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Research Article

Assessment of Stakeholders' Readiness for Financial Resources Generation Under the New Higher Education Policy in (Anglo-Saxon) Public Universities in Cameroon

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Abstract

The study assessed stakeholders' readiness for the implementation of the New Higher Education Policy (NHEP) on financial resources in the Anglo-Saxon Public Universities (APU) of Bamenda (UBa) and Buea (UB) in Cameroon. The study was guided by two research objectives two hypotheses relating to readiness for implementation of tuition and related fees, and production of income generation goods in both institutions as spelt out in section 61 of the NHEP. The researcher adopted a concurrent sequential design. The population of the study constituted 208,554 stakeholders and a convenient sample size of 384 adopted through a combination of the Krejcie and Morgan formular stratified purposive and snowball sampling techniques. A structured questionnaire tagged - Anglo-Saxon Public Universities Stakeholders Questionnaire (APUS-Q) and an interview guide were used as instruments for data collection. Descriptive (mean scores, percentages, and standard deviation) and inferential (independent t-test) statistics were used in data analysis. An institutional comparative analysis revealed the following results: stakeholders' of UBa and UB were readiness to implement tuition and related fees as spelt out in the new policy. UBa appeared more ready with approval rating of 70.05% as against 29.95% disapproval rating - representing a mean score readiness of ($\bar{x}$ = 28.177; SD = 4.5159). While UB had an approval rating of 65.73% as against 34.27% disapproval rating – representing a mean score readiness of ($\bar{x}$ = 27.075, SD = 4.3355). There was a statistically significant difference in mean score readiness between UBa and UB (t = 2.330 and p-value = 0.020), thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. Results on both institutions readiness to produce income generation goods showed that UB appeared relatively ready with an approval rating of 56.3% as against 43.7% disapproval rating - representing an overall mean score readiness of ($\bar{x}$ = 27.061; SD = 4.0540). On the contrary, UBa indicated not ready for this with an approval rating of 36.4% as against 63.6% disapproval rating – representing a mean score readiness of ($\bar{x}$ = 20.701, SD = 3.8471). The t-value (-14.938) and P-value (0.000), showed a statistically significant difference in the mean score readiness of UBa and UB thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. The study overall recommended an absolute decentralised approach to public university management especially those operating under the Anglo-Saxon tradition in order to avoid bureaucratic barriers to the implementation of the new higher education policy within the Cameroon.

Keywords

Stakeholders, Financial Resource Generation, Higher Education Policy, Anglo-Saxon Public Universities, Cameroon

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1. Introduction

The effective functioning of the university education system in Cameroon is heavily dependent on educational finance, which is crucial for achieving higher education goals. Historically, the government funded 70 to 90 per cent of public universities, but these findings have diminished due to competing financial commitments. Rapid increase in teaching staff, non-teaching staff, and student enrolment, along with the establishment of more state universities, has escalated costs, further strained by crises like Boko Haram and the Anglophone conflict [11]. In response, the government has introduced Law N° 2023/007 of 25th July, 2023 on Higher Education Policy in Cameroon to involve all stakeholders in financing public universities [41]. Stakeholders' contributions are linked to their financial input towards enhancing educational quality. Education is viewed as a vital investment for national development, necessitating substantial funding in the sector. This study aims to assess stakeholders' readiness for generating financial resources under the new higher education policy in Anglo-Saxon public universities in Cameroon, focusing on their willingness to pay tuition and related fees, as well as their readiness to produce income-generating goods as outlined in section 61 of Law No 2023/007 of 25th July, 2023 on Higher Education Policy in Cameroon [41].

Contextually, the evolution of higher education in Cameroon is anchored in the 1996 Constitution and subsequent policies emphasising the government's role in ensuring accessible education for its citizens. This responsibility is underscored by laws such as Law N° 98/004 of 14th April 1998 and Law No. 2001/005 of 16th April/2001, which guide the direction of education and higher education, respectively [27]. One of the crucial problems faced by Cameroon after their independence was the need for a trained national corps, especially for senior positions in the civil service. The absence of higher institutions of learning at the time led Cameroonians to pursue university education abroad. However, the education they acquired overseas was poorly adapted to the local realities. It is based on this that a presidential decree 62/DF/289 of July 1962 created the Federal University of Cameroon, which opened its doors effectively in September 1962. The explosion in student population at the Federal University of Cameroon led to the enactment of presidential decree no. 77/108 of 28th April 1977, creating four university Centers, including the University Centers of Dschang, Ngaoundere, Douala and Buea [13, 14, 29, 30, 37].

The establishment of the Anglo-Saxon University of Buea and the University of Bamenda was a significant response to the growing student population in Cameroon, aimed at enhancing academic and professional development. The University of Buea, founded in 1993, was the first Anglo-Saxon university in the country, designed to provide quality education that aligns with both national and international standards [4, 14]. This institution sought to prepare students for the job market, contributing to national development [41]. Similarly, the Anglo-Saxon University of Bamenda was founded to enhance access to higher education while promoting research and innovation that tackle local challenges [19]. These universities are dedicated to nurturing skilled graduates who can support economic growth across various sectors, including agriculture, technology, and services [42]. By establishing partnerships with foreign institutions, these universities seek to improve educational quality and research capabilities [19]. Overall, the creation of the Anglo-Saxon University of Bamenda and the University of Buea demonstrates a commitment to addressing the educational needs of Cameroonians whilst contributing to the nation's overall development.

Readiness in tuition and related fees, along with the generation of income through various goods and services in universities, plays a crucial role in supporting the goals of state universities in Cameroon by ensuring sustainable financial resources for high-quality education and research initiatives. By establishing transparent and manageable tuition structures, universities can facilitate access for a broader range of students, particularly from marginalised backgrounds, thereby promoting inclusivity and equity in higher education [17]. Income-generating activities, such as partnerships with industries, commercialisation of research outputs, and provision of specialised training programs, can enhance the university's capacity to invest in modern facilities, attract qualified faculty, and support innovative research projects [26]. This financial stability not only contributes to the overall educational experience but also strengthens the university's role in preparing skilled graduates who can effectively meet the demands of the job market and contribute to national development. Furthermore, these efforts foster collaboration with international institutions, enhancing educational quality and promoting cultural exchange, which aligns with the broader objectives of social cohesion and civic responsibility.

The goals reflect the commitment of Cameroonian state universities to contribute to the overall development of the nation while addressing the educational needs of its citizens. In response to the fifth five-year development plan (1981-1986), Cameroon established six public universities through Decree No. 93/026 on January 19, 1993, to enhance academic and professional development for its citizens. The reforms aimed to decentralise education by alleviating pressures on the Federal University of Yaoundé and professionalising university studies to produce graduates ready for the job market [12, 13], Crucial objectives included increasing stakeholder participation in university financing, diversifying academic programs to meet labour market needs, ensuring accessibility for qualified citizens, fostering democratic values and national unity, granting universities greater autonomy, improving research environments, and enhancing staff and student welfare [14, 29, 42, 31, 38]. Expand and enhance the involvement of various stakeholders in funding and overseeing public universities by implementing higher registration

fees (increased from a modest 3300 CFA to 50000 CFA) and engaging the community to diversify funding sources.

Since the 1993 reforms, universities have faced significant challenges due to inadequate financial support, inefficient resource management, and a heavy reliance on government funding, which typically covers 70% of their budgets [16]. The remaining 30% comes from student fees, internal revenue sources, and donations [32, 36]. However, a substantial portion of university budgets, over 65%, is allocated to recurrent expenditures, leaving only 35% for capital projects and research [24]. For instance, in 2014 and 2015, the University of Buea distributed a large portion of the presidential excellence grants to students instead of investing those funds in enhancing learning infrastructure and research initiatives, raising questions about the strategic allocation of financial resources to improve educational quality [31, 33]. Evaluations reveal that university budgets in Cameroon still fail to adequately support research initiatives, resulting in on-going underfunding for institutional, staff, and postgraduate research [26, 27]. Funding for most research projects continues to be primarily derived from international donors and research agencies, with individual researchers or collaborative groups actively applying for these funds. Recent studies highlight various types of grants available within the funding system, which originate from the Ministry of Higher Education and filter down through universities to basic units. The first type is a traditional research allowance, which has been maintained at a range of 90,000 to 200,000 FCFA based on academic rank and is disbursed as direct government subsidies for research activities. More recently, the "Research Modernisation Grant" (RMG) was introduced, designed to provide a quarterly bonus to academic researchers at State Universities, further aiming to enhance research efforts [27, 39]. Despite these initiatives, significant gaps in funding for comprehensive research development remain a pressing challenge [14].

Cameroon universities require a funding policy that involves stakeholders' willingness to implement a new financial approach that is not only effective and efficient but also sustainable. As noted in the preceding paragraphs, the current primary funding source of government subvention is neither feasible nor sustainable in the 21st century. Therefore, a review is necessary, but this requires the preparedness of stakeholders to implement the new Higher Education Policy on financial resources in Anglo-Saxon universities in Cameroon. This could potentially improve HE funding and the sustainability of universities all over the country. Achieving this successfully depends on the full participation and contribution of Higher Education Stakeholders (HES). Law N°: 2023/007 of 25th July, 2023, on Higher Education Policy in Cameroon, section 61 sub-section I, which outlines the financial framework for public higher education institutions in Cameroon, necessitates this study to determine whether various stakeholders are ready. This policy mandates that the financial resources of these two Anglo-Saxon public universities derive from a diverse range of sources, including state subsidies, student tuition and training fees, revenue from the production of goods and intellectual services, as well as donations, local government support, and international cooperation [41]. For effective execution, students, parents, administrative staff, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, community members and business community members must collaborate closely to ensure that systems are established for the efficient management and allocation of these funds. Furthermore, there is a need for stakeholders to engage in proactive dialogue to address potential challenges and to optimise resource mobilisation in alignment with the stipulated requirements, ultimately enhancing the overall quality and accessibility of higher education in the region.

Law N°: 2023/007 of 25th July, 2023 on Higher Education Policy in Cameroon seeks to reform and modernise higher education governance in Cameroon, addressing challenges such as the significant rise in teaching staff, non-teaching staff, student enrolment, and the number of state universities from 2001 to 2023 [41]. This growth has led to increased costs, further exacerbated by crises like the Boko Haram insurgency and the Anglophone crisis, which have diverted funds towards security needs. The bill proposes diversifying funding sources for public higher education, including state subsidies, tuition fees, donations, and loans, recognising that sole government funding is no longer sustainable in the context of neoliberal economic pressures [27]. It emphasises that higher education is now an achievement that must be paid for by beneficiaries, while the government's role shifts to supervisory and supportive functions. Additionally, it highlights the importance of reducing dropout rates and improving completion and success rates in higher education through targeted educational reforms.

2. Review of Related Literature

University stakeholders refer to individuals or groups of persons who are interested in the operations and success of universities or any university. Based on their interests, stakeholders contribute to the attainment of university goals and objectives through difference means and ways including material and financial donations, knowledge, infrastructure, research and administrative services, employment of graduates, supplies and other related patronages among others for examples of internal stakeholders are students, faculty/lecturers, support staff, and administrators while external stakeholders are parents, Alumni, Government representatives, members of diplomatic corps, Business/industries, local communities and international organizations others [27]. These diverse groups of individuals and organizations have vested interests in the institution's activities, outcomes, and overall mission. Each stakeholder group plays a crucial role in shaping the university's policies, programs, and reputation, contributing to its success and sustainability [45, 50]. Recent studies emphasize the importance of stakeholder engagement in higher education governance, financing and deci-

sion-making processes, highlighting how collaborative approaches can enhance institutional effectiveness and responsiveness to societal needs [44, 54]. As universities increasingly face challenges such as funding constraints and evolving educational demands, understanding and addressing the needs and expectations of various stakeholders becomes essential for strategic planning and long-term viability [48].

Financial resource generation in higher education has increasingly shifted towards diversified funding models to enhance institutional sustainability and academic quality. Universities are actively pursuing alternative revenue streams such as online education, research grants, philanthropic donations, and partnerships with industry [49]. The rise of digital platforms has facilitated crowdfunding initiatives for specific projects, allowing alumni and community members to contribute directly to university programs [43]. Additionally, many institutions are focusing on improving their financial management practices and investment strategies to maximize endowment returns, thereby ensuring long-term financial health [46]. As competition for state funding and tuition revenue intensifies, the emphasis on innovative financial strategies continues to grow in the higher education sector.

Higher education policy in Cameroon has evolved significantly in response to both national development goals and global educational trends. The government has prioritized expanding access to higher education to meet the demands of a growing youth population and to enhance the country's human capital [52]. Recent reforms have focused on improving the quality of education through the establishment of accreditation bodies and the promotion of research and innovation [41]. Additionally, the integration of technology in teaching and learning processes has been emphasized, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted the need for flexible learning modalities [51]. However, challenges such as inadequate funding, infrastructure deficits, and disparities between public and private institutions continue to hinder the effectiveness of these policies [47]. Overall, while significant strides have been made, ongoing efforts are necessary to align higher education with both local needs and international standards.

Anglo-Saxon public university in Cameroon is characterized by a model that emphasizes academic freedom, research-oriented education, and a liberal arts curriculum, which contrasts with the more traditional French-style education system prevalent in the country [53]. This model aims to foster critical thinking and innovation among students, preparing them for global competitiveness. Recent reforms have sought to align these universities with international standards, promoting greater autonomy and accountability within public institutions [47]. However, challenges such as inadequate funding, limited infrastructure, and disparities in educational quality remain significant obstacles to the successful implementation of this model [51]. Overall, while the Anglo-Saxon public university framework presents opportunities for educational advancement in Cameroon, its effectiveness is contingent on addressing these systemic issues.

The preparedness of university stakeholders to generate financial resources is crucial for the sustainability and effectiveness of higher education institutions. Stakeholders, including administrators, students, parents, administrative staff, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, and the business community, must be capable of addressing financial challenges amid rising operational costs and declining state support. Effective strategizing of financial resource allocation is vital for adapting to changing economic conditions [3]. Understanding the diverse needs of stakeholders can improve collaboration in securing funding and optimizing resources. Therefore, assessing stakeholders' readiness is vital for developing a resilient academic environment [7]. Universities are increasingly seeking diverse income sources beyond traditional funding, such as tuition and government support, by developing and selling goods like branded merchandise and academic publications [16, 25]. This approach not only generates essential financial resources but also enhances brand visibility and community engagement. By leveraging their intellectual capital, institutions can create innovative products for both academic and non-academic audiences [6]. This fosters a culture of entrepreneurship within the academic environment. Ultimately, focusing on income generation through goods supports universities' educational missions and promotes long-term growth [5]. University tuition and related fees have become a critical concern for students, families, and policymakers alike, as the cost of higher education continues to rise globally. This tuition increase can be attributed to various factors, including reduced state funding, administrative costs, and the growing demand for enhanced facilities and services. As a result, students often face significant financial burdens, leading to increased student debt and potential barriers to access for low-income individuals ([7]. Understanding the implications of tuition and fees is essential for assessing the overall landscape of higher education and its accessibility, as well as for informing policy decisions aimed at making college more affordable [18].

Rising university tuition and fees have become a significant concern for students, families, and policymakers globally [3]. Some factors contributing to this increase include reduced state funding, higher administrative costs, and the demand for better facilities and services. As a result, many students are burdened with substantial debt, which can hinder access to higher education for low-income individuals. Understanding these financial dynamics is crucial for evaluating the accessibility of higher education. Furthermore, it can guide policy decisions aimed at making college more affordable for all [7].

Theoretically, this comparative analysis of stakeholder readiness for implementing the New Higher Education Policy on financial resources is based on Stakeholders theory by R. Edward Freeman (1984), Economic Theory of Higher Education Financing by Nicholas Bar (2004), and the Educational Change model by Michael Fullan (1940-present).

Stakeholder theory emphasizes the importance of identifying and engaging all parties of interest in higher education governance. These parties include students, parents, administrative staff, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, community members, business community members and government entities. Effective communication and collaboration among stakeholders can lead to more equitable tuition structures and funding allocation. Stakeholders' readiness under the new higher education policy demands that all stakeholders involved in the higher education governance process be carried along, thus in generating financial resources for university governance processes in Anglo-Saxon Public Universities. It is not only the university administration or the government that is to be responsible; all these stakeholders have to be carried along.

The economic theory of higher education financing by Nicolas Barr (2004) emphasizes the role of public and private funding in shaping tuition rates and institutional revenue streams. Barr is a strong proponent of well-designed tuition fees [4]. He argues that since the primary beneficiary of a degree is the individual (through higher lifetime earnings), it is economically efficient and fair for them to contribute to the cost. Fees provide much-needed revenue for universities, enabling them to maintain quality, expand access, and reduce their dependence on unpredictable government budgets. Barr's framework provided the intellectual justification for Cameroon, where the Anglo-Saxon public university moved away from the system where they remain largely on government subvention and introduced the system where the universities are generating part of their funds through school fees and income-generating goods. This will allow for massive expansion of these two universities, whereby it will make them less dependent on the state and give them certain autonomy. Instead of receiving a block grant from the government for teaching, universities now receive revenue directly from tuition fees and income-generating goods. This gives Anglo-Saxon public universities a more stable and predictable income stream tied to student numbers. It also, in theory, makes them more responsive to student demand.

Change Modernisation model by Michael Fullan (1940-present): Michael Fullan's Change Model emphasizes that change is a process involving uncertainty, conflict and continuous learning and can be developed through collaboration among stakeholders to drive success. It focuses on building capacity within institutions to implement sustainable changes effectively. The model advocates for continuous evaluation and adaptation to ensure relevant outcomes. Institutions must experience change as a process (initiation, implementation and continuation), even if they resist, they must undergo the change process to advance. In relation to this study, the New Higher Education Policy on HE financing on financial resources is a change (from Law No. 2001/005 of 16th April 2001, from state-dependent to Law No. 2023/007 of 25th July 2023, of university financial independence), which has a process, and we are at the level of implementation. The responsibility of the stakeholder is to understand and be ready for the change and accept. This study is interested in knowing whether these two Anglo-Saxon Public Universities' stakeholders are ready to accept and implement this change in terms of tuition and related fees, and income generation goods.

3. Statement of the Problem

Financial resources are crucial for the effective functioning of higher education institutions in Cameroon, especially public universities, which have historically relied on government funding for 70% to 90% of their budgets. However, due to increasing financial pressures in other sectors, this support has declined over time. There are reports a significant growth in teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as student enrolment, alongside the establishment of more state universities, all of which have strained financial resources. This has been further exacerbated by crises such as the Boko Haram insurgency and the Anglophone crisis [41]. In response, the government introduced the New Higher Education Policy (NHEP) Law N° 2023/007 of 25th July, 2023, which aims to modernize university governance and diversify funding sources by involving stakeholders in financing public universities [41]. According to the policy, institutions will derive their resources from various channels, including state subsidies, tuition fees, donations, and loans, while managing these funds in accordance with the state's fiscal regime.

This change has introduced the need for tuition and related fees, as well as the production of income-generating goods, seen as innovations that universities are called upon to adopt. The question is whether the stakeholders are ready to implement these innovations. Previous attempts to implement tuition and related fees have often faced resistance from stakeholders, particularly students and parents. Administrators have mostly relied on government subsidies and have made little or no effort to engage in income-generating activities within their institutions. It is therefore necessary to explore the situation on the ground, especially in the two Anglo-Saxon public universities. The study was aimed at assessing stakeholders' readiness for the implementation of the NHEP on financial resources in APU in Cameroon. Specifically, the study is to:

1) Assess stakeholders' readiness to implement (pay) tuition and related fees in APU in Cameroon.
2) Examine stakeholders' readiness to implement (produce) income generation goods in APU in Cameroon.

4. Research Methods

The research adopted a positivist and post-positivist approach (quantitative and qualitative) with a concurrent sequential design. The researcher collected both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously. This parallel approach

allowed the researcher to compare and contrast data types in real time for a comprehensive understanding. The datasets were analysed separately and then integrated. This study was conducted in Cameroon, specifically, the two Anglo-Saxon Public Universities out of the 11 state Universities (the University of Bamenda and the University of Buea). The Parent population for this study was made up of all HE stakeholders in Cameron (public). A parent population is a collection of all members of a defined group that are being studied or from which the information was collected for data-driven decisions. The population is: Parents, students, academic staff, non-academic staff, administrative staff, and the business community. With the use of multiple sampling techniques such as purposive, disproportional stratified, and the Krejcie and Morgan table, a sample of 384 was drawn from 208,554. These came from the 7 groups of stakeholders, who constituted all stakeholders of public Anglo-Saxon universities in Cameroon in the cities of Bamenda and Buea (Parents, students, academic staff, non-academic staff, administrative staff, and business community).

Table 1. Anglo-Saxon Public Universities' Stakeholders Proportionately chosen.

S/N	HES	Target Population		Sample Size		Sub Total
		Bamenda	Buea	Bamenda	Buea	
1	Students	22,672	25,863	83	129	212
2	Parents	6,600	150,000	15	20	35
3	Academic staff	565	699	20	30	50
4	Non-academic staff	557	606	20	25	45
5	Administrative staff	365	397	12	15	27
6	Business community (members)	130	100	8	7	15
Total		30,889	177,665	158	226	384

Sources: University of Bamenda and Buea (2025)

Data collection instruments included a semi-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher and an interview guide. The questionnaire was named the Anglo-Saxon Public Universities Stakeholders' Questionnaire (APUS-Q). It consisted of two main sections: Section A focused on the demographic details of respondents, such as stakeholder groups and gender, while Section B contained the questionnaire items, which were developed from literature on higher education financing. There was a total of 20 items, evenly split between tuition and related fees and income-generation goods. Respondents had four response options for the 20 items: Highly Approved (HA), Approved (A), Disapproved (D), and Highly Disapproved (HD). The ten items (1–10) assessed tuition and related fees, while the ten items (11-20) assessed income-generating goods. The interview guide consisted of two main sections: Section A focused on the demographic details of respondents, such as stakeholder groups and gender, while Section B contained the interview items, which were developed from literature on higher education financing. There was a total of 4 interview items with 2 each, per objective, for which respondents' answers could prompt for more clarity.

The questionnaire and interview guide were evaluated for content and face validity by experts in education and social sciences. the APUS-Q was then pilot tested on fifty (50) stakeholders, where 25 were from UBa and 25 from UB (20 students, 10 parents, 10 academic staff, 8 non-academic staff, administrative staff and 2 business community staff), who were part of the target population, but not part of the sampled population. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, resulting in a general reliability coefficient of 0.94, indicating good internal consistency. The researchers, assisted by a research assistant, took a total of one month and two weeks to administer the instruments to the selected participants. After distributing the questionnaires, interviews were granted to 2 stakeholders from each participating institution. Ethical considerations were prioritised by obtaining authorisation for data collection from the relevant authorities of the institutions involved in the study, as well as securing informed consent from respondents who voluntarily chose to participate.

After a 100% return rate, the questionnaire and interview were coded, and both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the responses and verify the hypotheses. Descriptive (Mean scores and standard deviations) and inferential statistical (t-test) techniques were adopted and used to analyse and justify the research questions and research hypothesis. The core purpose of a t-test was to assess whether the mean scores of UBa and UB stakeholders were statisti-

cally different (hypothesis). Essentially, it helped the researcher decide whether the observed difference between the groups is likely due to a real effect or just random chance. The t-test calculated the test statistic, which is the mean measure of the difference between the sample means relative to the variability within the samples.

To determine whether to reject or retain the hypothesis in this work, we examine the p-value obtained from the t-test results. If the p-value (Sig. (2-tailed)) is less than the common alpha level of 0.05, this indicates that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean readiness score of stakeholders; we reject the null and retain the alternative. When the p-value (Sig. (2-tailed) is greater than the common alpha level of 0.05, this indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean readiness score of stakeholders; we reject the alternative and retain the null. The analysis was done with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.

5. Results and Discussion

Table 2. Institutions Distributions.

Institution		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	UBa	159	41.4	41.4	41.4
	UB	225	58.6	58.6	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	

Sources: Researchers' field work (2025)

This frequency table indicates that the institutional distribution of the study consists of 384 participants. The majority of participants (225 individuals, or 58.6% of the total sample) were from the University of Buea (UB), while 159 participants, representing 41.4% of the sample, were from the University of Bamenda. This distribution highlights a greater representation from the University of Buea, likely due to its larger population density in comparison to the University of Bamenda.

Table 3. University Stakes Category.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Students	212	55.2	55.2	55.2
	Parents	35	9.1	9.1	64.3
	Academic Staff	50	13.0	13.0	77.3
	None-Academic Staff	45	11.7	11.7	89.1
	Administrative Staff	27	7.0	7.0	96.1
	Business Communities	15	3.9	3.9	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researchers' field work (2025)

This table presents the university stakeholders category of groups, encompassing a total sample of 384 participants, and provides a comprehensive breakdown of the different stakeholder groups involved in the study. The most prominent group, constituting over half of the respondents, was Students, with 212 individuals representing 55.2% of the sample. Following students, Academic Staff made up the next largest segment with 50 participants (13.0%), closely trailed by Non-Academic Staff at 45 participants (11.7%). Parents accounted for 35 individuals (9.1%), while Administrative Staff contributed 27 participants (7.0%). The smallest group represented was Business Communities, with only 15 participants, accounting

for 3.9%, and were selected because they have a direct interest in or are affected by the university's activities and outcomes.

Objective One: Assess stakeholders' readiness to implement (pay) tuition and related fees in APU in Cameroon.

Table 4. *Descriptive statistics on stakeholders to implement tuition and related fees in APU in Cameroon.*

Questionnaire Items	Institutions	N	Mean	Approval (HA/A) %	Disapproval (D/SD) %	Std. Deviation	Decision
Tuition fees should be introduced in the university to ensure better funding for higher education institutions.	UBa	146	2.95	65	35	.908	A
	UB	214	3.36	78.7	21.3	.875	A
Tuition fees are necessary to reduce the financial burden of higher education funding on the State	UBa	146	3.14	71.3	28.7	.796	A
	UB	214	3.36	78.7	21.3	.790	A
The university should introduce a late registration fee for students who fail to pay fees on the due date.	UBa	146	3.18	72.7	27.3	.733	A
	UB	214	2.52	50.7	49.3	1.120	A
The university should introduce paid certification programs for business/professional executives.	UBa	146	3.20	73.3	26.7	.767	A
	UB	214	3.12	70.7	29.3	1.068	A
The amount of tuition fees should be based on the student's academic program.	UBa	146	3.13	71	29	.781	A
	UB	214	2.93	63.3	35.7	.856	A
Tuition fees should be higher for international students than for domestic students.	UBa	146	3.01	67	33	.805	A
	UB	214	2.57	52.3	47.7	1.268	A
The university should charge a Resit-examination fee to increase university funding.	UBa	146	2.18	39.3	60.7	.852	A
	UB	214	2.51	50.3	49.7	1.266	A
The university should impose a fee for certification of certificates/attestations.	UBa	146	2.15	38.3	61.7	.833	A
	UB	214	2.87	62.3	37.7	1.104	A
The university should introduce/charge a fee for issuing attestation of completion of studies.	UBa	146	2.18	39.3	60.7	.811	D
	UB	214	1.57	19	81	.824	D
Registration fees should be different from the tuition fee.	UBa	146	3.01	67	33	.805	A
	UB	214	2.27	42.3	57.7	1.139	D

Sources: Researchers' field work (2025)

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 4 provide insights into stakeholder readiness to implement tuition and related fees at APU in Cameroon, as outlined in Section 61 of the National Higher Education Policy (NHEP). the respondents are UBa and UB stakeholders. Both UBa and UB stakeholders generally support the introduction of tuition fees as a means to enhance funding for higher education. UBa has a mean score of 2.95, and UB has a higher mean score of 3.36 for the item "Tuition fees should be introduced in the university to ensure better funding for higher education institutions." The approval rates are 65% for UBa and 78.7% for UB, indicating a stronger consensus at UB. Stakeholders from both institutions agree that tuition fees are necessary to alleviate the financial burden on the state, with mean scores of 3.14 (71.3% approval) for UBa and 3.36 (78.7% approval) for UB. This suggests recognition of the financial challenges faced by the government in supporting higher education. The introduction of a late registration fee garners mixed response. UBa shows a mean score of 3.18 (72.7% approval), indicating support, while UB has a significantly lower mean score of 2.52 (50.7% approval), suggesting ambivalence or opposition among its stakeholders. There is a favourable attitude towards introducing paid certification programs for business/professional executives, with mean scores of 3.20 (73.3% approval) for UBa and 3.12 (70.7% approval) for UB, indicating readiness to diversify revenue sources through professional development offerings.

Stakeholders at both institutions agree that tuition fees should vary based on academic programs, with UBa scoring 3.13 (71% approval) and UB scoring lower at 2.93 (63.3% approval). This reflects an understanding that different programs may require varying levels of resources. The opinion is divided regarding higher tuition fees for international students, with UBa showing some support (mean score of 3.01, 67% approval) compared to

UB's lower score of 2.57 (52.3% approval), indicating less consensus on this issue. Both institutions show disapproval for charging fees related to resit examinations and certification of certificates/attestations, with UBa scoring 2.18 (39.3% approval) and 2.15 (38.3% approval) respectively, and UB scoring even lower at 2.51 (50.3% approval) for resit examination fees and 2.87 (62.3% approval) for certification fees. The proposal to charge for issuing attestations of completion of studies receives significant disapproval, particularly from UB stakeholders, who show a mean score of 1.57 (19% approval), indicating strong resistance to this idea. While UBa stakeholders support the idea that registration fees should differ from tuition fees (mean score of 3.01, 67% approval), UB stakeholders show a lack of consensus with a lower mean score of 2.27 (42.3% approval), suggesting differing views on fee structures. Overall, the data indicate that stakeholders at both UBa and UB are generally supportive of implementing tuition and related fees as a strategy to improve funding for higher education, although there are notable differences in opinions regarding specific fee structures and types. While there is agreement on some aspects, significant disapproval exists for certain fee implementations, particularly those perceived as additional burdens on students, such as resit examination fees and certification charges. This highlights the need for careful consideration and communication when proposing new financial policies in higher education institutions in Cameroon.

Table 5. *Summary of descriptive statistics on stakeholders' readiness for implementation of tuition and related fees in UBa and UB.*

	Institution	N	Mean	Approval (%)	Disapproval (%)	Std.	Decision
Overall mean score readiness for tuition & related fees	UBa	147	28.177	70.05	29.95	4.5159	Approved
	UB	214	27.075	65.73	34.27	4.3355	Approved

Sources: Researchers' field work (2025)

The table presents summary statistics related to stakeholders' readiness to implement tuition and related fee in the two institutions under study. Comparing the overall results from the two institutions (UBa and UB), it is observed that UBa appeared more ready with a stakeholder approval rating of 70.05% as against 29.95% disapproval rating - representing a mean score readiness of ($\bar{x}$ = 28.177; SD = 4.5159) while UB had a stakeholder approval rating of 65.73% as against 34.27% disapproval rating – representing a mean score readiness of ($\bar{x}$ = 27.075, SD = 4.3355). The overall mean score difference ($\bar{x}$ = 1.102; SD = 0.1804) between the two institutions indicates that the average tuition and related fees in UBa is higher than in UB, which explains the differing readiness ratings.

To conclude, factors such as perceived value of education, financial aid availability, and other socio-economic influences could play significant roles in shaping these opinions. Understanding these dynamics may help institutions adjust their tuition strategies to improve student satisfaction and approval ratings.

Testing of Hypothesis

H_{O1}: There is no significant difference in the mean score readiness of stakeholders of the two APU in Cameroon on the payment of tuition and related fees.

Table 6. *Independent sample test on stakeholders' readiness for tuition and related fees for UBa and UB.*

		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Tuition and Related Fees	Equal variances assumed	1.158	.283	2.330	358	.020	1.1018	.4729	.1718	2.0317
	Equal variances not assumed			2.313	305.646	.021	1.1018	.4764	.1643	2.0392

Sources: Researcher's field work (2025)

From the analyses, the calculated T-value stood at (2.330) with a p-value (0.020), which is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis (H01) is therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha1) upheld. This means that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores readiness of stakeholders of both institutions on the payment of tuition and

related fees. The Mean Difference (1.1018) suggested that, on average, the readiness score of UBa was (1.1018) points higher than that of UB. This could be because UBa started with a good number of '*paid',* and professional programs, although UB has faced opposition in its introduction, it began by offering most academic programs at lower fees compared to paid and professional programs.

Interview Results for Stakeholders on Tuition and Related Fees for UBa and UB

Table 7*. Thematic Pre-Code Analysis on Consolidated School Fees.*

Questions	Categories	Theme	Grounding	Quotation
Given the increasing student enrolment in public English-speaking universities, do you think introducing a reasonable tuition fee in different programs will be good for the university's financial standing?	Consolidated School Fees	Service fees	The majority from UBa and a few from UB	"Fees for specific fees such as application and registration fees should be different", "It will be pertinent since some program demand a lot funding", "yes, some programs have higher opportunities than others and yet have higher paid jobs than others", "yes if those programs are to be well exploited and explore for our students" and "yes, it will cause a good number of students to be serious in their study"
		administrative fees	A few of them	"Fees for administrative tasks, such as processing or maintenance fees be introduced", "They should add fees for late registration, document processing and let it be backed by receipt" and "They should add fees for extra services or materials, such as textbooks or equipment and library fees."
		Penalty fees	A few of them	"They should add late registration, delayed payment fees, so that the students will be punctual" and "the University should add late payment charges, on every activity in everything, since students are not serious",
		Against any increase	A stake	"No!!!!, why? Increase in fees will lead to high dropout, and illegal activities involvement will increase by those who will want to go to school by the course", "No Universities should invest in income-generating goods" and "No, it is a sign/way of widening the gaps between the rich and the poor"
Do you think any other fees should be added? If yes, which ones?		Program Additional Fees	The majority of the Stakes	"Yes, in the domain of engineering, medical, commercial, field trip fee, more practical work, examination fee, library fee, technological fee" and "attestation fee, late registration fee, certification fee, and security and hygiene fee" and "attestation of completion fees, late registration fee, paid certification, fees should be based on the student's academic program, Resit-examination fees and introduce/charge fee for issuing of attestation of completion"
		Services Additional Fees	A few of them	"Service fees for specific services, such as application for registration fees" and "extra services such as academic services, student support services, library and research services, financial services, ICT and Technological services, campus safety and security fees can be introduced to boost the university's financial challenges"

Sources: Researcher's field work (2025)

The University of Bamenda (UBa) has a more stringent and formalised fee collection process compared to the University of Buea (UB), primarily due to differences in their fee structures and payment systems. At UB, students pay a low flat annual registration fee of 50,000 FCFA, which is fiercely defended by student unions against increases or additional charges, leading to minimal fees categorised as registration rather than tuition. Recently, UB reverted to bank payments to manage income better, despite inconveniencing students. In contrast, UBa requires the same registration fee plus additional charges for medical examinations, insurance, and online services, using a detailed online payment system that incorporates mobile money and bank validations, resulting in a more complex and comprehensive fee collection process.

Objective Two: Examine stakeholders' readiness to implement (produce) income generating goods in APU in Cameroon

Table 8. Result on Stakeholders to produce income generating goods.

Questionnaire Items	Institutions	N	Mean	Approval (HA/A) %	Disapproval (D/SD) %	Std. Deviation	Decision
The university produces souvenirs, which are often sold to stakeholders for income generation.	UBa	146	3.08	73.34	24.66	.929	A
	UB	214	3.27	87.15	12.85	.679	A
The university rents out some of its movable properties for income generation	UBa	146	2.01	27.43	72.57	.818	D
	UB	214	2.27	42.74	57.26	1.256	D
The university rents out plots to local farmers for farming, thereby generating income for the university.	UBa	146	1.95	21.21	78.79	.688	D
	UB	214	3.12	76.15	23.85	.872	A
The university owns a bakery.	UBa	146	1.70	10.03	89.97	.626	D
	UB	214	1.76	15.87	84.13	.741	D
The university owns an animal farm for cattle/poultry.	UBa	146	1.73	8.34	91.66	.557	D
	UB	214	3.69	97.99	2.02	.580	A
The university owns a water processing factory where bottled water is produced and generates stakeholders' income generation.	UBa	146	1.60	6.10	93.90	.582	D
	UB	214	3.74	99.75	0.25	.441	A
The university manufactures soaps/detergents, which are sold to stakeholders.	UBa	146	3.55	96.29	3.71	.588	A
	UB	214	3.43	90.28	9.18	.700	A
The university life stocks produce dairy products for sale to stakeholders.	UBa	146	1.63	7.35	92.65	.599	D
	UB	214	1.81	22.66	77.34	.921	D
The university produces seedlings for sale to local farmers.	UBa	146	1.74	9.34	90.66	.576	D
	UB	214	1.97	30.27	69.73	1.025	D
Some university halls are rented out to stakeholders.	UBa	146	1.68	9.68	90.32	.630	D
	UB	214	1.99	27.09	72.91	.834	D

Sources: Researcher's field work (2025).

The table presents data on the readiness of stakeholders at two universities in Cameroon (UBa and UB) to implement income-generating activities based on a questionnaire. Here's an interpretation of the findings: The questionnaire aimed to assess various income generation initiatives at the universities, measuring stakeholder approval and disapproval for each initiative. The results are summarised with mean scores, percentages of approval and disapproval, standard deviation, and a decision indicating whether the initiative is generally approved or disapproved. These two institutions have varied levels of approval for different income-generating activities, with some initiatives receiving significant support and others facing considerable disapproval. Responding to the production of Souvenirs, both universities show a positive readiness to produce and sell souvenirs, with UB showing a higher approval rate Mean of 3.08, and Approval of 73.34% while UB showed a lower approval, with a Mean of 3.27, and Approval of 87.15%. Both universities have low approval for renting out movable properties, indicating a lack of readiness or interest from stakeholders, in response to the rental of movable properties, as UBa Mean is 2.01, Approval of 27.43% and UB Mean is 2.27, Approval of 42.74%. While UBa shows a low readiness, with a Mean of 1.95, Approval of 21.21% and UB stakeholders are more favourable towards this initiative, with a mean of 3.12, Approval of 76.15% talking about the rental of plots to local farmers. Both universities show significant disapproval regarding owning a bakery, UBa with a mean of 1.70, Approval of 10.03% and UB mean of 1.76, Approval of 15.87%.

There is strong disapproval at UBa, with a mean of 1.73, and Approval of 8.34%, but overwhelming approval at UB, with a mean of 3.69, and Approval of 97.99% for owning an animal farm. Talking about the water processing factory, similar to the animal farm, UB shows very high approval with a mean of 1.60, Approval of 6.10% while UBa shows significant disapproval with a mean of 3.74, Approval of 99.75%. Both universities have strong support for manufacturing soaps/detergents, UBa did with a mean of 3.55, an Approval

of 96.29% and UB did with a mean of 3.43, an Approval of 90.28%. There is low approval for producing dairy products at both universities, as UBa responded with a mean of 1.63, approval of 7.35% and UB with a mean of 1.81, Approval of 22.66%. Again, both universities show low readiness for the production of seedlings for sale as UBa stakes did with a mean of 1.74, Approval of 9.34%, while UB stakes did with a mean of 1.97, Approval of 30.27%. There is significant disapproval from stakeholders regarding the rental of university halls as UBa with a mean of 1.68 and approval of 9.68%, and UB with a mean of 1.99 and approval of 27.09%. The data indicates that stakeholders at UB are generally more supportive of income-generating initiatives compared to UBa, particularly in areas such as souvenir production, animal farming, water processing, and soap manufacturing. However, both institutions face challenges in other areas like property rentals and agricultural production where readiness is low and disapproval is high. This analysis suggests that while there are opportunities for income generation through certain initiatives at these universities, there is also considerable resistance or lack of interest in others, highlighting the need for targeted strategies to enhance stakeholder engagement and readiness for implementation in income-generating activities in accordance with the NHEP guidelines.

Table 9. *Summary descriptive statistics on stakeholders' readiness for the production of income generating goods in UBa and UB.*

	Institution	N	Mean	Approval (%)	Disapproval (%)	Std.	Decision
Overall mean score readiness for production of income generating goods	UBa	147	20.701	36.4	63.6	3.8471	Disapproved
	UB	214	27.061	56.3	43.7	4.0540	Approved

Sources: Researchers field work (2025)

The table presents summary statistics related to stakeholders' readiness to produce income generating goods in the two institutions under study. Comparing the overall results from the two institutions (UBa and UB), it is observed that UB appeared averagely ready with a stakeholder approval rating of 56.3% as against 43.7% disapproval rating - representing an overall mean score readiness of ($\bar{x}$ = 27.061; SD = 4.0540). On the contrary, the results from UBa indicated that the institution is not ready for this with a stakeholder approval rating of 36.4% as against 63.6% disapproval rating – representing a mean score readiness of ($\bar{x}$ = 20.701, SD = 3.8471). The overall mean score difference ($\bar{x}$ = -6.3604; SD = -0.2069) between the two institutions indicates that the average production of income generating goods in UBa is below average as compared to UB, with a relatively high approval rating. The difference in overall means scores between the two institutions (approximately 6.36) signifies that UB may have more potential or efficiency in producing income generating goods than UBa.

Testing Hypothesis

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean score readiness of stakeholders of the two APU in Cameroon on the production of income-generating goods.

Table 10. *Independent sample Test on production of income generating goods by UBa and UB.*

		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Income Generated Goods	Equal variances assumed	3.073	.080	-14.938	358	.000	-6.3604	.4258	-7.1977	-5.5230
	Equal variances not assumed			-15.082	324.341	.000	-6.3604	.4217	-7.1900	-5.5307

Sources: Researcher's field work (2025)

Given the t-value (-14.938) and P-value (0.000), which are less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (Ho_2) in favour of the alternative hypothesis (Ha^2). This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores readiness for the production of income generating goods by the two APUs. The Mean Difference (-6.3604) suggests that, on av-

erage, the readiness score for UB (approved) is (6.3604) points higher than UBa (disapproved).

Table 11. Thematic Pre-Code Analysis on income generation goods.

Questions	Categories	Theme	Grounding	Quotation
Apart from money from school fees and subvention from the government, what income generated goods do you think our university should supplement their funding?	Income Generation Goods	Touristic site	A few of them	"The university workshops, factories, farms with a variety of live stocks, plants and different species could serve as a tourist site where people come in to enjoy and even buy some" and "Having a tourist site like a botanical garden will lead to more sales and earnings"
		Rentages / hires	A few of them	"University halls and shuttles can be used to generate more income" and "the university should rent out its halls, school buses, machinery and even its vast land to farmers".
		Fund raising	Few from them UB and UBa	"Donations from alumni group, corporate partnership, grants", "get to all the elect of the region or financial support and bring up projects that can be supported by all the business community and all other stakeholders" and "seek financial support from major gifts and endowments funding elects, the parents, reach Family abroad and NGOs"
		Sales of produced products	A few of them	"they university should sell their newly produced products to the community", "Licensing intellectual property, research commercialisation, and rent some of their asset like land, halls, buses, fields", "having schools' shuttles, touristic site, renting of land to farmers, opening of poultry farm, opening supermarkets" and "through production o seedlings for sale, food processing, restaurant, canteens, and via the sale of dairy products", "they should invest in agriculture, real estate and transport".

Sources: Researchers' field work (2025)

The University of Buea (UB) is better positioned with regards to the production of income-generating goods than the University of Bamenda (UBa) due to its proactive approach and structured support for entrepreneurship. This is exemplified by its multiple incubator phases and significant funding grants for innovative ideas in sectors like agriculture and sustainable textiles. UB's formal partnership with the Ministry of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises enhances its capacity through substantial subsidies and support for its incubation activities. In contrast, UBa, while also involved in income-generating initiatives through its Innovation Centre and UBa Ventures, faces challenges such as bureaucratic hurdles, reliance on public funding, and infrastructural issues, which hinder its progress in fostering university manufacturing and entrepreneurship.

6. Discussion of Findings

Stakeholders' Readiness to Implement (Pay) Tuition and Related Fees in APU

The findings presented in Table 4 reflect a nuanced landscape of stakeholder readiness to implement tuition and related fees at APU in Cameroon. Overall, there is a significant level of support for the introduction of tuition fees as a means to enhance funding for higher education. This aligns with the broader context of higher education financing, where institutions are increasingly exploring alternative funding mechanisms to alleviate financial pressures on state budgets [20]. The mean scores of 2.95 for UBa and 3.36 for UB indicate a stronger consensus at UB regarding the necessity of tuition fees, highlighting the importance of institutional context in shaping stakeholder opinions [15].

Moreover, the agreement among stakeholders that tuition fees can help relieve the financial burden on the state reinforces the recognition of the fiscal challenges faced by governments in supporting higher education [34]. The mean scores of 3.14 for UBa and 3.36 for UB suggest a shared understanding that increased funding is essential for maintaining educational quality and accessibility. However, the mixed responses regarding the introduction of late registration fees reveal a divergence in stakeholder perspectives. While UBa shows support with a mean score of 3.18, UB's lower score of 2.52 indicates ambivalence or opposition. This discrepancy may reflect differing institutional cultures or student demographics that influence perceptions of financial burdens [40].

The favourable attitude towards paid certification programs for business/professional executives further illustrates stakeholders' willingness to diversify revenue sources. This is consistent with trends in higher education, where institutions are increasingly offering professional development opportunities to generate additional income [20]. On the other hand,

significant disapproval for fees related to re-sit examinations and certification indicates a concern for student equity and access. The low approval ratings for these fees suggest that stakeholders are wary of imposing additional financial burdens on students, which could exacerbate existing inequalities in access to education [15]. While there is general support for implementing tuition and related fees as a strategy to enhance funding for higher education at both UBa and UB, the findings reveal critical areas of contention that warrant careful consideration. Stakeholders' differing views on specific fee structures highlight the need for transparent communication and inclusive decision-making processes when developing financial policies in higher education institutions in Cameroon [34].

The analysis of group statistics related to tuition and related fees at the University of Buea (UBa) and the University of Bamenda (UB) reveals important insights into stakeholder perceptions and approval ratings regarding tuition structures. The findings indicate that UBa respondents exhibit a higher approval rate (70.05%) compared to UB respondents (65.73%), suggesting a more favourable view towards tuition fees at UBa. This difference in approval rates could be attributed to various factors, including the perceived value of education, financial aid availability, and socio-economic influences, which are critical in shaping students' attitudes towards tuition [16]. The higher approval rate at UBa may indicate that students feel they receive a commensurate value for their investment in education, despite the average tuition fee being higher at 28.177 compared to UB's 27.075. This aligns with findings from previous studies that suggest students' perceptions of tuition fees are often linked to their perceived quality of education and institutional reputation [35]. The disapproval rate at UB (34.27%) is notably higher, which may signal concerns regarding the perceived value of education relative to the costs incurred.

The standard deviation figures further illuminate the differences between the two institutions. UBa's standard deviation of 4.5159 indicates greater variability in tuition costs among its respondents, which could reflect a broader range of financial situations or experiences with tuition fees among students. In contrast, UB's slightly lower standard deviation of 4.3355 suggests a more homogeneous perception regarding tuition costs, potentially indicating less disparity in student experiences or financial situations.

The confidence intervals for both groups provide insight into the precision of the mean estimates. UBa's confidence interval ranges from 27.449 to 28.891, while UB's spans from 26.488 to 27.662. The narrower confidence interval for UBa suggests a more precise estimate of the mean tuition fee, which is supported by its smaller standard error mean of 0.3725 [9]. While the standard error for UB is not provided, one might infer that it is smaller due to the larger sample size, thereby enhancing the reliability of its mean estimate. The minimal bias figures (.003 for UBa and -.004 for UB) indicate that the bootstrap estimates closely align with the actual means, suggesting that both estimates are reliable [8]. This reliability is crucial for institutions as they consider adjustments to their tuition strategies based on stakeholder feedback. [28] argue that the financial sustainability of higher education institutions in Africa is increasingly threatened by dwindling government funding, necessitating innovative funding mechanisms such as tuition fees. This perspective aligns with the findings presented here that there is significant support among stakeholders for the introduction of tuition fees to enhance institutional funding.

The findings suggest that while UBa respondents are generally more approving of tuition rates, the differences in average fees and approval ratings warrant further investigation into the underlying factors influencing these perceptions. Factors such as perceived value of education, availability of financial aid, and socio-economic influences could significantly shape student opinions [21]. Understanding these dynamics may help institutions refine their tuition strategies to enhance student satisfaction and improve approval ratings.

The findings regarding the resistance to tuition and fee scrambles at the University of Buea (UBa) reflect a complex interplay of economic hardship, cultural expectations, and a lack of trust in university authorities. With the average income of Cameroonian parents being low, even a modest registration fee of 50,000 FCFA can be burdensome for many families [22]. This financial strain is compounded by the perception that proposed fee increases serve primarily as a means for university authorities to generate quick revenue without clear accountability or transparency regarding the use of these funds. Such scepticism is not unfounded, as historical patterns of government corruption and mismanagement in Cameroon have fostered a general distrust among stakeholders [35]. Consequently, parents and students are not only concerned about the immediate financial implications of higher fees but also about the potential for misallocation of resources that could further undermine the quality of education.

Moreover, students have articulated a strong belief that any increases in fees should be accompanied by tangible improvements in educational quality and program offerings. The discontent is exacerbated by past experiences where strikes led to the cancellation of professional and graduate programs due to funding issues, which students perceive as detrimental to their educational prospects [15]. This sentiment highlights a disconnect between fee increases and the perceived value delivered by the university. The cultural context also plays a significant role; while there is an expectation for fees in anglophone regions, there exists a tradition of careful scrutiny regarding their justification [56]. Students are acutely aware of the costs associated with private education alternatives, yet they resist public university fee hikes they deem unjustified, illustrating a desire for equitable treatment and accountability from public institutions.

Also, the lack of early involvement of students in the decision-making processes surrounding fee adjustments has led to

increased mistrust and opposition to proposed hikes. Engagement with student unions often occurs only after fee proposals are announced, which has proven ineffective in fostering a collaborative atmosphere [8]. This top-down approach alienates students and contributes to feelings of disenfranchisement, resulting in repeated protests against tuition increases. To mitigate these tensions, university authorities need to adopt more inclusive practices that prioritise student consultation and engagement in financial discussions. By fostering an environment of transparency and collaboration, institutions like UBa can work towards rebuilding trust and addressing the underlying concerns that drive resistance to fee hikes.

The introduction of reasonable tuition fees at the University of Bamenda (UBa) and the University of Buea (UB) is a response to the financial constraints faced by these institutions in the context of diminishing government support. As noted by [35], funding for higher education often relies heavily on government allocations, which can fluctuate significantly. In Cameroon, it has been observed that government funding has dropped to between 70% and 90%, leading universities to seek alternative revenue sources [9]. Tuition fees play a crucial role in supplementing the limited government funding that covers only a portion of the universities' recurrent budgets. According to [22], registration fees significantly contribute to the income of these institutions, allowing them to maintain operational efficiency and enhance educational quality. This reliance on tuition is particularly pronounced for specialised and professional programs that require additional resources, such as expert faculty and advanced facilities. For instance, programs like the MBA often necessitate funding beyond what state support can provide, making tuition fees essential for their sustainability.

Moreover, the introduction of reasonable tuition fees enables universities to manage operational costs effectively. These costs include health services, registration, and course administration, which are vital for ensuring a conducive learning environment [8]. By implementing a fee structure that balances affordability with the need for financial sustainability, both UBa and UB aim to uphold the quality of education while addressing the operational challenges they face. Negotiations with student unions also play a critical role in this process. Universities strive to keep tuition fees at acceptable levels to mitigate the risk of strikes and unrest, a concern highlighted by the historical context of student activism at the University of Buea [56]. This collaborative approach underscores the importance of maintaining a dialogue between university administrations and students, ensuring that financial decisions are made with consideration for student welfare.

Stakeholders' Readiness to Produce Income Generating Goods in APU

The findings from the descriptive statistics assessing stakeholder readiness for income-generating activities at UBa and UB reveal a stark contrast in approval levels across various initiatives. Notably, UB stakeholders exhibit a significantly higher approval for several activities, such as souvenir production and animal farming, with mean scores of 3.27 and 3.69, respectively, compared to UBa's lower scores of 3.08 and 1.73 [23]. This disparity suggests that UB stakeholders are more inclined towards engaging in entrepreneurial ventures that could enhance university revenue streams. Furthermore, both institutions demonstrate a pronounced disapproval of initiatives like owning a bakery and producing dairy products, indicating a potential gap in perceived feasibility or interest in these areas [40]. The low approval ratings for renting movable properties and university halls further highlight the challenges both universities face in diversifying their income sources.

The results underscore the necessity for targeted strategies to boost stakeholder engagement, particularly at UBa, which shows considerable disapproval across many initiatives. The overwhelming support for manufacturing soaps and detergents at both institutions (mean scores of 3.55 for UBa and 3.43 for UB) indicates a common ground where stakeholders see potential for success [9]. However, the overall low readiness for agricultural production and property rentals suggests that stakeholders may require more information, resources, or incentives to consider these options viable. This analysis aligns with the objectives of the National Higher Education Policy (NHEP) in Cameroon, which emphasises the importance of enhancing university capacities to generate income while fostering entrepreneurship among stakeholders. Addressing these challenges through strategic planning and stakeholder engagement could pave the way for more successful implementation of income-generating activities in both institutions.

Stakeholder support for income-generating activities at APU reveals a complex landscape shaped by institutional contexts, stakeholder values, and broader socio-economic factors. The strong approval for souvenir production aligns with the university's branding and presents minimal perceived risk, suggesting that stakeholders recognise the potential for such initiatives to enhance the university's identity while generating revenue. This sentiment mirrors findings in the literature that emphasise the importance of aligning income-generating activities with institutional missions to foster stakeholder buy-in [33]. Conversely, scepticism towards more ambitious ventures, such as renting movable properties or owning bakeries, indicates a cautious approach among stakeholders who view these activities as impractical or misaligned with the university's core mission. This reflects a broader trend in higher education where stakeholders often prioritise initiatives that resonate with the institution's identity and values over those perceived as burdensome or risky [22].

The differing perspectives on renting plots to local farmers between UBa and UB further underscore the necessity for localised assessments of stakeholder attitudes. At UB, stakeholders appear more receptive, potentially due to stronger alignment with community engagement initiatives, which can

cultivate a sense of shared purpose and collaboration [33]. In contrast, UBa stakeholders' express reservations, which may stem from concerns about the practicality and sustainability of such arrangements within their institutional framework. This divergence highlights the need for nuanced strategies that consider the unique cultural and operational contexts of each institution. Moreover, the stark contrast in perceptions of value-added production, such as soap manufacturing at UBa versus livestock dairy production and seedling sales, emphasises the importance of context-specific strategies. Initiatives that are well-received at one institution may face significant disapproval at another due to differing stakeholder values and institutional missions. As [33] argues, government investment plays a critical role in addressing funding crises in higher education; without adequate support, institutions may struggle to implement innovative income-generating strategies that align with their educational missions.

Additionally, the concerns raised by [22], about rising tuition fees exacerbating existing inequalities resonate strongly within this context. As institutions explore income generation strategies, it is imperative to ensure that these efforts do not inadvertently increase financial barriers for disadvantaged students. Inclusive policies that take into account students' socio-economic backgrounds are essential for creating a more equitable educational landscape.

The findings of the comparative analysis between the University of Buea (UB) and the University of Bamenda (UBa) reveal significant insights into stakeholder readiness for implementing income-generating initiatives, particularly within the framework of the National Higher Education Policy (NHEP) in Cameroon. The evidence suggests that UB stakeholders exhibit a higher level of preparedness compared to their counterparts at UBa, largely due to UB's structured approach to income generation. UB's systematic framework for income-generating projects is pivotal in shaping students' perceptions of financial responsibility. As highlighted by [1], while income generation is vital for institutional sustainability, it must also ensure equitable access to education, particularly for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. This balance is crucial as institutions navigate the pressures of financial viability while maintaining their educational missions. UB's multi-phase incubator programs and substantial funding grants for innovative projects foster a culture of entrepreneurship among students. This aligns with the findings of [2], who emphasise the role of public-private partnerships (PPPs) in providing essential resources for higher education institutions in Africa. They argue that well-structured partnerships can enhance financial sustainability without exacerbating disparities in access to education. UB's collaboration with the Ministry of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises exemplifies such a partnership, providing critical support that empowers students to engage in entrepreneurial activities confidently.

The thematic analysis identifies four core strategic categories for increasing university funding: Touristic Sites, Rentals/Hires, Fundraising, and Sales of Produced Products. Each category presents opportunities for diversifying revenue streams while enhancing community engagement and sustainability. However, the limited representation of these suggestions among stakeholders, indicated by the recurring "Few of them" response, suggests that these ideas remain underdeveloped and require further exploration. The aspiration for diversified income streams is not unique to UB; however, its proactive entrepreneurial ecosystem positions it more favourably than UBa. The structured support systems at UB allow for a more effective realisation of these opportunities. In contrast, UBa faces challenges such as bureaucratic hurdles, reliance on public funding, and infrastructural deficits that hinder its ability to translate stakeholder ideas into actionable income-generating projects.

The importance of institutional support in fostering an entrepreneurial culture cannot be overstated [55]. The findings suggest that UB's formal partnership with the Ministry of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises significantly enhances its capacity to support entrepreneurship among students. This collaboration not only provides financial resources but also builds a supportive ecosystem that encourages innovation and the practical application of skills learned in academia. Such an environment positively influences students' readiness to invest in their education, as they perceive clear pathways to financial success through entrepreneurial ventures. This aligns with broader trends in higher education where institutions are increasingly recognising the need to integrate entrepreneurship into their curricula and operational frameworks [8]. Further, integrating the insights from [10] into the discussion on stakeholder readiness reveals a multifaceted landscape where institutional context, stakeholder engagement, and equity considerations play crucial roles in shaping attitudes toward tuition and related fees. While there is a consensus on the need for innovative funding mechanisms, careful consideration of how these mechanisms are implemented is essential to ensure they promote access and equity in higher education in Cameroon.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The assessment of stakeholder readiness for implementing the New Higher Education Policy (NHEP) in Cameroon reveals distinct disparities between the University of Bamenda (UBa) and the University of Buea (UB). UBa shows a higher readiness to implement tuition and related fees due to its established fee collection processes linked to numerous paid and professional programs, reflected in a significant mean difference in readiness scores. Conversely, UB demonstrates greater preparedness for income-generating goods, supported by proactive entrepreneurship initiatives and partnerships, despite UBa's challenges with bureaucratic hurdles and reliance on public funding. The formalised approach at UBa, which incorporates multiple payment methods and emphasises accountability, likely fosters a greater sense of readiness

among its students regarding tuition payments. This supports the idea that effective fee management systems can improve students' preparedness and willingness to meet financial commitments, thereby shaping their overall academic experience.

Secondly, the findings from the t-test indicate a significant difference in readiness for income-generating projects between the University of Buea (UB) and the University of Bamenda (UBa), with UB demonstrating a higher mean readiness score. This difference can be attributed to UB's proactive measures, including structured support systems and formal partnerships that enhance its entrepreneurial initiatives. Their research emphasises that such collaborations and systematic support mechanisms are crucial for fostering entrepreneurship in higher education institutions. Conversely, UBa's challenges, such as bureaucratic hurdles and dependence on public funding, impede its potential to effectively implement income-generating projects.

The findings of this study have significant implications for the implementation of the New Higher Education Policy (NHEP) in Cameroon, particularly regarding financial resource management within Anglo-Saxon Public universities. The disparity in readiness scores between the University of Bamenda and the University of Buea highlights the critical role that effective fee management systems and institutional support mechanisms play in shaping stakeholders' preparedness for financial commitments. While UBa's comprehensive fee collection process enhances readiness for tuition payments, UB's proactive approach to income-generating projects demonstrates the necessity of structured support and strategic partnerships in fostering entrepreneurial initiatives. These insights suggest that policymakers and university administrators must prioritise the development of robust financial management frameworks and collaborative partnerships to enhance stakeholder readiness, ultimately contributing to the successful implementation of the NHEP and promoting sustainable economic practices in higher education institutions.

Based on the findings regarding the differences in tuition payment readiness, several recommendations can be made to the government to enhance the financial preparedness of students across universities: The government should invest in developing and implementing comprehensive fee management systems in all higher education institutions. This includes standardising online payment platforms and ensuring that universities have the infrastructure to handle various payment methods effectively. By doing so, institutions can improve transparency and accountability, which will enhance students' readiness for tuition payments. The government should provide targeted support and funding to public universities, particularly those facing bureaucratic challenges like UBa. This support could include grants for developing better financial systems and training staff in financial management practices. Such initiatives would help create a more conducive environment for students to manage their tuition payments effectively. By adopting these recommendations, the government can play a crucial role in enhancing the financial readiness of students across universities, ultimately improving their academic experiences and outcomes.

From the findings regarding the differences in readiness for income-generating goods, several recommendations can be made to the government to enhance entrepreneurial initiatives in higher education institutions: The government should prioritise the establishment of structured support systems within universities, similar to those at UB. This could include funding for entrepreneurship programs, mentorship schemes, and access to resources that facilitate project implementation. By investing in these support structures, the government can help foster a more conducive environment for entrepreneurship across all universities. The government should encourage universities to form strategic partnerships with the private sector and NGOs. These collaborations can provide essential resources, expertise, and funding opportunities that are crucial for the success of income-generating projects. By facilitating such partnerships, the government can enhance the capacity of universities to implement effective entrepreneurial initiatives.

The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on financial resource management in higher education by highlighting the significant disparities in stakeholders' readiness for implementing the New Higher Education Policy (NHEP) among Anglo-Saxon Public universities in Cameroon. By employing a mixed-methods approach, the study underscores the critical role of effective fee management systems and institutional support mechanisms in shaping students' preparedness for tuition payments and income-generating initiatives. Specifically, the research illustrates how a comprehensive fee collection process at the University of Bamenda enhances readiness for tuition payments, while structured support and partnerships at the University of Buea foster entrepreneurial initiatives. These insights not only inform policymakers and university administrators about the importance of tailored financial strategies but also provide a framework for enhancing stakeholder engagement and readiness in higher education contexts, thereby contributing to the development of sustainable financial practices within the sector.

The study is subject to several limitations that may affect their generalizability and applicability. Firstly, the study focuses exclusively on two Anglo-Saxon Public universities in Cameroon, which may not represent the broader landscape of higher education institutions in the country or region, limiting the applicability of the results to other contexts. Also, the closed-ended items on the APUS-Q were non-exhaustive due to the need to make the instrument brief and interesting to the stakeholders. Additionally, the reliance on a concurrent sequential design, merging quantitative and qualitative methods, may introduce biases in data interpretation, particularly if stakeholder perspectives are not adequately captured or if there are differences between quantitative scores and qualitative insights. Furthermore, the research may be influenced by external factors such as economic conditions, regulatory

changes, and institutional policies that were not fully accounted for in the analysis. Lastly, the study's timeframe may not reflect long-term trends in stakeholder readiness, as financial behaviours and attitudes can evolve, necessitating further longitudinal research to validate and expand upon these findings.

Abbreviations

NHEP	New Higher Education Policy
APU	Anglo-Saxon Public University
HE	Higher Education
HES	Higher Education Stakeholders
UBa.	University of Bamenda
UB	university of Buea
RMG	Research Modernisation Grant
APUS-Q	Anglo-Saxon Public Universities Stakeholders' Questionnaire
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
HA	Highly Approved HA
A	Approved
D	Disapprove
HD	Highly Disapproved

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Conflict of Interest

The Authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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