self-administered questionnaire given to participants from the two departments. When the software's initial version was developed, efforts were made to make sure it would effectively support the assessment process. Even though the process is currently paper-based, it is tracked using an electronic solution in order to support the development and research of questions as well as the potential for electronic assessment delivery in the future. The system also takes into account the issue of interoperability of the new system with the Universities existing systems that support Virtual Learning and Student Information Management.

A progress test (PT) is a type of evaluation that uses parallel testing to repeat the process at regular intervals while measuring the ability levels of all students in a program and their progress over time. In a study, Koşan et al. (2019) attempted to create an item bank for the PT and investigate whether the Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) would be a good fit for the PT application. The

research was descriptive in nature. There were 1206 medical students present. During the examination of the PT item bank's psychometric characteristics, "the Rasch model for dichotomous items was used." A number of CAT simulations were run using different standard error stopping rules. The estimates from the CAT simulation were contrasted with those obtained from the initial calibration of the Rasch model, which included every item. A unidimensional PT item bank with 103 items was obtained following Rasch analysis. Utilizing the Person Separation Index (PSI) and Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20), the item bank reliability was determined to be 0.77. At the conclusion of our analysis and for simulation conditions, there was a strong correlation found between θ estimates from CAT applications and those from paper-and-pencil applications (θ CAT). With a reliability of 0.75, estimation in the CAT can be done with an average of 14 questions (reduced 86,4%) and 17 questions (reduced 83,4%). This study reveals that it is possible to develop an appropriate item bank for the PT, and the difficulty of administering large number of items in PT can be scaled down by incorporating the CAT application.

The way test item are arranged in a test has an influence on student examinees. *Schee* (2009), in a study to investigate whether test item ordering has an influence on students academic performance. Marketing educators often use multiple choice exams with various versions of question sequencing to minimize cheating with little consideration for the influence of test item order on student performance. This study replicates prior research on question sequencing and student performance; however, consideration is also given to academic achievement as a contributing factor. The results indicate that student scores on multiple choice exams differ significantly based on two measures of academic achievement, not test item order.

Bono and Núñez-Peña (2019) analyzed the influence of two types of feedback on students' academic achievement in a higher education course with statistical content. Students' views regarding the usefulness of these types of feedback were also examined. After validating the rubrics in a sample of 100 students, a sample of 135 students was used to address the main objective of the study. The samples comprised undergraduates from the University of Barcelona who were taking a course called Research Designs as part of the University of Barcelona's Degree in Psychology. The majority of students regarded both types of feedback as being useful. Academic achievement did not differ according to whether students used rubrics, attended feedback classes, or made use of both types of feedback. However, there was a positive association between the frequency of attendance at feedback classes and academic performance. Finally, the students who reported feeling less anxious about exams as a result of using rubrics or attending

feedback classes obtained better exam grades. This study shows that teaching approaches which include feedback may lead students to have a more favourable view of their learning, especially when the feedback is more personalized and given in class.

In a study conducted by Daka et al.(2020) in an article published in the *Zambia Journal of Educational Management, Administration and Leadership (ZJEMAL)*, titled *The Relationship between Assessment Practices and Students' Academic Performances. A case of Undergraduate Students at the Medical School of the University of Zambia, 2008 – 2016* investigated the relationship between assessment processes and students' academic performance among undergraduate medical students trained at the University of Zambia, School of medicine during the period of nine years. Using a mixed method approach and an explanatory sequential research design, the results revealed that during the period under study there was little timely feedback and where it was done, it lacked guiding comments. It also revealed that 28,8% assessment tasks are misaligned with learning objectives. They conclude that the low students Grade Point Average (GPA) and high examination attrition rates at the medical school of the University of Zambia were due to improper assessment processes. The article recommended that assessment tasks should be aligned with learning objectives and that feedback should be given to students on time and should be detailed.

Another study was carried out by Rawlusk (2018) in which it addressed ongoing concerns about whether assessment practices in higher education support student learning. The study posits that most authors argue that examinations have become the focus of assessment, which adversely affect student learning. The study used a survey and a questionnaire to collect data and findings revealed that teachers have conflicting views relative to student use of feedback, and that there is limited involvement of learners in assessment strategies which impacts learning. The study recommended that teachers should utilize professional development to understand how to optimize the active participation of students in various authentic assessment methods and feedback.

Evaluation is an important tool for quality improvement because quality assurance in the higher education sector can only and sustained through holistic monitoring and evaluation mechanism. According to Obanya and Hountondji (2005) quoted in Onuka (2017), averred that formative evaluation contributes immensely to educational outcome improvement. Akyeampong (2011) agreed that assessment built into the learning system improves learning achievement. Improvement takes place when a positive change occurs. Such change/improvement is termed transformation. Improved quality HE system results from transformation. To Onuka (2017),

evaluation or assessment in higher education process must involve assessing competencies that should normally accompany the content of the various curricula. Those seemingly latent skills which have to be rather stimulated in the human beings like soft or emotional skills must be incorporated into the curricula, taught and assessed as part of the transformation process of the African higher education for improved quality. HE provision to the demand of the world of work. In fact, various forms of assessment should be evolved for the purpose of evaluating the various types of knowledge, soft and hard skills that are required to fit someone in each type of the world of work in the current knowledge economy and digital-based development (Ghartey, 2015). Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) (2015) quoted in Onuka (2017), equally expresses the need for the African education system to employ ingredients of quality assessment which include fairness, ethical considerations, integrity, inclusiveness, comprehensiveness and innovativeness while assessing the education system and its outcomes. Assessment could be for development/ improvement of system, process or learning or for determination of an outcome and its quality. Assessment of outcome whether of an on-going process or of an outcome provides feedback to the system or process for remediation that engenders improvement and accountability of the process/system. Evaluation tells who was responsible for what and what can be done to improve the process/system. Therefore, the dynamics of our digital-world dictates that evaluation of a system or process. The importance of assessment in quality assurance cannot be overemphasized though the presentation has not linked assessment to students' academic performance which the current study seeks to do.

Anyanwu and Onwuakpa (2015) in a paper entitled Improving Validity of Tests through Improved Test Development Procedures presented at the Annual International Association for Educational Assessment (IAEA) conference held at the University of Kansa, USA argue that psychometricians over the world are of the view that validity and reliability of test items are very critical in quality assurance of test items. They further postulated that validity is most important of the two attributes of a good test because it gives the scores, relevance and appropriateness of test items. The paper also highlighted on the importance of quality assurance of testing procedures. It identified some test development procedures in order to improve upon validity measures of tests such as providing clear instructions in the tests, avoiding the use of difficult vocabularies, appropriate arrangements of items and improving upon the length of tests. The paper opines that when these test development procedures are adopted, then, there is an assurance in the improvement of the validity of the test.

Question formats can have an effect on students' academic performance. Caldwell and Pate (2013) carried out a study to determine the effects of three variations in test item format on item statistics and student performance. To do this, the study wrote down fifteen pairs of directly comparable test questions to adhere to standard scale or deviate from non standard scale following three specific item writing guidelines. Differences in item difficulty and discrimination were measured between the two scales as a whole and for each guideline individually. Student performance was also compared between the two. The nonstandard scale was 12.7 points more difficult than the standard scale ($p=0.03$). The guideline to avoid "none of the above" was the only 1 of the 3 guidelines to demonstrate significance. Students scored 53.6% and 41.3% ($p<0.001$) of total points on the standard and nonstandard scales, respectively. Nonstandard test items were more difficult for students to answer correctly than the standard test items, provided no enhanced ability to discriminate between higher- and lower-performing students, and resulted in poorer student performance. Item-writing guidelines should be considered during test construction.

Another study by Zhang and Burry –Stock (2003) on classroom assessment practices and teachers' self perceived assessment skills published in the Journal of Applied Measurement in Education, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., investigated teachers' assessment practices across teaching levels and content areas, as well as teachers' self – perceived assessment skills as a function of teaching experience and measurement training. It argues that since teachers are primarily responsible for evaluating instruction and student learning, there is a widespread concern about the quality of classroom assessment. Data was collected from 297 teachers on assessment practices and analysed using MANOVA design. It was discovered that teachers rely more on objective tests and there was increasing concern for assessment quality. It also revealed that regardless of teaching experience, teachers with measurement training report a higher level of self – perceived assessment skills in using performance measures in standardized testing, test revision and instructional improvement as well as communicating assessment results than those without measurement training.

Areghan, Agwu, and Aidokhai (2012), investigated the potential sources of distortion during the administration of the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) and the marking of WASSCE scripts in Nigeria. According to the study, WASSCE is a high stake international examination conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) in Nigeria and Anglophone West Africa. The study presents pragmatic strategies adopted by WAEC in Nigeria to expand the framework for action in order to enhance effectiveness and efficiency of

its processes of test administration. It argues that large number of candidates, inadequate facilities and insufficient manpower have implications in the validity of assessment outcomes. The paper focuses on pre-examination and post examination practices with particular attention to distortions at the various stages and finally concludes that the challenges of proper administration of tests and coming out with valid and reliable assessment outcomes in the country are enormous because distortion in the process is a societal ill which examining bodies will continue to fight. It has also brought to light the various attempts made by the West African Examinations Council to reduce their effects on assessment such that test outcomes would be a true reflection of candidates' abilities.

The best assessment strategies can be marred by examination malpractices. *Amadi and Opuiyo (2018)*, carried out a review on examination malpractices among Nigerian university students. Examination malpractice is defined as any act of omission or commission which compromises the validity, reliability and integrity of any assessment or evaluation system. It highlights the probable causes of examination malpractice to include: students' fear of failure, desire by parents to have their children succeed, poor teaching methods, ineffective preparation by students and weak parental functions. It was discovered that the students lack the appetite to study but rather want to pass their examinations by all means. Some lecturers, who cherish sorting, sometimes examine students with what they were taught. It was also discovered that appropriate authorities were not doing enough to keep the trend in check. To resolve this problem of cheating in examination, the following recommendations were made: ban the sale of handouts to minimize incessant cases of examination malpractice, counselling services should be provided for students and adequate facilities should be provided to make teaching and learning effective. Other methods to curb examination malpractice include: appropriate recognition and remuneration of teachers and examination officials, employment of qualified teachers at all levels, enforcement of examination malpractice laws, adequate equipment of libraries and laboratories, less emphasis on paper certificates and the use of effective continuous assessment techniques.

Examination malpractices also have far reaching consequences on the quality of graduates in tertiary institutions. *Damare and Kawugana (2021)*, in a study focused on the impact of examination malpractice on the quality of graduates in tertiary institutions of Bauchi state. The study posits that examination malpractice is a cankerworm that is posing a serious problem in Nigerian educational system. The research design used for the study was both qualitative and quantitative and data was collected through a questionnaire and interview. The data collected was

analyzed using STATA statistical tools. The project provided societal re-engineering and re-orientation to revamp moral values: It recommended that good moral values should be properly inculcated into our youths, and parents counselled to stop aiding their children to cheat in examinations. Again, there is need to engage only honest persons in examination management. Based on the implications, recommendations were made which inter alia included: proper counselling of students, intensified public enlightenment campaigns, strict interviews to be conducted for candidates and emphasis should be on practical performance in lieu of reliance on certificates (paper qualifications). Petters and Okon (2014) also suggests effective counselling services in schools to assist students acquire techniques of effective study habits.

In a similar study on improving marking quality in essays, Hudson (2009), addresses how marking quality in essays or long form answers has been approach traditionally and explains how using images of candidates' answers can enable new quality mechanisms to be used. He postulates that significant developments have been made that combine the use of scanning technology, marking algorithms and adequate sampling criteria to provide a dynamic approach to monitoring marking variances. The paper recommends a mix of assessment formats as the best to be used to balance marking reliability with content validity, as the processes used are focused on narrowing the gap in variance between individual markers and between markers and agreed marking standards.

Again, Swanzy (2009) in a research project entitled Internal Quality Assurance Strategies in Higher Education focused on Ghanaian Polytechnics. A qualitative methodological approach via in depth interviews of twenty key informants and document analysis was used to establish how polytechnics in Ghana address problematic situations in quality assurance. The findings revealed that their internal quality assurance strategies focussed on staff and students, where quality concerns were prominent. These strategies seem to have enhanced teaching and learning in polytechnics, but there was need for them to re – institutionalise their quality systems to enable them to deliver quality vocational and technical education. This study is relevant to the present study because it duels on the same subject though in Ghana. The study focuses on the staff and students who are key actors in education but fails to highlight the essence of curriculum, assessment and evaluation in internal quality assurance in universities. This present study seeks to fill the lacuna.

In another dimension, Hayward (2006) in a paper prepared for presentation at the Conference on Higher Education Reform in Francophonie Africa: *Understanding the Keys to Success of Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education in Africa*, discussed quality audits stating that

audits should play a major role in assuring accountability by universities and other tertiary institutions. That should be a welcome change since most universities are not held accountable for their expenditures, quality of their programs or the teaching and output of their faculty members. In many African states, the growing demand for accountability is gaining widespread public support. In the private sector, it would serve as a badly needed way to identify fraud and poor quality. This paper raises key issues on quality assurance but fails to link it to students' academic performance in tertiary institutions.

Sadler (2017) in an article published in *Quality of Higher Education* entitled *Academic Achievement Standards and Quality Assurance*, argues that quality assurance processes have been applied to many aspects of higher education, including teaching, learning and assessment. At least in the latter domain, quality assurance needs its fundamental tenets critically scrutinized. A common but inadequate approach has been to identify and promote learning environment changes likely to improve learning outcomes. They are simply labelled 'quality assurance' without establishing their effectiveness. Part of the problem is that the case for quality assurance has been largely taken as self-evident. Originally, quality assurance principles were developed in domains outside higher education. In those, auditable product, service and other standards play a central role. Although external processes do not directly transfer to higher education, their underlying principles offer perspectives and pointers for reconceptualising quality assurance and improving assessment and grading. Quality assurance should be grounded in authoritative and properly formulated academic achievement standards applied to actual student works, performances and course grades.

Tanyi (2020) in an article published in the first edition of *La Revue de la Faculte des Sciences de l'education* titled *Quality Assessment in Cameroon Higher Education : Challenges and prospects* states that Cameroon's higher education like other developing countries has been experiencing pressures from the society such as increase enrolment that demands large class size and the need for quality education which invariably needs quality assessment. The author argues that large class size is a problem to quality assessment and quality education and that the problem was going to continue to increase considering the projections on the demand for higher education. The article identified and discussed challenges and prospects of assessing large classes using the multiple choice questions (MCQs) as an assessment strategy in Cameroon higher institutions. The author recommended and elaborated on the MCQ construction as one strategy in which university lecturers could adopt to enhance and ease evaluation of large classes. This would in turn enhance

quality assessment in higher education in Cameroon. The article further recommends that the Cameroon government should speed up the process of training education evaluators for quality assessment.

Tanyi and Wirngo (2015) in an article published in the journal of the Educational Assessment and Research Network in Africa (EARNIA), entitled *Assessment Irregularities and Examination Malpractices in Tertiary Education*, state that for over the years the Cameroon educational system, the examination boards and higher educational institutions have witnessed examination irregularities. They argue that between 2005 and 2015, some school personnel are said to have leaked examinations while many students are also said to have cheated during the writing of examinations. They also posit that in June 2015, there were gross assessment irregularities in the advanced Teachers Training institution and faculty of education which affected the output of the students. The study therefore aimed at exploring the probable causes of these irregularities in the tertiary education. The variables used for the study included assessment tools, physical and psychological environment, the knowhow of the evaluator and the student factor. The theoretical framework for the study was based on the works of Bandura and Spring. Four questionnaire were formulated and a purposive sample of lecturers and students of higher institutions in Yaoundé were used. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used and the result and the results indicated that assessment were used and the results indicated that assessment irregularities have a significant impact on examination practice.

In another paper on improving marking quality in essays, presented during the 35th annual conference of the International Association of Educational Assessment (IAEA), Hudson (2009), addresses how marking quality in essays or long form answers has been approach traditionally and explains how using the images of candidates' answers can enable new quality mechanisms to be used. The paper postulates that significant developments have been made that combine the use of scanning technology, marking algorithms and adaptable sampling criteria to provide a dynamic approach to monitoring variances. The paper concludes that a mix of assessment formats are best used to balance marking reliability with content validity, as the processes used are focused on narrowing the gap in variance between individual examiners and between examiners and the agreed standards. The study is helpful is helpful to this present study in that it focuses on improving assessment quality for quality students results, though the study fails to correlate marking quality to the performance of students.

Downing and Halayna (1997), writing on test development, validity evidence from quality assurance procedures and published in the *Journal of Applied Measurement in education* stipulate that validity of high –stakes examination scores involve collecting and organising evidence to support a specific test score interpretation or the use in some specific context. They argue that the primary type of validity evidence is derived from item development process and item responses. An ideal process is identified that documents how items are developed and how responses to the items are studied to ensure that basic building blocks of tests and test items are sound. These arguments form the basis for this study in that they emphasise the important procedures in constructing items that are sound, valid and reliable which are important elements of quality assurance. However, the study does not relate this to the performance of students especially at the university level.

Consequently, transformation from traditional ways of school management to a new creative and innovative approach such as introduction of tripartite curriculum for inculcating multiple intelligences instead of mono – intelligence is advocated for especially in Nigeria. Tripartite curriculum structure ensures that students are exposed to a body of material from within their own discipline, a body of material relevant to their own discipline but delivered by other disciplines, and breath in the form of material deliberately not from their own discipline. So, the current paradigm shift to a new secondary curriculum in Nigeria will surely be a success. This article is relevant to this present study in several dimensions. One, it articulates the importance of quality assurance especially internal quality assurance indicators and secondly, it emphasizes on a new curriculum to inculcate multiple intelligence. However, the work focuses on quality assurance indicators in secondary schools unlike this present study which duels on universities and ignores to discuss internal quality assurance strategies which the present study seeks to highlight.

In another study, Cockrell (2016) discussed long-held concerns about the grades teachers assign and what grades really mean. In a study aimed at linking students' grades or performance grades, to both teacher expected end of grade and end of course achievement level and actual end of course achievement level. Correlations between pairs of achievement measures such as performance grades and expected end of course achievement levels were calculated. While correlations between students' performance grades and standardized assessment scores were similar to those found in prior studies with respect to students' ethnicity and gender, relationship between those two measures of student achievement and the marks reporting teacher-expected standardized assessment scores indicated that teachers underestimated differences between the performance

grades they assigned to students and those students' actual standardized assessment scores. Overestimating or underestimating students' level of learning has important implications since it affects both students and parents' understanding of the effectiveness of the learning process. The study argues that misunderstanding or misrepresenting students' levels of learning also directly affects teachers' ability to match appropriate levels of instruction to students' needs in order to maximize learning outcomes. This study is relevant because it is

Marshall (2014) in a PhD dissertation entitled Teachers' Use of Test-Item Banks for Student Assessment in North Carolina Secondary Agricultural Education Programs, explored the usage and incorporation of test item banks in the North Carolina agriculture teacher classroom as well as the motivations for their use and its influence on experiential learning. The descriptive research design was used and a questionnaire was used as data collection tool. The study highlight that a person's motivation are based on three factors such as valence, instrumentality and expectancy. Valence refers to an individual's desire for a specific outcome, instrumentality is the belief of the individual that his performance is related to the desired outcome while expectancy is used on the amount of effort given by an individual toward a certain performance. The results show that the existence of item banks in institutions promotes learning as earlier indicated. Therefore, the availability of item banks ensures fair assessment and promote learning. While this is true, the present study discusses the creation of item banks as an obligatory action path for all universities so as to ensure internal quality assurance in assessment practices.

Muchai, J. (2014) in a dissertation investigated the factors responsible for massive cheating in examinations, methods used in cheating and made recommendations. He argues that there have been significant increase in test cheating, unpermitted student collaboration and an increased prevalence of chronic cheating. The following factors were identified as being responsible for cheating : students learning from a dishonest society, poor teaching, poor learning environment, lack of effective study habits, poor time management, technology and lack of facilities. The study used 22 participants selected from two technical schools in Kenya from randomly selected institutions. The participants comprised of 16 students who had either cheated or knew some students who had cheated in examinations, 4 lecturers who were directly involved in examination administration and 2 examination officers who provided documents collected previously on cheating. A qualitative case study was used to collect data and the data was collected using observation method, structured interviews and document analysis. The data collected through interviews were transcribed and grouped into categories guided by research questions. The results

of the study show several factors that contribute to cheating and recommended that cheating may be curbed through strict supervision of examination, provision of adequate facilities and frequent administration of tests and assignment. The recommendations are in line with the present study.

In a study, Khamis and Bakar (2012) argues that students can enhance their soft skills and learning experience through the use of group projects. The current study aims to determine the weaknesses and strengths of an individual in a group, and relate them with group performance based on the individual presentation marks. The paper presents the concept of group management in measuring individual performance in group projects in an academic setting. Individual performances in similar courses were also compared based on two consecutive semesters. The respondents for this study were first year students who attended similar courses for both semesters. Performance measurement was based on peer review and lecturer evaluations. The criteria for these evaluations were similar for both semesters. The findings of the study revealed that peer review and lecturer evaluations can be used to determine the performance of students in a group project, and these two evaluation tools had no significant correlation. This study highlights other methods of effective and fair assessment practices and while the current study discusses same, it goes on to link it with students' academic performance and as an internal quality assurance strategy.

Discussing the importance of feedback in higher education, Carless, D. (2022) argues that feedback is a powerful tool for improvement of student learning, yet complex to implement effectively. He postulates that feedback involves processes in which learners make use of performance-related inputs to enhance their work or learning strategies. New paradigm feedback practices reaffirm that learners are at the centre of feedback processes and emphasize student generation of insights to inform their development. To harness these insights productively, learners need feedback literacy and capacities to exploit feedback opportunities. New paradigm feedback practices are discussed within five inter-related themes: feedback literacy partnerships; feedback seeking strategies; peer feedback; digitally-enabled feedback; and feedback in online learning environments. Effective feedback in education is an important element in satisfying student learning, therefore, when feedback is ineffective, student learning is affected negatively. Feedback is considered in the current study as an important internal quality assurance strategy which must be promoted and enhance by the university authorities.

Effective teaching and adequate feedback is powerful ways of enhancing learning. Teachers need to seek and learn from feedback such as from students' responses to tests as much as do students, and only when assessment provides such learning is it of value to either of them. Zotovie et

al.(2014), carried out study to assess the effect of feedback on students' performance at the end of semester examinations in Health Training Institutes. It sought specifically to find out the different different feedback strategies and their contribution to student performance. Data was collected through the use of questionnaire involving 460 students and tutors. The results demonstrated that the type of assessment tools used in the institute were quizzes, assignments, project work and examinations which take the form of fill in the blank spaces, MCQs and essay questions. Tutors give an average of (1-3) quizzes which is determined by class size. The results also indicate that feedback does not have any impact on their academic performance however, students would have performed better if feedback was given to them on time, meanwhile optimal timing of feedback might vary based on the feedback's content. Time allocated for teaching and learning is limited for tutors to use some of the instructional period to give feedback to students also, class size pose a problem in giving feedback to students. Without feedback, students go through various courses without assessing their progress only to fail at the final examination such as the licensure examination. Tutors and students should be encouraged to use technology for assisted learning and unlimited and timely feedback, also peer review is another strategy for managing the load to ensure lots of timely feedback; it's essential, however, for tutors to train students to do small-group peer review.

The university should adopt an applicable policy on the promotion of bilingualism and assessment in the institution in follow up to the political effort in promoting bilingualism. While the University of Yaoundé 1 allows students to write examinations in their best official language, it does not ensure that the examination questions are in both official languages for clearer understanding but it also fails to ensure that lecturers master content in both languages to be able to effectively score or mark the students' scripts in both languages without bias or inadequacies. Kouega (2010) in a study revealed that in the University of Yaoundé 1, most Anglophone lecturers are sufficiently bilingual to score scripts written in French well to the satisfaction of French students but that it is the contrary with Francophone lecturers. The same study revealed that Francophone lecturers argue that Anglophones students' scripts were often poorly structured with too many facts lumped up in their scripts, making marking difficult unlike the Francophone students' scripts which always include an introduction, body and conclusion. There is therefore need to address this inconsistency in approaches and mastery of both languages by all lecturers in the university. It is only through the mastery of content in a particular language that one can give accurate scores to a script written in that language, therefore, bilingualism should be a condition sine qua non for recruitment and

retention for all lecturers of the University of Yaoundé 1, if it is to maintain its status as a bilingual university in Cameroon.

Alternative assessment strategies could cause students to be more engaged and motivated to study and this may influence their academic performance. Krawczyk (2017), in a thesis investigated the effects of alternative assessment strategy on students' engagement, motivation and overall learning in an urban private Montessori middle school program in the Midwest, in the United States of America. Two teachers and 13 students participated in two phases (one social studies and one science unit) over the course of six weeks. Teacher-assigned grades on class and homework were removed and replaced with student-determined final grades based on self-assessment using collaboratively created rubrics and individual portfolios. Students kept daily learning logs and completed a pre- and post-unit survey designed to measure their level of engagement, motivation, and learning preferences. The researcher kept daily observational notes as well as tallies of behavioural markers for engagement and disengagement. Students were also invited to give open-ended feedback about their experience at the end of the intervention. The results showed that while the alternative assessment model did not have a direct impact on students' daily engagement or intrinsic motivation, it did increase students' understanding of how their work correlated to a final grade in the unit, and it created opportunities for students to make connections to their learning and thus more actively plan their future work. Additionally, a direct correlation appeared between the level of student activity and student engagement in classes, indicating the importance of reducing passivity as much as possible in the daily learning process.

Agborbechem (2015) argues that society tends to attribute much doubt about the quality of graduates to the activities that are taking place in universities in Cameroon. The purpose of this study was to find out psychosocial factors that influence students' tendencies towards 'sorting' in Universities. He postulates that the greatest amongst these activities is examination malpractice and that recently, a new trend in examination malpractice that is struggling to gain grounds especially in Cameroon universities is 'sorting'. According to the researcher 'sorting' manifests itself in Cameroon universities by the sales of handouts and textbooks, purchase of marks through direct exchange of money and boba jobbing whereby students sacrifice their time to do odd jobs for their lecturers in order to gain favour. The study adopted a survey research design. To collect data, a questionnaire was administered to 388 students in universities in Cameroon. Four hypotheses were formulated in their null form and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The researcher recommended the encouragement of inter-university course examination unions that

could collaborate to take care of the construction and scoring of course examinations. It also recommended that more intensive counselling services for both students and lecturers while severe sanctions should be meted out on perpetrators of 'sorting'. This study is relevant in that it discusses key issues on Cameroon's higher education.

In another study on the propensity to cheat in university examinations, Frenette et al (2020) presents a seven-step approach to maximizing the evidence of validity that led to the development of the questionnaire on cheating in University Examinations (QCUE). The purpose of the present research was to develop a questionnaire and to proceed with its validation process in order to measure the propensity to cheat in exams among university students in Quebec's faculties of education. With good psychometric properties, the QCUE meets a need for a French language questionnaire on the propensity to cheat in examinations and allows to measure the scope of cheating among university students. They argue that cheating in universities is a common practice all over the world and global effort should be taken to combat it. The descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyze the data.

Alhassanl and Anya (2017) in another study on forms and consequences of examination malpractices' in Nigeria's schools and universities, argues that education is a process of teaching and learning and is evaluated through examination at the end of the learning period. The paper defines the concepts of examination malpractice and its numerous forms of sorting. It revealed the origin of examination malpractice in Nigeria, identified the traces of intended malpractice and explained the causal factors of examination malpractices. The paper highlighted the effects and consequences of examination malpractices in Schools and Universities and the efforts made to curb examination misconduct. Finally, while emphasizing the urgent need for institutions to embrace integrity on a sustainable basis, the paper x-rayed what the stakeholders should do to remedy the odious and unacceptable behaviour of examination malpractices.

In another study on the causes and forms of examination malpractices in Nigeria, Onyibe, Uma and Ibina (2015) posit that education which is the process of teaching and learning is evaluated through examination at the learning period. Examination not only serves as feedback for the teacher to ascertain the level of knowledge acquisition but also serves as a measure of knowledge retention by the trainee. Therefore any misconduct or irregularity distorts this feedback and gives false outcome of the learning process. This paper examines the causes and forms of examination malpractice in Nigeria, the consequences on the national development, previous efforts made at curbing it and recommended ways of eradicating examination malpractice in the country. Relevant

journals and conference papers consulted, and the writers' personal experiences during examination invigilation were the sources of data used in the paper. It is discovered that the perennial lack of political will on the part of government to enforce the Decree 20 of 1984 and now, Examination Malpractice Act 33 of 1999 has caused the examination misconduct to remain on the increase in Nigeria. This paper recommends strongly that the Examination Malpractice Act of 1999 should be amended to incorporate that section of Decree 20 of 1984 which stipulated twenty-one years imprisonment without option of a fine for a convicted culprit. And the Act should be diligently enforced no matter whose ox is gored. This study is related to this current in that it highlights the various examination malpractices and measures to check them. It is relevant in that it draws attention on examination malpractice that distorts feedback and give wrong feedback. Therefore, all efforts must be made by any university to ensure that examination malpractice is completely wiped out to ensure quality education.

Nganchi and Charlotte (2020) in study examine the effects of examination malpractice on students' future. It was based on the observation that during examinations study were found moving up and down in the examination hall and sometimes moving out with examination papers with an accompanying invigilator, and sometimes outright bribery of invigilators. The study designed four research objectives and hypotheses. The survey research design was adopted and a questionnaire was used in the study to collect data from 120 respondents. The results revealed that impersonation is negatively related to students' future, there was a relationship between cheating, impersonification and examination malpractices. The study made several recommendations to the ministry of higher education and education stakeholders.

Formative assessment is important in enhancing student learning and achievement. Ozan and Kincal (2018) in a study examined the effects of formative assessment practices on students' academic achievement, attitudes towards lessons and self-regulation skills in the fifth-grade social studies class. A mixed method research approach was used to conduct the study while the research group consisted of 45 students in the class and a teacher who performed the practices. Experimental procedures were carried out for 28 weeks. Social studies performance tests, attitude inventories for social studies classes, self-regulatory learning skills scales, semi structured interview forms, and observation forms were all used as data collection instruments. As a result of the research, it was determined that the experimental group in which the formative assessment practices were performed had a significantly higher academic achievement levels and better attitudes toward the class than the students did in the control group. With regard to the students'

self-regulation skills, although the formative assessment had a positive effect, no significant difference was found between the experimental and control groups. According to the researcher's observations and the interviews conducted with the teacher and students, it was determined that the general view on the application of formative assessment was notably positive.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a survey and correlational research designs. A survey research design is the use of a survey administered either in written form or orally, to quantify, describe or characterize an individual or a group. A survey examines the individual, groups, institutions, methods and materials to describe, compare, contrast, classify, analyse and interpret the entities and events in the field, (Cohen et al, 2007). According to Sharif (2017), survey research designs are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviours or characteristics of the population. So, they help to identify important beliefs and attitudes of individuals towards national trends or policies. A survey study describes trends in the data rather than offering rigorous explanations. The survey is employed in this study to enable the researcher study a large population, relatively quickly, at low cost and which will have a greater statistical power. Moreover, it gives the researcher the ability to collect a large amount of information and having the availability of validated models. It is very appealing when sample generalization is a central research goal and one of the best means available for developing a representative picture of the attitudes and characteristics of a large population. The type of survey used in this study is descriptive. The descriptive survey is chosen because it enables us to collect data at a particular point in time to describe the nature of the existing phenomenon and identify standards against which these existing phenomena can be compared. It also helps us to scan a wide field of issues, population, institutions and programmes to describe or measure any generalised features. It further helps us to assure objectivity and generalization of findings.

Since descriptive survey design will focus mostly on the 'what' of the objective of the study, the researcher also employed the correlational research design in order to enable us to diagnose the 'why' and 'how' of the study. A correlation is a statistical test to determine the tendency or pattern for two or more variables or two sets of data to vary consistently (Sharif, 2017). The statistic that expresses a correlation statistic as a linear relationship is the product moment coefficient. So, a correlation research design describes qualitatively the degree to which variables are related. The

design allows the researcher to predict an outcome, such as the prediction of ability, quality of schooling, student motivation and academic motivation influence student achievement (Anderson and Keith, 1997). This involves collecting data to determine if and to what extent internal quality assurance strategies can influence students' academic performance. In this light, the degree of relationship is determined by the product-moment correlation coefficient referred to as r . The r is measured on a scale of -1 to +1. The more related the variables are, the more accurate the predictions based on their relationships or better still the higher the absolute value the stronger their relationships. The correlational research design was adopted because the researcher intends to determine the strength of the relationship that probably exist between internal quality assurance strategies and students' academic performance. It helps find the direction and the strength of the relationship. Again, the design is less expensive and not time consuming. Correlational research studies are advantageous because they occur in real life situations. For instance, the data collected from this work is typically more applicable to everyday encounters.

The philosophical assumption for this study is pragmatism. Philosophical assumptions are beliefs about the ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology of the study (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Pragmatism is chosen because pragmatist philosophy accepts concepts to be relevant only if they support action (Saunders et al. 2012). It links the choice of research paradigm directly to purpose and nature of the research questions (Creswell, 2003). Pragmatist recognise that there are many different ways of interpreting the world and undertaking research that no single point of view can ever give an entire picture and that there may be multiple realities (Bassong, 2017). Pragmatism emphasizes the active role of the researcher in creating data and theories. Pragmatism as a paradigm is viewed behind the philosophical framework of mixed method research (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006) as cited in Singh (2019). The focus is more on a research problem under study and types of questions asked (Creswell, 1998).

The pragmatist paradigm allows for the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in one study. So, in order to make the research meaningful and legitimate, research conducted within this framework is free to use the methodology of qualitative as well as quantitative paradigms (Gray, 2013). It is based on this philosophy that we adopt the mixed-method approach in order to get a full understanding of the phenomenon under study (Techo, 2016). Also, this approach was chosen because the combination helps to enhance objectivity of data. According to Tashakkori and Taddlie (2010), employing mixed-method offers a feasible approach and unites

the philosophy and methodology. Despite the advantages of the mixed-method approach, Fakis et al (2014) opine that critics hold the view that mixing qualitative and quantitative research methods are difficult because both use different ontological and epistemological assumptions. However, Tasakkori and Tedlie (2010) argue that mixed method is possible given that it frees the researcher from the dual grip of all levels of the research and provide the opportunity for using more than one design.

Data was collected using two self made questionnaires. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. In this study, the researcher employed the questionnaire because it enabled the researcher to acquire adequate, precise and objective information. It is cost effective, time saving and so enables the researcher to gather much information from a greater number of respondents in a relatively short period of time. Questionnaires are ideal for survey study (Mugenda and Mugenda 1999) and are widely used in education to obtain information about current conditions and practices and to make enquiries about attitudes and opinions quickly and in precise form. The questionnaire is a carefully designed instrument for collecting data in accordance with specifications of the research questions and hypotheses. It consist of a set of questions to which the respondents response in writing. It is a form consisting of interrelated questions prepared by the researcher about a research problem under investigation and based on the objectives of the study. The questions were constructed in compliance with the research question and objectives. Two self made questionnaires used were each presented in two main sections: personal or demographic information (gender, age, level of education, experience, faculty, department) and the second part was questions on independent variables (university human resources, student learning resources and infrastructure, student profile and support services, university pedagogic practices and university assessment practices) and the question of academic achievement (skills, certification, promotion, behavior) presented according to the hypotheses.

Validation of Instrument

Validity refers to how well a test measures what it is purported to measure. Validity encompasses the entire experimental concept and establishes whether the results obtained meet all the requirements of the scientific research method .Instruments are devised to measure what the researcher intends to measure and therefore he must ascertain the extent to which the instruments measure what they were designed to measure. Validity is defined as a measure of truth or falsity

of the instrument of data collection. It is classified into internal and external validity of the instruments. This is the most important measure to take to make sure the research instruments serve their intended purpose as every instrument is designed for a particular purpose. Once it is designed appropriately, it measures rightly, and if it is faulty, it misses the target. Validity is an important requirement for both qualitative and quantitative studies (Cohen et al. 2007). To verify the extent to which the research instruments conceived for this study measures accurately what they were intend to measure, the two instruments are subjected to content validity.

Face Validity

Face validity is about whether a test or any measurement tool appears to measure what it is supposed to measure. It is concerned with whether a measure seems relevant and appropriate for what it's assessing on the surface. The instruments were then presented firstly to some lecturers and research experts who read and made some adjustments and judge the instrument appropriate and objective with the subject matter and coverage of the entire topic under study. It was then submitted to the researcher's supervisor for cross-examination and scrutiny. She examined the items by checking the language, clarity of the questions, relevance of the items to the objectives of the study, and items' ability to accurately represent a common theory and practice. After a succinct scrutinisation of these instruments together with the researcher, the former brought in more corrections and modifications which were modified by the researcher. After a third examination, the items on the questionnaire were confirmed valid and relevant to the study thereby confirming the face validity of the instrument.

Content Validity

Content validity refers to the extent to which a test represents the universe of items from which it is drawn and it is particularly useful when evaluating the usefulness of the achievement test (Salkind, 2000). For Amin (2005), content validity is the degree to which the test measures what it was intended to measure. It shows how adequately the instrument samples the universe of knowledge, skills, perceptions and attitudes that the respondents are expected to show. Content validity is therefore the degree to which an experiment of measurement actually reflects the variables designed to measure. In this study, the designer of the instrument made sure that all the questions asked in the questionnaire fully exhaust all what was implied by the research question and hypothesis. To further ensure that the content is valid, the researcher employed Partial Least

Square –Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) and the measurement model analysis consisting of convergent validity and discriminate validity for the questionnaires. Convergent validity calculated stood at 0.7 meanwhile, above the threshold of 0.5 which is the alpha, meanwhile the discriminant validity was 0.65 as recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Hence, confirming strong evidence of the content validity of the instrument measured.

Reliability of Data

According to Drost (2011), reliability is the extent to which measurements are repeatable when different persons perform the measurements on different occasions, under different conditions, with supposedly alternative instruments which measure the same thing. Reliability is consistency of measurement over time or simply, it is the stability of measurement over a variety of conditions. Reliability of the instruments in the study was concern with how consistent the results obtained with the instruments are. If the same result can be consistently achieved by using the same methods under the same circumstances, the measurement is considered reliable. Asika (2012) opines that a researcher who designs a research instrument should be more concern about how consistent the result he obtains from the instruments are. It should be intended to ensure that the instruments give similar, close or even the same results if the study to which the instrument was applied is taken all over again even by a different researcher under the same assumption and condition. Reliability is invariably the consistency between independent measurements of a phenomenon. It denotes the stability, dependability, predictability of the measuring instruments.

Test-retest Reliability

To establish the reliability of the instruments, the researcher employed the test-retest approach. According to Amin (2005), test-retest reliability refers to the degree to which the scores on the same test by the same individual are consistent over time. Test-retest reliability refers to the temporal stability of a test from one measurement session to another (Drost,2011). This is an indication that that result obtained at a given point will be the same or closer to the former scores if the test is administered again after some time. The correlation between scores on the identical tests given at different time operationally defines its test-retest reliability. In this study, the researcher administered the questionnaire to students and of the faculty of law in the University of Yaoundé II SOA, and after two weeks, the researcher administered again the same tool to the same population and the results were analysed with the help of Chronbach's alpha and presented below.

In this study, the researcher employed the Chronbach's alpha statistical tool. Chronbach alpha was used in this study in order to assess the reliability, or better still the internal consistency of the set of scale or test items used in this study. According to Salkind (2000), internal consistency examines the reliability within a particular set of items. Internal consistency is evaluated by correlating performance on each of the items in a test or scale with total performance on the test or scale that takes the form of a correlation coefficient. Correlations are expressed as a numerical value, represented by lowercase *r*. for instance; the correlation test between test A and test B would be represented as $r_{\text{testA. testB}}$. In which case, the scores in test A and the scores in test B are correlated. The reliability coefficient or correlation coefficient ranges from -1.00 to +1.00. A value of 1.00 would be the most appropriate reliability, where there is no error in the measurement process.

Discussion of the Findings

The first objective of the study was to find out the effects of the university test construction practices on students' academic performance. The research question derived from the objective was: What is the link between the university test construction practices and students' academic performance? A null hypothesis was derived from the research question which states that the university test construction practices have no significant relationship with students' academic performance. Based on the findings, the results of the study reveal that the university test construction practices has a strong relationship with students' academic performance. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected while the alternative hypothesis was upheld. This influenced the researcher to conclude that the university test construction practices strongly relate to students' academic performance. This was certainly true because even with the best pedagogical practices, academic performance cannot be deduced without the use of good assessment practice. The findings corroborates with similar findings by Rawlusk (2018) whose analysis and evaluation of assessment illustrate that higher education teachers use both authentic activities and examinations as assessment practices, and argues the study show very limited application of the various types of authentic tasks. This limited use of the many types of authentic techniques brings into question whether teachers fully understand how the various strategies can enhance learning

The second objective of the study was to establish a link between the university test administration strategies and students' academic performance. The research question derived from the objective was: What is the link between the university test administration strategies and students' academic performance? A null hypothesis was derived from the research question which states that the university test administration strategies have no significant relationship with students' academic performance. Based on the findings, the results of the study reveal that the university test administration strategies has a strong relationship with students' academic performance. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected while the alternative hypothesis was upheld. This influenced the researcher to conclude that the university test administration strategies strongly relate to students' academic performance. This was certainly true because even with the best pedagogical practices, academic performance cannot be deduced without the use of good assessment practice. **The findings corroborates with similar findings by Rawlusk (2018) whose analysis and evaluation of assessment illustrate that higher education teachers use both authentic activities and examinations as assessment practices, and argues the study show very limited application of the various types of authentic tasks.** This limited use of the many types of authentic techniques brings into question whether teachers fully understand how the various strategies can enhance learning

The third objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between the university test scoring strategies and students' academic performance. The research question derived from the objective was: What is the link between the the university test scoring strategies and students' academic performance? A null hypothesis was derived from the research question which states that the the university test scoring strategies have no significant relationship with students' academic performance. Based on the findings, the results of the study reveal that the the university test scoring strategies has a strong relationship with students' academic performance. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected while the alternative hypothesis was upheld. This influenced the researcher to conclude that the university test administration strategies strongly relate to students' academic performance. This was certainly true because even with the best pedagogical practices, academic performance cannot be deduced without the use of good assessment practice. **The findings corroborates with similar findings by Rawlusk (2018) whose analysis and evaluation of assessment illustrate that higher education teachers use both authentic activities and examinations as assessment practices, and argues the study show very limited application of the various types of authentic tasks.** This limited use of the many types of

authentic techniques brings into question whether teachers fully understand how the various strategies can enhance learning

Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effects of the internal quality assurance strategies on students' academic performance in the University of Yaounde 1. Specifically, it sought to find out the link between the university test construction practices and students' academic performance, the link between between the university test administration strategies and students' academic performance and the relationship between the university test scoring strategies and students' academic performance. The study found out that the internal quality assurance strategies in the university test construction, test administration and test scoring strategies significantly affected students' academic performance in the University of Yaounde 1. Therefore, the university stakeholders, management and teachers should each engage in a fervent effort in the establishment and implementation of internal quality assurance structures to ensure the monitoring and evaluation of assessment practices of the Cameroon universities.

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