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**UNIVERSITY SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:
ACHIEVING HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN CAMEROON**

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of the University of Cincinnati
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ABSTRACT

As place-based institutions, higher education institutions (HEIs) have the intellectual capacity and resources, both private and public, to transform communities facing human and social development issues. As such, HEIs must revisit their role/contribution and recognize their social responsibility to remain relevant in today's society. Indeed, social responsibility requires new community research and revitalization, job creation, teaching, and innovation. This study explores the role/contribution of Cameroonian HEIs in addressing human and social development issues through a qualitative case study of the University of Douala. More specifically, this study explored how the university advances development agendas through the use of interviews and a photovoice project, examining historical, social, and political events and practices that frame the role/contribution of HEIs in Cameroon. The findings suggest that HEIs are an important asset for the community and make significant educational, social, environmental, economic, and cultural contributions to the community. Specifically, the findings indicate the contribution of the University of Douala in the following areas: service, innovation, advocacy, leadership, and capacity building. Consequently, HEIs can help to advance human and social development. However, their contribution in these areas remains underutilized. Also, stakeholder engagement and lack of funding emerge as elements that downplay the contribution of the University of Douala in human and social development issues. Adaptive solutions for complex issues should consider the potential contribution of HEIs. This study concludes with recommendations and implications that aim to educate different stakeholders and practitioners on how HEIs can maximize their potential.

RESPONSABILITÉ SOCIALE DE L'UNIVERSITÉ: ATTEINDRE LE DÉVELOPPEMENT HUMAIN ET SOCIAL AU CAMEROUN

RÉSUMÉ

En tant qu'institutions opérant dans les territoires, les établissements d'enseignement supérieur possèdent des capacités intellectuelles et matérielles pouvant transformer les communautés confrontées aux problèmes de développement humain et social. En tant que tel, ils doivent régulièrement actualiser leur engagement et mission envers la société pour rester pertinent au regard d'un environnement instable et imprévisible. En tant que potentiel levier du développement durable, ils doivent adopter la responsabilité sociale. En effet, la responsabilité sociale des universités (RSU) doit être considérée comme étant un précurseur du réveil communautaire, création d'emplois, développement économique et durable, et innovation technologique. La présente étude explore l'apport des universités au développement humain et social dans un contexte Camerounais. Une étude de cas qualitative réalisée à l'Université de Douala par le biais des entretiens et un projet photovoice et en tenant compte de l'environnement historique, social et politique dans lequel l'enseignement supérieur s'est forgé, cette étude démontre la capacité des universités à accompagner l'État dans ses multiples missions. Cependant, ces atouts restent largement sous-exploités. Dans le cas précis de l'Université de Douala, le manque d'engouement des parties prenantes, l'organisation institutionnelle et l'absence de financement apparaissent comme étant des éléments qui minimisent la contribution de l'Université de Douala aux problèmes de développement humain et social dans son milieu. Projeter des solutions adaptées aux problèmes complexes devrait tenir compte du potentiel des établissements de l'enseignement supérieur. Cette étude se termine par des prescriptions et des incidences qui visent à sensibiliser les agents de développement sur la façon dont ces établissements peuvent maximiser leur contribution au développement humain et social.

Dedication

This project is dedicated to my mother, **Christine Ebandane** for her unconditional love, support and encouragement. Much love!

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Since their inception, higher education institutions (HEIs) have taken on major roles in society (Clark, 1993). By being hubs of knowledge creation and technological innovation, universities can be seen as agents of progress. Etzkowitz (2002) contends that universities should respond to new challenges by adapting to recent trends, leading to social engagement in the development of individual students, nations, and society as a whole. Similarly, the European Commission (2007) defines the role of HEIs as being blended between economic and social interdependency, and sees HEIs as important players in poverty reduction and sustainable development. Following these assertions, in 2009, participants of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Conference on Higher Education adopted the *Declaration of Higher Education for Sustainable Development Rio+20* to encourage HEIs to teach and conduct research about sustainable development (UNESCO, 2005). When HEIs are involved in such actions and take their social responsibility seriously, it creates a sense of security and positively impacts individual citizens in the *community* (Boatright, 2009). HEIs can choose to be proactive and assume a leadership role by adopting social responsibility as part of their competitive advantage with activities that connect HEIs, societies, communities, and the issues that affect them (e.g., unemployment, race relations, climate change). As such, social responsibility enables HEIs to integrate social, environmental, and economic matters into their missions, cultures, decision-making processes, and strategies; and therefore how they establish practices to improve society (Boatright, 2009).

While *social responsibility* has not yet entered the common vocabulary, recent national debate in Cameroon, West Africa, has focused on the future of youth and the role of HEIs (Cameroon's National Institute of Statistics [CNIS], 2014). Cameroon currently faces a number

of challenges derived from a weak economy, environmental issues, armed conflict, high unemployment, and the prevalence of communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Adopting the concept of social responsibility within Cameroonian HEIs, or *university social responsibility* (USR), may provide a means to help address human and social development issues, as well as to facilitate student engagement and raise their consciousness to contribute to society (Vallaey, 2008b). Similarly, Cameroonian HEIs are not usually considered as key stakeholders or included in strategies that can contribute to the achievement of human and social development issues, and there is no clear action plan that aligns the mission of HEIs and development. To date, capabilities, knowledge, and *resources* gained through global collaborations and partnerships have been extremely useful in addressing community challenges in many places around the globe (United Nations Development Program [UNDP], 2003). For example, USR initiatives in health, water and sanitation, agriculture, and environmental protection have positively impacted communities (Africa Progress Report, 2012). Therefore, by embracing USR, HEIs in Cameroon will gain knowledge and other capacities to change the lives of communities around the country. Consequently, this study draws from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to understand the role/ contribution of HEIs to human and social development issues in Cameroon. In this respect, this study provides analysis of the social responsibility of HEIs in Cameroon through a case study of the University of Douala. Due to similarities between the University of Douala and other HEIs in Cameroon, the results of this case study may be relevant to more HEIs. Data were collected through participant interviews and survey, as well as a photovoice project. These approaches are crucial to continuing a conversation on the social responsibility of HEIs in Cameroon. The section below will provide an overview of some of the important historical,

developmental and geographical contexts that are needed to better understand how human and social development issues have been approached in Cameroon.

Background

Cameroon: Geography, History, Development

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2016), Cameroon is located in Central Africa and shares the same boundaries with a number of countries, the Central African Republic and the Republic of Chad to the east and north, the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the west, and the Republics of Congo, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea to the south. Cameroon is the 54th largest country in the world and covers an area of 475.44 square kilometers. The country is divided into 10 main regions with the City of Yaoundé serving as its political capital and the City of Douala as the economic capital. The economy is largely based on agriculture; however, oil production and natural resources such as timber, coffee, cocoa, cotton, palm oil and rubber have given a boost to the Cameroonian economy, making it one of the most powerful in the Central African region. It is also one of the most ethnically pluralistic countries in Africa with two official languages (French and English) and over 250 ethnic groups. Regional differences include religion (i.e., Christianity, Islam, and animism), linguistic group (e.g., Fulfulde, Hausa, and Bantu languages), climate, and vegetation (e.g., rainforest, mountains, coast, savanna, and desert). The land has flat and coastal plains and mountains. Also, the country has volcanic prone areas (Djeudo, 2013).

The recent social and demographic patterns of Cameroon are typical of developing countries, with a population growth rate of (2.6% in 2014; approximately 21.7 million inhabitants; IMF, 2016) and a substantially young population. Most of that population lives in rural areas, with about 48% living in urban areas. The shift in population from rural to urban has

been progressive over the past few decades as people seek employment in urban areas. This rapid growth in population has resulted in a speedy and uncontrolled urbanization that puts very strong pressure on social facilities and the job market. Furthermore, political and economic refugees from neighboring countries continue to flock into the eastern part of the country in search of peace and security, market outlets, and better employment opportunities.

Historically, Cameroon has been a complex nation whose political development has been architected by many influences. In brief, Cameroon was colonized by three European countries: (a) Germany (1884–1919), (b) under the trusteeship of the United Nations (UN) by France post-WWI, and (c) Britain (1919–1960). This colonial domination influenced the form and function of the country in many respects. The most lasting influences in this relationship can be found in the Cameroonian bureaucratic structure, administrative policies, and political economy. For example, Cameroon still models its educational system based on France and the United Kingdom (Djeudo, 2013).

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2016), Cameroon gained its independence in January 1960 and the federal state was proclaimed in October 1961. After a few years, the federal state was brought to an end through a referendum in 1972. Consequently, the country was renamed the United Republic of Cameroon. The reunification of Cameroon under both the French and British rules was free of conflict, thereby achieving a sense of national unity among many ethnic groups. The country has enjoyed long-term stability in leadership with only two presidents, Ahmadou Ahidjo (1960–1982) and Paul Biya (1982–present).

Despite an abundance of natural resources in Cameroon, the rate of unemployment and poverty among young people and the general population is high, and there is a considerable presence of uncertainty due to corruption and the mismanagement of resources, particularly

among elected officials and government employees. According to Cameroon's most recent household survey, approximately 8 million people were living in poverty in 2012; malaria and HIV/AIDS are currently major public health concerns in Cameroon (Djeudo, 2013). However, despite armed conflicts and insecurity caused by Boko Haram (terrorist group) in the northern and eastern regions as well as neighboring countries such as the Republics of Chad and Nigeria, Cameroon has been politically stable for much of its history in comparison to other African countries.

Cameroon, with its diverse culture, economic and linguistic background, has adopted a regional approach to achieve development and fair distribution of the fruits of economic prosperity throughout the entire country (Robert, 17 June 2014). According to Ndjogui, Nkongho, Levang, Feintrenie, & Rafflegeau (2014), French and British economic policies laid the foundation for economic disparities between many regions in Cameroon by shifting resources mostly in coastal and main cities. The current economic and social policies of the country are still largely impacted by those policies. To combat regional poverty, development policies and programs were initiated under the Five Year Development Plan that started just after the independence in 1960 until 1980 (Ndjogui, Nkongho, Levang, Feintrenie, & Rafflegeau, 2014). The country's economy has also been heavily dependent on the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs), comprised of the World Bank and the IMF to alleviate poverty. This has led to Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) introduced in the late 1980s in Cameroon, economic policies required to qualify for BWI loans (Watkins, 1999). Problems associated with the imposed SAPs have since exacerbated unemployment and depressed local industry due to intensive privatization as well as increasing debt and dependency on richer nations.

The complexity of human and social development issues facing the continent of Africa has hindered its progress. In 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were presented and adopted by the UN and world leaders as a strategy to alleviate human and social development (UNDP, 2003). In April 2003, the Government of Cameroon embarked on the formulation of a long-range development plan and contextualized the MDGs into a new vision. The major strategies of the vision include: reducing poverty to a socially acceptable level, reaching a middle-income country status, becoming a newly industrialized country, consolidating the democratic process, and strengthening national unity while respecting the country's diversity. This long-range plan represents the major aspects of human and social development concerns in Cameroon. To implement the plan, Cameroon adopted the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, which are documents prepared through a participatory process involving local and international stakeholders (Craig & Porter, 2003). The document was intended to serve as an integrated development framework for Cameroon. In 2008, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers were revised and replaced by the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper. Within this context, the MDGs have been taken as representative of human and social development concerns and translated into a system that broadens the opportunities for people to experience life fully. Rather, the government has currently promoted self-employment to support the development of growth-stimulating sectors (particularly the rural sector), handicrafts, and services that would contribute in reducing unemployment. For higher education, the government is investing in infrastructure, research, teaching, and staff.

In addition, improving the health conditions of the population is a goal pursued in both social and economic development. The government of Cameroon hopes to achieve these health goals by implementing an updated strategy of the healthcare system to better align with the

MDGs. This strategy seeks to provide quality health services and care to all by improving supply and financing demand, thereby reducing morbidity by a third among the poor and affecting the following areas: HIV/AIDS, other diseases, and the health of the mother and child. If implemented thoroughly, this plan has the potential of improving the social and economic conditions of the Cameroonian people. Unfortunately, Cameroon has yet to decrease its reliance on foreign aid in order to implement programs developed by the Cameroonian government and people effectively. The background information about the MDGs provided above serves as a framework to contextualize human and social development issues. As such, the contribution of HEIs examined in this dissertation is structured around a select number of these human and social development issues.

Higher Education Institutions in Cameroon

The genesis of the higher education system in Cameroon dates back to 1961 with the creation of the National University Studies Institute (Njeuma et al., 1999). This institution later became the Federal University of Cameroon in 1962, followed by the University of Yaoundé in 1967 (Fonkeng, 2007). As the first and only university at the time, the University of Yaoundé was allowed by the central government to develop its own mandate and deliver degrees and diplomas. In 1969, the Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences was created to train physicians, and the International School of Journalism of Yaoundé was developed a year later, the fruit of an international cooperation with France. The International Relations Institute of Cameroon and the National Advanced School of Engineering were both established in 1971 (Njeuma et al., 1999).

Decree No. 77/88/28 of April 1977 created a few additional universities in various regions of the country: university centers in Buea (training translators and interpreters in the

Anglophone Southwest), Douala (training managers in the Littoral Region), Dschang (training agronomists in the West), and Ngaoundere (agrifood training in the North). Decree No. 92/74 of 13 of April 1992 transformed two university centers into autonomous universities: Buea, Ngaoundere, Douala, and Dschang. Similarly, the University of Yaoundé was divided into Yaoundé I and Yaoundé II (Soa). The University Institutes of Technology in Douala, Dschang, and Ngaoundere were created at the same time (Fonkeng, 2007). In 2001, the Cameroonian government assigned a new mission to higher education: production, organization, and dissemination of scientific, cultural, professional, and ethical knowmedge for the develoment of the nation and humanity (Fonkeng, 2007). From a few hundred students in 1961, Cameroon's HEIs have grown to more than 240,000 students and 4000 full-time teachers as of 2005 (Djeudo, 2013).

Language. Cameroon is the only country in West Africa that uses both French and English as official languages of instruction at the university level. However, the French language has a wider geographical distribution, with over 80% of residents being Francophone (Robert, 17 June 2014). The movement of students, professors, ideas, and cultures across national boundaries has provided an opportunity for interaction between Cameroonians as well as the hybridization of cultures (Fonkeng, 2007). However, the continued use of Western languages as a medium of instruction in HEIs indicates the powerful legacy of colonialism. This legacy offers some advantages to these institutions, which are struggling to be visible and competitive in the global arena of knowledge. At the same time, low fluency in these languages contributes to high attrition rates of students who are hampered from effectively participating in the teaching and learning process (Fonkeng, 2007). The majority of Cameroonians are monolingual, and they only communicate with other people in the language they understand. Additionally, indigenous

languages (approximately 200–250 languages) are suffering from linguistic persecution as none of them have made it to the university syllabus (Djeudo, 2013).

Organization. Higher education in Cameroon is placed under the authority of the Ministry of Higher Education. The system is comprised of three cycles. The first cycle ends after 3 years with a license or bachelor's degree, and another year after the license leads to a master's degree or postgraduate diploma in the English universities. These qualifications mark the end of the second cycle. A doctoral degree is awarded after 4 years of study after receiving a Master's degree. At the end of the first year of the third cycle of university education, Francophone universities award a Diploma of Advanced Studies (Njeuma et al., 1999).

Three types of tertiary institutions make up the sector of higher education in Cameroon: universities, professional schools, and research institutes. The current landscape of higher education in Cameroon is largely the product of a 1993 reform, which increased access to higher education along with educational choices and diversified programs for students (Njeuma et al., 1999). This decree also allowed universities to expand their mission and curriculum. Universities and specialized schools now offer a number of options to students. Research done by Njeuma et al. (1999) reveals that Cameroon currently has 10 universities, including eight public (University of Buea, University of Bamenda, University of Douala, University of Ngaoundere, University of Yaoundé I, University of Yaoundé II at Soa, and University of Maroua), and more than a hundred private HEIs.

A particularity of Cameroonian universities is that they grow very fast from year to year. According to the Ministry of Higher Education, Cameroonian universities have grown at the rate of 13.5%. The most significant benefit is the number of women that are pursuing higher education. Unfortunately, the infrastructure is not always there to accommodate the growing

number of students (Robert, 17 June 2014). Currently, the system follows the Francophone model, with all students in full degree courses, few links to the labor market, no involvement of the private sector in program selection and curriculum content, and virtually all financing (apart from small student fees introduced in 1993) provided and controlled by the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Economy and Finance (Njeuma et al., 1999). This model, initially designed to produce personnel for the civil service, no longer corresponds to the reality of shrinking public services nor to international best practices (World Bank, 2004). Few graduates from the ordinary universities find employment within a year of their graduation, and the overall unemployment rate of university graduates is around 30% (Fonkeng, 2007). On the other hand, training institutes use private-sector internships to give their students specific job skills directly transferable to paid employment after graduation. These institutes continue to generate income through courses offered on a part-time and “*à la carte*” basis where students can more easily pay for their own training (Fonkeng, 2007). The vocational universities enjoyed close linkages with employers and entrepreneurs and are successful at job placement for their graduates (Njeuma et al., 1999). To address these issues, numerous attempts are being made to correct these problems; both the Government of Cameroon and outside actors appear to be well aware of the need for significant reforms.

Reform. In the 1990s, Cameroon and many other African countries experienced an economic crisis that affected the entire higher education system, leading to government reform in 1993, which addressed university governance (particularly decentralization), a rapid increase in the number of universities, and the introduction of income-generating activities (especially programs driven by the market; Njeuma et al., 1999). Subsequently, the curricula became more professional and focused on employment in the fields of information technology, administration,

accounting, banking, and finance (Njeuma et al., 1999). This change was motivated by an increasing level of unemployment among graduates and a growing demand from students for marketable skills that would be translatable in the job market.

Problems stemming from these two decades of reform have attracted the attention of national leaders and those concerned with the future of the country (Robert, 17 June 2014). Such problems include the inability of technical institutions to provide job-ready training to students due to a lack of teachers, expertise, diversity in course offerings, resource constraints, and a separation between the colleges and the world of work (World Bank, 2004). Furthermore, management deficiencies associated with overly centralized decision-making often made it hard for schools to respond to local conditions and to the needs and preferences of students or faculty members (World Bank, 2004).

More current problems also include ‘brain drain’ (or high-skill) migration and dependence upon Western models of education, corruption and lack of academic freedom, privatization of higher education institutions, and funding (Fonkeng, 2007). Additionally, Cameroonian HEIs face competition from foreign universities due to their modest size, lack of diversity in the curriculum, outdated mode of governance, and limited financing. In response, Cameroon adopted the Bologna Process in 2014, which was earlier created in 2009 to establish a European higher education area based on international collaboration and academic partnership attractive to international students and staff (Feudjio, 2009). Cameroon is currently realigning its higher education system with the present universal degree structure of bachelor’s, master’s, and doctorate organized in three levels. These were adopted to replace the titles of License, Maitrise, DEA and Doctorat D’état (Feudjio, 2009).

Privatization. According to the UNESCO (2006b), the proliferation of private universities in Cameroon started as a national trend after the higher education reform in 1993. Private institutions increased at a faster pace than public universities, due to the high demand for higher education and the inability of public universities to meet the demand (Ngwana, 2003). In Cameroon, private institutions typically offer short-term, professional courses in the areas of management, journalism, information technology, hotel management, and electronics (Djeudo, 2013). These institutions are established in major cities where people can afford the cost of higher education, although these schools tend to be poorly equipped, lack a sufficient amount of full-time qualified instructors, and charge outrageous tuition fees—sometimes ten times higher than those of public universities (Feudjio, 2009). The Ministry of Higher Education has taken action to regulate private universities and alleviate some of these issues. Since 1993, a required application process was set in place for private universities before they can start their activities. This application must include the curriculum and programs of study that the institution intends to offer. Private institutions in Cameroon are sectarian as well as secular. Institutions affiliated with religious orders have shown significant growth because of the credibility of their institutions and the quality of the education that they offer. Religious private institutions depend on their funding to come from national and international organizations (Ngwana, 2003).

Although the Ministry of Higher Education supervises all public and private institutions, universities enjoy a considerable amount of autonomy in their academic and educational activities. A Vice-Chancellor (President) serves as both the academic and executive head of private Anglophone universities. In comparison, at various French universities, the President, in addition to being the executive head of the institution, is the chairperson of the university councils. In most cases, the President is the sponsor of the university. In consultation with other

backers, they form the council. Professional schools are run by boards that include representatives of relevant industries, the private sector and government ministries, presumably to incorporate the experience and knowledge gained in the workplace into the pedagogy and learning activities of the schools. Driven by the market, programs and courses are tailored to attract students and generate income for these private universities (Djeudo, 2013).

Funding. Public universities in Cameroon are funded by the state. Funding from the government has been declining since the early 1990s due to the economic crisis (Njeuma et al., 1999). The higher education system in Cameroon is heavily controlled by the state to the extent that the Ministry of Higher Education may waive payment of university fees created by the university authorities, and public HEIs can only charge fees that have been approved by the government. According to Njeuma et al. (1999), previous attempts by the University of Buea to require \$33 USD per student for infrastructure development have been blocked by the government. At the same time, higher education is very affordable in Cameroon, giving students the opportunity to study various programs.

Major universities around the world offer new knowledge areas to their students and faculty members as soon as they become available. Unfortunately, this is not the case for Cameroon higher education systems. Research is minimally funded in Cameroonian universities. Consequently, universities do not excel in research and cannot adapt to innovation. Administrators in higher education, particularly deans and department heads, are aware of global trends in higher education, and are frustrated that they cannot introduce these new areas of study and specialization to their students and faculty members because of long existing resource constraints (Ngwana, 2003).

Most departments are not fully staffed, making it difficult to support the growing number of students effectively. As a direct result, there are fewer students graduating from universities (Njeuma et al., 1999). The poor graduation rate is coupled with the inadequacy of the infrastructure and academic facilities. Without support from the government, the universities in Cameroon cannot afford the many amenities needed to excel as HEIs. High student population, poor student to faculty ratio, and inadequate financing lead to a weakening university environment. Universities are dilapidated with poorly ventilated and overcrowded lecture halls, and the absence of enough space forces some institutions to even use high school classrooms (Njeuma et al., 1999).

Ngwana (2003) draws the connection between the lack of funding for HEIs in Cameroon and the brain drain phenomenon. *Brain drain* is more formally defined as the movement of highly educated people from their country of origin to other countries in search of better opportunities (Bloom & Rosovsky, 2001). These institutions do not have enough qualified instructors to train students. Human capital is the most important resource that universities can provide to the country. Highly trained individuals contribute immensely to the development of a society. Brain drain most notably occurs in countries with political instability, a poor economic situation, social conflicts and civil wars (Bloom & Rosovsky, 2001). In Cameroon, the brain drain phenomenon is motivated by the wide gap between the incomes of highly qualified workers compared to those living in developed countries. Another source of funding for HEIs in Cameroon is international aid. However, the current focus of international organizations is given to the achievement of primary education for everyone (UNDP, 2003). In many cases the aid provided to higher education does not directly support HEIs. A big part of that aid is redirected to provide scholarships to students and to stimulate research. This situation has forced a number

of universities not to solely rely on government funding or international aid but instead to come up with innovative ways to support higher education. Some HEIs such as the University of Douala have started working with the private sector to help support research and some educational programs.

University Social Responsibility

University social responsibility (USR) is a term for community engagement in HEIs' academic research and teaching for the purpose of enhancing social and economic development (Reiser, 2008). University community engagement is understood as the interaction of the university with the outside world for the purpose of solving problems (Reiser, 2008). It also serves as an umbrella concept of functions that take into consideration the community and the partnership between faculty members and community practitioners (Vallaey, 2008b). This approach couples teaching and learning experiences with the commitment towards society. Baker (2004) has suggested that there are five forms of engagement: public scholarship, participatory research, community partnership, public information networks and civic literacy scholarship. Sandmann (2006) further argued that engagement is linked to the application and dissemination of knowledge and includes community members.

The concept of USR is closely related to *corporate social responsibility* (CSR), the level of engagement of corporations in communities. Broadly, CSR is what companies do voluntarily to raise their performance beyond minimum legal standards and exhibit engagement in a wide range of important issues including health, human rights, sustainable development and social justice (Geary-Schneider, 2000). Often, the relevance of these issues varies depending on the corporation and its mission (Geary-Schneider, 2000). The CSR concept has allowed corporations

to build trust with their stakeholders, address social issues, and boost the level of their accountability.

With that in mind, the concept of social responsibility is very much relevant to HEIs. Boyer (1996) argues that HEIs should demonstrate their commitment when it comes to addressing social, moral, and economic development issues of their communities, thereby suggesting that HEIs have to develop an extensive range of scholarship that speaks to social issues. Sandmann (2006) suggests that universities need successful communities not only in order to create demand for their services, but also to become an asset in those communities. At the same time, communities need successful universities that build their capacity in the most comprehensive way to address human and social development needs (Sandmann, 2006).

Through engagement and partnerships, HEIs can facilitate actions that create an environment where citizens are able to contribute to and improve their communities (Boyer, 1996). As such, CSR has given HEIs another outlook of how they can fulfill their social responsibility and engage with society. HEIs must internally think about their daily practices (waste management, energy and water consumption, biodiversity, etc.), as well as about their campus development (architecture and buildings). This approach of USR involves all the stakeholders with which HEIs come in contact.

Although Western universities have been leading the conversation on the scholarship of community engagement and social responsibility, little is understood about what social responsibility entails. Geary-Schneider (2000) argues that university social responsibility, as a subject area, has not been extensively researched. This could provide an explanation for why university social responsibility is often confused with university community service (Bok, 2003). Generally, USR tends to be discussed either as an internal process of HEIs or an external process

that involves engagement with the community. The literature of USR is abundant in Latin America; however the definition of social responsibility varies in the interpretation of responsibility and whether the university is responsible for its internal or external activities. Within the context of Cameroonian HEIs, the concept of social responsibility is currently a point of discussion; however it has yet to be implemented in the daily activities of HEIs (Vallaey, 2008b).

Problem Statement

Cameroon is facing major human and social development challenges. These challenges include poverty, social injustice, HIV/AIDS and major epidemics, disparity in wealth distribution, gender inequality, food insecurity, child mortality and maternal health and environmental issues. According to the National Institute of Statistics, the poverty rate remained stable between 2007 and 2014, with a corresponding increase in the number of poor and a high rate of unemployment as a result of population growth (CNIS, 2014). In many Cameroonian cities, it is common to see precariously constructed dwelling areas where poor sanitation and insecurity prevail beside towering buildings and luxurious homes. Poverty alleviation implies assisting people with jobs on the one hand and on the other improving services such as health, education, housing, and clean water. The return of the Cameroonian economy to growth demands the availability of sufficient qualified human resources able to master the innovative technologies required in the production of high value-added goods and the contribution of all strata of society (CNIS, 2014).

Though aware of the role of HEIs in nation building and betterment of society, the Cameroonian government does not yet have a clear strategy on how to include stakeholders such as HEIs during early stages of planning and implementation processes of human and social

development programs. By failing to do so, the government has ignored the university as a key partner for development. However, HEIs have the capacity to generate significant economic, capacity building, and human development value in communities through USR (Boyer, 1996). In response to this assertion, this study explored the contribution of Cameroonian HEIs in human and social development (i.e., the achievement of the MDGs) as well as how the attributes of USR can help to maximize their contribution. The relationship between HEIs and the USR concept has not been extensively analyzed in the higher education literature (Geary-Schneider, 2000). However, USR may provide HEIs with an opportunity to foster a sense of integrity and accountability as they relate to the practice of engagement as well as commitment in students to achieve human and social development.

Scope of the Study

This study used data from national reports and research papers (for the period 2000–2015) obtained from the CNIS to track progress in human and social development in Cameroon. These issues provide a basis to examine the potential HEIs hold to make a difference within the country. For the purpose of this study, four of the eight human and social development issues identified through the following MDGs were explored due to their local relevance: (a) eradicate extreme hunger and poverty, (b) achieve universal primary education, (c) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; and (d) ensure environmental sustainability. Although information about HEIs in Cameroon was collected throughout the country, the University of Douala provided the case study for this investigation. This study aimed to enable Cameroonian HEIs to conceptualize their role in society and facilitate resource sharing and partnership opportunities between HEIs and the community through the implementation of community initiatives.

Rationale for the Study

After the implementation of a variety of human and social development programs (SAPs or MDGs), Cameroon still has a long way to go in achieving sustainable development and poverty alleviation. Among other things, there is no clear strategy for the Cameroonian government to engage HEIs fully in achieving sustainable development and poverty alleviation. The intellectual capital of Cameroonian HEIs must be involved in developing solutions for the current human and social needs in Cameroon. The collective strength represented in the collaboration between universities and their communities is a critical component of the effort to alleviate poverty.

While a number of studies have been previously conducted on many aspects of university engagement (Astin, 1984, 1993; Berger and Milem, 1999; Chickering and Gamson, 1987; Goodsell, Maher and Tinto, 1992; Kuh, 1995; Kuh et al., 2005; Kuh and Vesper, 1997; Pace, 1995; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991, 2005), this study specifically explored the contribution of the University of Douala toward its community. Through university social responsibility (USR), the study seeks to understand the role of Cameroonian HEIs in human and social development. Higher education institutions have struggled to find an ideological framework that will preserve HEIs' sense of a special mission in society but also accommodate the changing realities of a new era (Vallaey, 2008b). As Boyer (1990) asserted, the greatest weaknesses of HEIs lies in the civic realm. There is a declining sense of civic obligation in our communities, a lowering of trust in HEIs, and a diminution of compassion in society. A partnership between HEIs and the community restores the basic idea and practice for improving human and social conditions (Vallaey, 2008b). Consequently, the intent of this study is to change the underlying ideas Cameroonian leaders have about the role of HEIs and their impact in the community. The

concept of USR is a pursuit that requires the university's staff, faculty, and students to embrace what USR means to them and construct together the action steps to contribute to the community.

Significance of this Study

This study explores the contribution of HEIs in human and social development in Cameroon. Cameroonian HEIs have an immense potential to address human and social development needs. However, the fundamental problem is that Cameroonian HEIs have yet to implement fully their mission of supporting development to the same degree as teaching and research. The efforts started at the University of Douala during this investigation open new possibilities for Cameroonian HEIs becoming more socially responsible. This study is an attempt to direct HEIs toward new ways of understanding their social responsibility. At the same time, this study aims to help all related stakeholders (community members, students, faculty members, parents, HEIs, members of civil society, businesses and government entities) as well as practitioners to advance HEIs' contribution to addressing human and social development issues. The expectation for this study is to generate interest in the growing field of USR and raise awareness on what constitutes the mission of HEIs. Furthermore, the study will provide some of the characteristics of HEIs in Cameroon drawn from my time spent at the University of Douala that will serve as a good foundation for further investigations.

Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to describe the factors and conditions that characterize HEIs using USR in Cameroon. The two overarching research questions for this study are:

1. What is the contribution of Cameroonian HEIs in human and social development?
2. How can Cameroonian HEIs increase their ability to engage with local communities?

Research Site

The fieldwork for this study was conducted in Cameroon with the vast majority of time spent in the City of Douala in the Littoral region. The Littoral region is one of the ten regions in Cameroon and is located in the South-Ouest part of the country. The region covers 4.4% of the national area with four main cities (Yabassi, Nkongsamba, Douala, and Édea), Douala being the capital (CNIS, 2014). According to the National Institute of Statistic in Cameroon, the population of the Littoral region was estimated at 3,174,437 inhabitants in 2013 (CNIS, 2014). Agriculture and fishing are economic activities practiced by the vast majority of people of the region. As for the industry, the Littoral region is doing well compared to other regions in the country. Industries include but not limited to: food processing, breweries, tobacco, and textiles. Most of the industries and infrastructures are concentrated in the City of Douala (CNIS, 2014).

Located in the Gulf of Guinea on the riverbanks of Wouri, Douala is the economic capital and an important trading center of the country and serves as the gateway for some of the country's major exports like coffee, oil and cocoa. Both German and French colonizers developed the city. The first infrastructures built in Douala were mainly to accommodate the colonizers. Douala is divided into six urban municipalities. Its population increased from 1.9 million in 2005 to close to 3 million in 2013 (CNIS, 2014). Despite its extensive potential, Douala faces many challenges that slow down its economic growth. Poverty, rapid population growth, lack of basic infrastructure, and shortages of housing have resulted in the proliferation of ghettos, heavy traffic and the need for more land. The urban poor in the City of Douala lack basic facilities and services that include housing and access to employment. Major challenges include real estate speculation, difficulties implementing urban land reform, flooding, transportation, health, rapid growth and a high percentage of children being homeless. In its

current conditions, Douala is characterized by poverty with a high proportion of the population earning money from informal activities, carried out on the streets or areas not zoned for commercial activities. The study area is largely influenced by the presence of a number of institutions such as the University of Douala, which is a state university with six satellite campuses across town, a Catholic university and many private and professional institutes. During this research, much time was spent at the main campus of the University of Douala (UD) located at the “Cite-Sic Bassa” neighborhood.

The University of Douala

The UD was created and organized in 1993 as a regional university. It moved into structures previously occupied by two professional schools. It is one of the largest universities in the entire country with 11 colleges and 72 professional programs, and over 800 faculty and staff members. Its large student population of over 45,000 students is evidence of its influence in the City of Douala and in the Littoral region of Cameroon (Robert, 17 June 2014). The UD serves as a barometer of what is happening in the Littoral region and is comprised of six campuses scattered throughout the Littoral region. Its location in Cameroon’s economic capital is an important asset to its stature, allowing the university to train students to be ready to be employed in the local job market. Nearly 22 years after its inception, the UD is facing the same problems that plague other Cameroonian HEIs (Robert, 17 June 2014). Infrastructure and resources are absent, consequently affecting the quality of education and its research activities. These challenging factors slow down the ability of the UD to fully contribute to social change. In that context, it raises the question: “How can the UD fulfill its social responsibility?” An attempt to answer that question leads us to explore how the UD responds to human and social development issues. The Cameroonian law of April 2001 on higher education states that “the government

assigns to higher education a fundamental mission of producing, organizing and disseminating scientific, cultural, professional and ethical information for the development of the nation and society as a whole.” The specific missions of the University of Douala are: (a) teaching, (b) research, (c) developing and promoting the practice of bilingualism, (d) supporting development and promoting social and cultural advancement, and (e) promoting access to higher education and research (Robert, 17 June 2014).

With a fast growing population in the city, the University of Douala would need to frequently reestablish, revive and modernize itself to effectively link with the community while creating an environment in which individual members of the community feel empowered. As a place-based institution, the University of Douala is uniquely positioned to serve as a connector and agent of development, yet its relationship with community members and other stakeholders, along with its core missions, have often been misunderstood. This unfortunately reinforces the portrayal of universities as “ivory towers.”

Methodology

The methodology used in this study is explored in more detail in Chapter 3. The qualitative procedures used to identify and better understand the contribution of HEIs in human and social development include: (1) research design, (2) sampling, (3) data collecting procedures, (4) data analysis and triangulation, and (5) ethical considerations. In sum, this case study collected data via interviews and a photovoice project to assist in the interpretation and clarification of the contribution of HEIs in human and social development. Additionally, data were obtained by administering a survey containing predominantly structured questions to a cross section of participants. The purpose of the survey was to narrow down the scope of the study as well as to complement the information from the interviews and photovoice process.

The study was conducted in 2 phases. Both phases took place over a period of 6 months, and covered a period of 3 months each time in 2014 and 2015. These phases were conducted in Douala. An overview of socio-economic, demographic and educational characteristics of Douala can be found in chapter 1. A total of 25 community leaders, students, faculty members, staff and elected officials participated in the study. Selection procedures were based on convenience, but the selected participants represented various dimensions of the study that are important in terms of gender, age, professional experience and qualifications.

Definition of Terms

Higher education institutions (HEIs). For the purpose of this study, *higher education institutions* and *universities* will be used interchangeably to reflect the usage of these terms at the University of Douala.

Human and social development. Development focused on achieving the well-being of the people in such areas as employment, education, health, the environment, and human rights. Development prioritizes human beings, addressing their basic human needs (UNDP, 2003).

International organizations. Organizations that extend across national boundaries and often involve two or more nations, but do not possess autonomous powers or authority to impose rules. International organizations exert certain influences in decision-making and policymaking among their member states but without the authority to impose binding mandates. These international organizations include select UN agencies such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the IMF, the World Bank, and the UNDP; all of which have influenced national and educational policymaking in Cameroon (UNDP, 2003).

Service learning. Academic service learning is characterized by connecting specified learning outcomes to organized community service activities. In this study, the service learning

programs were designed and implemented by the universities and offered as elective courses that fulfill academic requirements (Boyer, 1996).

University social responsibility (USR). In Cameroonian context, USR means that HEIs are a service to their immediate respective communities—and to the country as a whole—because of their assets (Reiser, 2008).

Community. In the context of this project, community is defined as a group of civic minded individuals coming together to shape the future of their environment. Community is much more than a physical space (boundaryless).

Resource. This term has been used in this study to represent the tangible and intangible assets that are used to build the capacity of citizens and enhance their build environment.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to lay the foundation for the dissertation by presenting the factors that influence the contribution of Cameroonian HEIs to human and social development. More specifically, this chapter included a discussion of the social responsibility of HEIs in contributing to human and social development. Additionally, it provided background information about higher education in Cameroon. The overall purpose of this study is to examine the contribution of HEIs in human and social development and how they engage in changing the quality of life of people in Cameroonian communities. Subsequent to the setting out of background information and justification of the study, is the outline of research objectives and questions. Finally, an overview of the various research methods used to generate the data in this study is provided as well as a description of key concepts or terminology.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The contribution of higher education institutions (HEIs) to human and social development can be examined through various lenses. Thus, identifying the specific context and theoretical framework of the study to answer and explain the research questions is imperative. A *conceptual framework* is defined as the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that supports and informs your research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Further, Miles and Huberman (1994) state that a conceptual framework is made up of key theories and their interactions. The purpose of this chapter is to situate the study within its conceptual framework, which draws from postcolonial, Freirian, growth pole, and social responsibility theories. It begins by providing an overview of the theories, and is followed by an explanation of their application and utility within this study on the contribution of HEIs to human and social development in Cameroon.

Postcolonial Theory

As a popular movement, postcolonial theory includes many definitions, views, and ideas that can be adapted to multiple situations. To better understand postcolonial theory, it is first important to explore colonialism. According to Taiaiake (2001), colonialism is a theoretical framework for understanding and explaining the complexities of relationships that evolved between indigenous people and Europeans and the outcomes of a new reality among the colonized and colonizers. It manifests itself through institutions and policies put in place by European colonizers toward indigenous people, as well as the export of Western social and cultural values to colonized countries. Within the African context, under colonialism, cultural diversity was dismissed by the exclusion of most African traditions from education (Taiaiake, 2001). Africans who have experienced colonial education have relayed the effects it has had in

undermining traditional African societies by introducing European values and isolating students from their communities (Busia, 1964). Consequently, the voices of indigenous peoples and their efforts to liberate themselves from the colonizers have been ignored in the larger social historical narrative of decolonization (Spivak, 1988).

Long after the independences of colonized countries in Africa, most ex-colonies have continued to be subservient to the needs of their former colonizers (Spivak, 1988). This continuing colonization has taken different forms such as globalization or neocolonialism. Cameroon has yet to overcome the aftermaths of colonization or its continued impacts. Advocates of postcolonial theory such as Krishna (2009), Krishnaswamy (2008), Said (1978), and Spivak (1988) argue that the aftermaths of colonialism are still being felt by the colonized; colonialism has not automatically disappeared with decolonization.

Postcolonial theory was selected for this study because it speaks to my experiences as a person from a formerly colonized country. It also explains the realities and attitudes of the research participants as well as their communities, along with the discourses that affect the larger development process in developing countries (Subedi & Daza, 2008). Postcolonial theory has therefore shaped my understanding of the socio-political and socio-historical context related to HEIs in Cameroon. Postcolonial theory is further important for the analysis of the contribution of Cameroonian HEIs to human and social development because it sheds light on both the economic and noneconomic dynamics that drive HEIs.

Postcolonialism, however, is very complex and hard to define (Castle, 2001). It refers to both the era after colonialism as well as a set of critical attitudes taken toward colonialism (Loomba, 2005). Indeed, there is no consensus on whether colonialism is something of the past, or whether it is even appropriate to call the time after colonialism “postcolonialism” (Loomba,

2005). Postcolonial theory has drawn from many disciplines including feminism, history, education sociology, anthropology, human geography, Marxism, philosophy, post-structuralism, and psychoanalysis (Young, 2001). As a whole, postcolonial theory focuses on the aftermaths of colonialism and how it still affects people living in formerly colonized nations (Young, 2001), examining the time period beginning with the end of the direct rule of colonizers over the colonized, or the era of post-colonialism. Postcolonial theory challenges the practices of the dominant Western perspectives and seeks to reposition and empower the marginalized and subordinated other (Dussel, 2001). It pushes back against paternalistic and patriarchal foreign practices that dismiss local thoughts, cultures, and methods as uninformed, 'barbarian,' or irrational (Dussel, 2001).

Postcolonial theory can be traced back to the 1950s and 1960s, when most colonies were starting to gain independence from their colonizers. Nkrumah (1965), Said (1978), Ashcroft (1995), Tiffins (1995), Bhabha (1994) and Spivak (1988), among others, were the early contributors to this theory (Krishna, 2009). These authors investigated the lost power, identity, and culture of people from mainly developing countries such as Cameroon. In particular, Said (1978) significantly influenced the field of postcolonial studies. Said argues that there is a long tradition of problematic and demeaning images of Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East that serve to justify the colonial and imperial aspirations of the Western world in developing countries. Mbembe (2001) describes post-colonialism in Cameroon as a situation in which people are being choked by the French or British autocrat. To reinforce what has already been said, Spivak (1988) is another important player in the postcolonial debate that reflects on the thoughts of Gramsci; he describes the ways in which the *subaltern* (i.e., non-elites) have been marginalized in the social history of decolonization. Ashcroft, Griffith, and Tiffins (1995),

Loomba (2005), and Young (2001) further write about the practices and representation of ongoing subordination within former colonies post independence. Many previously colonized countries that have achieved political independence still operate under the political, cultural, educational, economic, and intellectual influence of their colonizers (Ashcroft et al., 1995; Chambers & Curti, 1996). For that reason, new terms such as *imperialism* and *neocolonialism* have emerged. However, colonialism involves a “direct rule” (Loomba, 2005, p. 11), which is not the case with imperialism. In imperialism, the new relationship created between the colonizers and colonized is based on dependency, to ensure that the colonized rely on European labor and goods. Loomba (2005) further explains: “in the modern world, then, we can distinguish between colonization as the takeover of territory, appropriation of material resources, exploitation of labor and interference with political and cultural structures of another territory or nation, and imperialism as a global system” (p. 11), which is different from the direct rule.

Gupta (1998) stated that development in less developed countries has been driven by historical trajectories of European colonialism, developmentalism, and global capitalism. In the postcolonial era in Cameroon, English and French are considered imperialist languages, as they remain the official languages of instruction post independence. This reinforces the idea that education in Cameroon was mainly established to integrate Cameroonians into French and British cultures, to make them assistants of the colonizers (Mbembe, 2001). Even though Cameroon is no longer a French and British colony, the influence of Western cultures and ideas persists.

Postcolonial Critique

Postcolonial theory arose, in many ways, as a critique of dependency theory because of its shortcomings in dealing with the problematic of the modernization paradigm (Ninnes &

Burnett, 2004; Sylvester, 1999; Tikly, 1999). Modernization paradigm is another concept that has played a comparable role. It's defined as an economic theory that is rooted in capitalism and incorporates the full spectrum of the transition and drastic transformation that a traditional society has to undergo in order to become modern (Hussain et al., 1981; Lenin, 1964). Similarly, dependency theory has been viewed as a way in which developing countries rely upon the support of more wealthy nations. Dependency theory was developed as a result of colonialism and framed by liberal reformers (Prebisch), the Marxists (André Gunder Frank), and the world systems theorists (Wallerstein) (Ninnes & Burnett, 2004). Additionally, postcolonial scholars critiqued dependency theorists' framing of colonized countries as completely dependent, instead showing the ongoing contestation and negotiation that has occurred throughout the colonization process (Ashcroft et al., 1995). On the contrary, Bennabi (1991) introduced the concept of *colonisability* or readiness for colonization. Bennabi (1991) attributes colonization to the weakness of local cultures, arguing that colonizers did not create this situation of vulnerability, but rather it existed long before the colonizers arrived. Consequently, Bennabi suggests that internal weaknesses made it easier for developing societies to be colonized. He also suggests that the liberation of colonized societies should address the issue of colonisability. Toynbee (1957) provides early support for this argument, as he believes that the deterioration of a civilization is due to its internal weaknesses. It is therefore imperative to look at a culture comprehensively to address its weaknesses and strengthens.

Critics of postcolonial theory argue that it has a narrow vision because its preoccupation with questions of race, ethnicity, and culture exclude other forms of oppression such as gender or class. As a result, one group of people in society may appear to be more influential than another (Reimer Kirkham & Anderson, 2002). For example, within this context, postcolonial analysis

does not necessarily require a gendered examination of the educational gap that exists between men and women in African HEIs, therefore omitting women in HEIs who could help toward human and social development. Here, there is a clear omission of perspectives from feminist scholarship. To address these issues, a number of postcolonial thinkers have included discourses to develop analyses that are based on gender experiences within a postcolonial context (e.g., Anderson, 2000, 2002, 2004a; McConaghy, 2000; Narayan, 2000; Narayan & Harding, 2000.)

Post-colonialism and Higher Education

The importance of postcolonial theory in education resides in its contribution to areas such as culture, language, racism, and curriculum (Ninnes & Burnett, 2004). Some postcolonial theorists argue that the aftermath of colonization may be beneficial to both the colonized and the colonizers, as they can learn something from each other (Ninnes & Burnett, 2004). Additionally, from an economic development standpoint, highly skilled workers are needed to achieve national economic development (Brown, 1999; World Bank, 2004). Tikly (2003) argues that postcolonial theory has facilitated the process of skills acquisition in Africa where students lack certain skills due to gender inequality and cultural issues. These socio-historical aspects of education impact HEIs' ability and efforts to contribute to human and social development.

According to Coloma, Means, and Kim (2009), the relationship between higher education and postcolonial theory is mixed and convoluted: education is “a double-edged sword wielding power for enslavement and oppression as well as for subversive revolution and self-determination” (p. 10). Education continues to be used as a primary tool for colonization, which continues to replicate socioeconomic inequities globally. In this age of the knowledge economy, higher education plays an important role in the development of the nation. Higher education institutions train highly skilled workers to be creative and to become an asset for their respective

nations. However, if the individuals being trained and the knowledge generated are not culturally and socially specific, this training may fail to fulfill the goals of national and social development. Contextualizing educational systems means having community values in mind. Community members are the principal holders of their culture's knowledge and the main actors for academic and mental decolonization.

Education is an agent of cultural transmission and social change; it also reflects the dynamic process of nation building that is continually being modified by new conditions (Bok, 2003). Hence, educational systems modeled after those of the colonizers should be replaced by Cameroonian educational policies. This will, in turn, refocus and set its immediate priorities, which include the contextualization of the educational system, economic growth, and national unity. Ever since the independence of Cameroon, the role of education has been associated with national development, with the inherited colonial system modified to serve new economic and social interests. Additionally, many government members in Cameroon have received Western education in foreign institutions. This raises the question as to how Western education has impacted development in Cameroon.

Traditional African education was practical and relevant to the needs of African society, and focused on social responsibility, political participation, morality, spiritual values, observation, and imitation (Fafunwa & Aisiku, 1982). The curricula included programs such as rituals and skills required to sustain the culture and life of the family and community. Great attention was placed on interpersonal connections and complementary commitments: "In old Africa . . . the man who combined good character with specific skills was pronounced to be a well-educated and well-integrated citizen of his community" (Fafunwa & Aisiku, 1982, pp. 9–10). Trades were learned by apprenticeship from elders. Without a better understanding of which

individuals are within the educational system, human and social development cannot be achieved fully, for individuals must first understand who they are (Bassey, 1999). Consequently, a small group of influential African scholars pushed for the validation of oral history as a method of inquiry, and earlier nationalists advocated for the acknowledgement of the culture of Africa and systems (Omolewa, 2007). The goal was for students in an African education system to learn in ways that best fit their traditions and needs.

As a result of colonization, Cameroon's educational system does not fully reflect its history and culture. The system follows the rigid structure of education established during the colonial period by the French and the British, warranting an examination of post colonialism in this context. Mbembe (2001) notes that the colonial educational system with its imperialist methods has made the domination of colonizers permanent. Mbembe further argues that the colonial educational system has been the most destructive method of domination in controlling the worldview of the colonized. The ongoing process of reforming higher education in colonial countries is often connected to the legacy of colonization. The education system that emerged out of colonialism reinforces the domestication of education that is a mechanism for the elite to dominate (Omolewa 2007). The development of Cameroonian higher education system is still in the hands of a selected group of people.

In sum, Altbach (2007) characterizes post colonialism as the apparent influence of Western countries on the educational policies and institutions of developing countries. Welch (2007) adds that postcolonial theory in education critiques the continuing domination of the Western education system, which in relation to this study frames HEIs' practices in Cameroon. As such, a postcolonial view would argue that HEIs in Cameroon should create strategies that aim to overcome the aftermaths of colonization and to contextualize knowledge to respond to

human and social development issues. The contribution of HEIs is more than just academic knowledge; it is also the services that HEIs provide to the community through social responsibility. As Freire (1973) explains, education influences and transforms people, but it can also brainwash them and create a society of dependents awaiting salvation from the colonizers who continue to exploit them. On the other hand, education can also be used as a tool to liberate people and allow them to use their talents to transform society and to tackle human and social developmental issues (Freire, 1993). In the context of this study, education plays a critical role in the development of a society.

Freire's Theory

Freire was an influential Brazilian scholar who developed theories concerning educating adults and illiterate people. His work continues to influence education, especially in developing countries where people are still struggling from injustice, authoritarian regimes, illiteracy and agency. Throughout history, HEIs have been used to build thriving communities. Dewey (1915) and Freire (1993) see institutions of learning as small communities where students are groomed into the fundamentals and values of democratic living. Freire's ideas were based on Dewey's democratic vision. Dewey (1916) argues that the important attributes for membership in a democratic society are learned in schools where students are trained to receive the tools they need to participate and actively contribute to society. Dewey (1916) also states that schools enable students to be engaged in community projects that are socially responsible. And finally, Dewey (1938) characterized education as "the process of coming to share in the social consciousness; and that the adjustment of individual activity on the basis on this social consciousness is the only positive method of social reconstruction" (p. 16). He saw school as a place where students go not only to learn, but also to become active citizens through the

cultivation of critical thinking and problem solving. Similarly, Freire (1993) continues Dewey's views, stating that a commitment to critical pedagogy is more than learning the language of critique alone; it is a deliberative process that creates a society where people find their purpose. Freire (1993) defines *critical pedagogy* as a process of influencing and transforming the relationship among classroom teaching, knowledge generation, institutional structures of the school, and the social and material relations of the wider community. One of the main intentions of critical pedagogy is to promote social change and to foster a better world (Zamudio et al., 2008). Critical pedagogy is also about supporting learners' capacity to help solve important human and social development issues (Zamudio et al., 2008).

Freire's philosophy on education seeks to engage people, to make them aware, and to help them act in order to change situations around them. For Freire, poverty and oppression are the result of an unjust world. Educators have the responsibility to bring about social change. Freire's critical pedagogy thus seeks to obtain the total freedom of oppressed people in colonized countries and to foster participatory democracy to create a larger global village. In this way, oppressed people around the world can construct local education systems that aim to solve human and social development issues. Furthermore, Freire's contribution to pedagogy also exposes how colonizers used education to control and dominate the colonies (McLaren 1995, 1997a, 1997b)

However, HEIs have also been used to create disparities between people and regions. They have perpetuated the idea of domination and superiority by training submissive individuals to serve the elites and the colonial power (Moulton, 2002). Consequently, some HEIs are no longer concerned with social change but aim to please the elite (Moulton, 2002). Many HEIs practice lecture-based pedagogies that do not help or create experiences where students as

citizens can develop the skills necessary for critical thinking (Freire, 1993). In this view, HEIs oppress learners more than they act as agents of social change. McLaren (1995) argues that HEIs should be viewed as a ground of social transformation and liberation where students are taught to contribute to society. Giroux (2012) argues that independent societies rely on autonomous individuals who have good judgment. However, Freire (1973) questions whether this is possible within educational institutions that rely on what he calls the *banking system* of education. This method is one of five main ideas from his theory of the pedagogy of the oppressed (Freire, 1993) that relate to this study—banking method, problem posing, dehumanization, internalization, and humanization—which are detailed below.

The Banking System of Education

The education banking system, as described by Freire (1993), is an exercise of domination with the ideological intent of indoctrinating the oppressed to adapt to the world of oppression. Freire (1993) used the term to describe an education system based on memorizing facts and figures. A characteristic of this ideology of oppression refutes education and knowledge as processes of acquisition that anyone can undertake (Freire, 1993). In the banking system of education, Freire (1993) associates the teacher/learner relationship with a dominant/dependent type of relationship where learners are compared to “receptacles” that have to be filled with persuasion from teachers’ narratives: “These receptacles are meant to regurgitate the information received from the teacher. In the relationship, the dominant is the authority and the dependent the oppressed” (p. 37). In this system of education, authorities develop curriculums without consulting the learners or considering their local needs. The banking system depicts knowledge as a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing, assuming an absolute ignorance of others (Freire,

1973). In the banking system, the achievements made by individual learners do not contribute to their personal development. Therefore, Freire (1993) argues that the more the banking system is used as a model of education, the less the learners develop the critical consciousness to become transformers of the world.

True advocates of the oppressed cannot accept this mechanistic concept of consciousness as an empty vessel to be filled or the use of banking methods of education as a form of domination in the name of emancipation (Freire, 1973). They reject the banking concept in its entirety. Hooks (1997), for example, calls for social justice and asks for all members of society to value and promote fairness in how they treat others. Hooks further contends that a just society is one where its members contribute and have a sense of their agency as well as of social responsibility toward others. Additionally, Hooks argues that a socially motivated society should oppose the banking education model because it does not promote the freedom of its learners.

Other scholars similarly argue that the banking model of education does not cultivate participation and democracy, and does not allow learners to take an active role in their education or support teachers to empower learners (e.g., Bigelow & Peterson, 2002; Darling-Hammond, French, & Garcia-Lopez, 2002; Hackman, 2005). Young (1991), for example, contends that banking education does not engage students to ask questions about their daily realities. Consequently, this keeps learners in a continual state of oppression and alienation as well as compromising their capability to develop critical thinking and affects their ability to become activists instead of spectators in life. In fact, Freire (1993) argues that the most compelling way to keep people in bondage is through education. In the Cameroonian context, the banking model of education is seen through the French and British education system that continues to be used to train a group of educated people who are not rooted in their own culture but assimilate and adjust

to policies and practices that don't serve the local context. Freire (1993) suggests that the banking model should be replaced by a more ambitious educational system where teaching emphasizes critical thinking as well as problem posing.

Problem Posing

As a mode of education, *problem posing* allows people to develop their own power and to analyze critically the way they exist in relation to others as well as their own consciousness (Freire, 1993). Problem-posing education is a pedagogy that seeks to reclaim the full humanity of the oppressed in their quest of freedom by providing tools to solve problems and to become empowered (Freire, 1993). Problem posing is quite different from banking education, which dehumanizes and limits the ability of the learners to reach their full potential. The main purpose of problem posing is to allow the learner to reflect on his situation and how to continually find solutions. In this system, the teacher does not only teach, but also learns. Similarly, the students do not only learn; they teach the teachers. As such, the responsibility is placed on both the teacher and the learners, and they work in a partnership characterized by authenticity and respect. Through an equal teacher-learner relationship, learning becomes a self-discovery process that helps the learners to understand their situation in a historical context and to transform the world based on their reality. As such, learners develop the capacity to be aware of the world around them, helping them to become empowered and to overcome their challenges.

Humanization

Unlike dehumanization, humanization treats individuals as fully human even though they are oppressed, in the sense that they take part in the process of liberating themselves. Humanization attempts to restore stolen humanity by trusting human abilities and skills. It involves treating human beings as critical thinkers, even if they need specific interventions (such

as education) to make them use these skills. As with dehumanization, humanization is enacted through education and culture. However, how education and culture are used in a humanistic approach is completely different from in dehumanization. Humanizing education is based on problem posing. According to Freire (1993), in order for humanizing pedagogy to take place, it has to pass through two stages. The first stage is for the oppressed to reveal the world of oppression and to commit themselves seriously to its transformation. The second stage of the process is to make the pedagogy belong to all the oppressed and to make the oppressors engage in the process for permanent liberation.

Dehumanization

Freire (1993) explains the nature of *dehumanization*, the relationship between the oppressed and oppressor and the role of education in reducing or advancing individual freedom. According to Freire (1993), dehumanization happens when a group of individuals are treated as less human or not fully human. That was the case in Cameroon during the colonial era when indigenous knowledge was often dismissed. The manifestation of dehumanization is characterized by servitude, prejudice, and exploitation. The oppressors are those who withhold the personal autonomy of others by imposing their own worldviews, and by perceiving other (usually indigenous peoples) as less than human and therefore malleable and manageable. Freire argues that dehumanization manifests itself through the oppressor and the oppressed, because the oppressor is dehumanized by the act of oppression, while the existential reality of oppression and the internalization of the image of the oppressor dehumanize the oppressed.

Oppressed individuals are compelled to adopt the actions and thoughts of the oppressors, thereby losing their own identity, worldview, and beliefs. This is apparent in the colonization process, which denies expressions of the colonized culture such as art, language, and religion.

The oppressed then begin—often unknowingly—to pursue approaches and techniques of the oppressors leading to a “culture of silence” among the oppressed who now have no voice (Freire, 1993). Additionally, Freire points out that this process of “being voiceless” becomes apparent when “during the initial stage of struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or sub-oppressors” (p. 2). The behavior of the oppressed creates a paradoxical situation with a culture and value system that gives more power to the oppressor.

Importantly, Freire (1993) believed that education can improve human conditions. Through education, people learn how to read, write, and become critical thinkers, becoming aware of their surroundings and creating their own stories and histories. In the eyes of Freire, education is the only way people can free themselves from their oppressors and transform the world. The liberation of the oppressed restores their stolen identity and ability to think as human beings, making the oppressed aware of their oppression and defeating injustice through the power of education (Freire, 1993).

According to Freire (1973), this quest for autonomy creates a sense of independence that gives individuals capacity to be their own person and to live according to their will, not from manipulative or distorting external forces. Giroux (2007) sees autonomy as a core element of freedom:

Freedom cannot work if citizens are not autonomous; self-judging, and independence are qualities that are indispensable for students if they are going to make vital judgments and choices about participating in shaping decisions that affect everyday life, institutional reform, and governmental policy. (p. 3)

These ideas must be translated into actions where the oppressed stand against the social, political, and economic injustices that limit their existence. Ayers (2001) calls for a conscious-based education that bridges the gap between injustice and freedom. Conscious-based education

then becomes a tool in areas where people are experiencing racism, dehumanization, and economic inequalities.

The consciousness of oppressed people has evolved to multiple levels corresponding to a particular historical time. Freire (1993) explained that developing countries go through different phases of emancipation, the most important of which is becoming an open society and exercising critical consciousness. Freire defines an *open society* as a society with aspirations to participate in a democracy and constantly pursue societal change. The goal of critical consciousness is to make people aware of what is happening around them and to help them take action to improve their situations. The core idea of critical consciousness is responsibility and commitment, which are the principles that guide the practice of university social responsibility. Ultimately, Freire argues that, eventually, the oppressed will fight to gain respect and humanity in a struggle to oppose those who are dehumanizing the oppressed. Freire noted that during the initial stages of the struggle, oppressed leaders might act like oppressors, due to what he calls *internalization*.

Internalization

As a result of dehumanization, oppressed individuals adopt the thinking and actions of their oppressors as they lose their own identity and worldview. The oppressed also believe the images of them that the oppressors project. Consequently, the oppressors become the role models of the oppressed, and they end up following the models, techniques, and approaches of the oppressors unconsciously. Thus, *internalization* is the process of becoming somebody else (Freire, 1993). Additionally, Freire (1993) points out that this process of “being somebody else” becomes apparent “during the initial stage of the struggle, [when] the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressor, or sub-oppressors” (p. 27). This is due to the fact that the “very structure of their thought had been conditioned by contradictions of

the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped.” Freire continues: “Their ideal is to be men; but for them, to be men is to be oppressors.” (p. 28). Their model of humanity is to follow their oppressors. As noted earlier, the oppressors dehumanize the oppressed in the sense that the oppressed not only lose their identity but also are only able to see the world in terms of their oppressors’ view of reality. This is because their thoughts are structured or conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation in which they are situated. This is why when the oppressed initiate the struggle to regain their lost humanity, their leaders tend to employ the same approach as the oppressors; this is the only model with which they are familiar. The consideration of each individual human being regardless of their condition rehabilitates people that have been oppressed for many years.

Freire’s Influence in Africa

Freire (1973) applied his concepts within African countries such as Tanzania, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Angola, São Tomé, and Príncipe (Godonoo, 1998). Freire notes his familiarity with African issues due to their similarity to the Brazilian context:

how important it was for me to step for the first time on African soil, and to feel myself to be one who was returning and not one who was arriving . . . the presence among the people of expressions of their culture that the colonialists, no matter how hard they tried, could not stamp out—all of this took possession of me and made me realize that I was more African than I had thought. (Freire, 1973, pp. 5–6)

Freire’s work has subsequently influenced African scholars and politicians immensely, among other countries (e.g., Pakistan, the United States, Scotland; Godonoo, 1998).

The premise of Freire’s work in Africa, as in many other developing countries around the world, has been to help educate oppressed people about their conditions, making learning accessible to communities and equipping them to fight against the oppressors wisely. Freire (1973) outlined a *conscientization process* predicated on literacy as a way to highlight the

strategies of oppression put in place by the colonizers and how to organize a social revolution to liberate the oppressed. Literacy is an important ingredient of development (Freire, 1973). It is crucial for communication and education, and is indispensable for greater participation in society. Through literacy, powerless people can find their voice and acquire the capacity to raise their income and transform their lives and the lives of people around them (Freire, 1973). Within the Cameroonian context, many people are still illiterate and cannot change their current conditions because they lack basic education. The literacy rate in Cameroon is at 74.99 % and the country ranks 129th among all countries (CNIS, 2014).

Critics of the Freire's Pedagogy

Freire's work has been closely linked to prominent theorists such as Dewey, Decroly, Montessori, Claparède, and Freinet. Thus, some have argued that Freire's work is not new or original. Freire's work appears to be influenced by elements of Socratic maieutics, philosophical existentialism, phenomenology, Hegelianism, Marxism, progressive education, and liberation theology (Dewey, 1915). However, according to Torres (2010), Freire tried to distance himself from other educational theorists. In defending Freire, Torres (2010) clarifies the difference between popular education and adult education: "Popular education cannot be confused with or restricted to adults. What defines popular education is not the learners age but the political opinion" (p. 109). This means that Freire is very much interested in empowering individuals to make a difference in society.

Some scholars criticize Freire's pedagogy as based on western assumptions that undermine indigenous knowledge systems (Bowers & Apffel-Marglin, 2005). However, Au and Apple (2007) suggest that such critique is based on misconceptions, and does not fully understand "the conceptual and political depth of Freire's conception of liberatory pedagogy,"

and also lack “substantial evidence to support their claims” (p. 458). Further critique of Freire comes from postmodernists who question the gaps between revolutionary and compromising, local and global, academic and community, empirical and theoretical. For example, Brady (1994) and Weiler (1994) criticize Freire’s ignorance of gender and race and sexism, respectively, in his writing. From a feminist perspective, Freire’s work is male-dominated, and fails to define terms such as humanization more specifically in terms of gender, race, or other forms of socially defined identities. Freire’s assumption is that in struggling against oppression the oppressed will move toward true humanity. This leaves unaddressed the unique forms of oppression experienced by different groups. Freire sets out these goals of liberation for social and political transformation as universal claims, without exploring his own privileged position or existing conflicts among oppressed groups themselves (Weiler, 1994).

Additionally, Freirian critical pedagogy may be viewed as utopian, naïve, or unable to bring about real change (Coben 1998). Coben (1998) believes that Freire’s vision of social transformation by pedagogical interaction does not necessarily produce outcomes that will yield economic transformation:

Freire’s rhetoric is seductive, yet his pedagogy of liberation remains a romantic ideal, and like other romantic ideals it has its dark side. [...] It is not enough to say that political leaders, or educators, must commit class suicide and devote their lives to the people. Without a clear political framework such action is a sacrifice, but to what end? (Coben 1998, p. 113).

According to Cohen (2010), Freire does not make a clear distinction of his ideas of agency and authority, banking and problem-posing education, and reality and the perception of reality. Consequently, Freire’s ideas about humanization and diversity may be appealing, with modernist notions of empowerment, conscientization, and dialogue represented in Freire’s rhetorical expression. In spite of these critiques, Freire’s theory on education enables the learner

to become a more effective change agent. This certainly holds value for the remaining theories (growth pole and social responsibility) of this study. Growth pole and social responsibility have provided the context in which HEIs are essential as catalysts of human and social development. The next section explains how HEIs create a system with a trickle down effect in the community.

Growth Pole Theory and Growth Centers

Examining growth pole theory helps scholars understand the system by which communities grow based on linkages with institutions. This system is rooted in place-based theories of economic development. The idea of lagging cities or regions provides multiple avenues to argue for the contribution of HEIs to human and social development as a place-based asset. Duncan (1999) and Black, McKinnish, and Sanders (2005) describe *lagging regions* as places with selective out-migration and deterioration of public services. Duncan (1999) further considers the economic and social ramifications of such changes. In the case of selective out-migration, place-based policies target places where there is excess labor, where income levels are low or place-based amenities are few (Cumberland, 1971). Growth pole theory is necessary to combat place-based problems of service provision and maintain regional competitiveness (Cumberland, 1971). As Duncan (1999) describes, human and social development issues have ramifications in the community; corruption, poverty, and nepotism are social effects of a declining community. As a community declines, the inherent sense of place may decline as well. A sense of place within institutions such as HEIs is a public good, which consequently deserves public funds to maintain (Bolton, 1992). The place-based market imperfections that cause such decline must be addressed through growth pole strategies (Bolton, 1992). Growth pole theory can help communities with HEIs experience agglomeration and knowledge spillovers, which are critical to the development of communities (Partridge & Rickman, 2008). However, the

consequences of human and social development issues in communities may be far removed.

Lichter and Johnson (2007) argue that when institutions are removed from communities, it can cause isolation and as well as poverty.

Perroux first introduced the growth pole concept in 1950. According to Perroux (1955), a *growth pole* is defined as “an urban center for socioeconomic activities which can achieve self-sustaining growth to the point that growth is diffused outward to the community and the pole region” (Hansen, 1971, p. 68). A growth pole is formed when an organization located in a specific area creates a flow of goods and incomes, and stimulates the development and growth of other industries related to it (Perroux, 1955). Conversely, independent organizations are not committed to the well-being of a place and will only maintain the relationship as long as it benefits the organization’s goals (Thomas, 2004). These are essentially institutions that are not intentionally cultivating a process that will attract businesses because of their presence in the area.

Growth pole theory is based on the idea that the economic prosperity of a company or institution serves as a catalyst for growth. The core idea of this concept is characterized by the fact that economic development or growth is not uniform across an entire region, but instead takes place around a specific pole. It is an economy whose domestic growth diffuses and, as a result, helps drive the growth process in other economies through spillover externalities, knowledge transfer and gains from exchange and interfacing (Perroux, 1955).

Growth poles were used as popular regional development strategies in the 1960s and early 1970s, with national governments investing in centers identified as growth poles with the belief that a cluster of several organizations would ultimately reduce regional disparities in employment and incomes, facilitate decentralization, and support rapid industrialization (Bolton,

1992). At the extremes, a growth pole may be as small as a single organization or as large as a global region. This suggests that an organization cluster, a manufacturing cluster, a city, a country, a region, or a group of these could be a growth pole. Darwent (1969) suggests that cities where economic growth is concentrated are generally referred to as growth poles. An example of the effects of a growth pole is the Silicon Valley region in California, which expanded because of the information technology industry. The benefits of related economic growth of the IT businesses in Silicon Valley trickled down throughout the state of California, resulting in an increase of employment and social development.

The classification of a country, region, or an area as a growth pole depends on two criteria: (a) the growth rate of the economy relative to the area being developed, and (b) the strength of linkages between the growth pole and the area. This notion has been extended to continental and global levels, where some countries or regions are described as growth poles because of their significant economic activities and linkages to other countries or regions and the strong impact they exert on growth in other areas. This demonstrates that the conventional usage of the term growth pole is an outcome-based classification of geographically concentrated economic activity (Darwent, 1969)

One of the largest criticisms of growth pole theory is that the terminology was not originally defined clearly and was not prescriptive enough for clear implementation. Perroux (1955) tried to clarify the nuanced differences between related terms. Parr (1999a, 1999b) suggests that growth poles created disappointing results in the 1960s and 1970s, leading to disenchantment in their implementation. According to Cerón (2004), the growth pole strategy as well as the investments associated with it failed because they were in “poor locations” and were “politically driven.” A number of additional reasons have been given to justify such failure: lack

of competitive advantage in the government-identified growth poles, fierce expectation of the profits of growth poles, exaggeration of external economies, and governmental politics affected the process of implementation of growth poles (Cerón, 2004).

Higher Education Institutions as Growth Centers

While most growth pole discourse has been limited to industrial communities and their capacities to transform rural and peripheral regions, the influence of universities in communities is a theme that has attracted increasing attention in recent years. Some higher education administrators and community members have called for a widespread return of colleges and universities to the historical mission of land grant university communities (Bledstein, 1976; Campbell, 1995; Kellogg Commission, 1999). Under this system, regional institutions shaped local communities by responding to their challenges (Bledstein, 1976; Campbell, 1995; Kellogg Commission, 1999). These ideas seem to be particularly relevant today as communities adjacent to university campuses struggle with challenges that university assets can address: urban deterioration, environmental threats, growing economic disparity, and the unmet needs of vulnerable people and communities in areas including education, health care, criminal and juvenile justice, housing, and employment.

The influence that HEIs have on communities is more than purely academic. Higher education institutions, through their interaction with the community and local business, typically have a trickle down effect that promotes a flow of capital in the community, therefore creating growth centers. Hoover (1971) defines *growth centers* as

places where there exists or can easily be created the necessary condition for expanding employment opportunity and especially the public infrastructure and the external economies that most activities require. Such growth centers are then expected to attract commuters and migrants from surrounding areas of labor surplus and at the same time stimulate secondary growth of employment in some of these areas. (p. 277)

As such, growth centers foster economic development in less prosperous surrounding areas through the presence and activities they generate. The contribution of HEIs in human and social development happens through the growth pole located in a growth center. Hirschman (1958) suggests that investments made by the growth pole develop enough connections to have an impact in the surrounding areas. As previously established, HEIs are important in many aspects of our society. They are connected to high technology industries as research institutions; therefore HEIs may in fact be growth poles that set off development.

To illustrate the impact that HEIs have as growth poles, Moriarty (1987) examined the Research Triangle Park in North Carolina intentionally established between the different campuses at Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill. These institutions reaffirm the notion of HEIs as growth poles because the region attracts high technology industries and acts as a regional incubator by providing an outlet for companies to conduct research with the creation of direct and indirect employment. Luger and Goldstein (1991) subsequently found 116 other cases in the United States where HEIs have played a key role in human and social development. The presence of HEIs in particular geographical areas has been critical to place making (Gaddard & Puukka, 2008). Within the Cameroonian context, HEIs in Cameroonian cities are vital for triggering and sustaining economic growth because they are entrusted with a national mission to assist the government to achieve human and social development issues. The extent to which these institutions are able to take on this role depends on a number of circumstances: characteristics of the individual institutions, various regions in which they are located, and institutional policy frameworks. Higher education institutions in Cameroon don't have the same ability to contribute to human and social development issues. For example, the University of Ngaoundéré in northern Cameroon doesn't have the same capacity as the University of Douala

because of its geographical location. The University of Douala is located in Cameroon's economic capital. This position gives the University of Douala an advantage over the University of Ngaoundéré that might not have access to the resources beside what the government is offering.

Currently, it is expected that HEIs not only provide instruction and conduct research but also play an active role in human and social development (Bloom, Caning, & Chan, 2005). Institutions serve as a hub of business incubation, technical skills, and other preexisting businesses that develop the workforce and the employability of members of the community, thereby improving the community's overall quality of life. As a result, the geographical area becomes a growth pole connecting HEIs with the development of a regional economy that develops partnerships between the HEIs and other stakeholders for a greater impact.

The integration of growth pole theory in this study is a simple illustration of the transformational role of HEIs and their opportunities to make a difference. Bloom et al. (2005) states that the location of HEIs is vital for generating and sustaining economic growth. Human capital, economic activities, infrastructure development, entertainment center formation, and population growth are some of the elements that follow the creation of a university and may create positive change. The contributions HEIs then make can be conceptualized in two categories. In the first category, HEIs consider themselves members of the community and feel responsible for the well-being of the people (Thomas, 2004). These institutions invest their resources on people and infrastructure to have a positive impact, consequently attracting other activities in the area that facilitate the creation of a growth pole. In the second category, HEIs view themselves as independent organizations, tenants of a place rather than integral members of the place. They consider their primary responsibility to be to their shareholders, rather than to the

place where they do business. The implication of this second category is that HEIs don't have to make a commitment to contribute to human and social development.

The location of HEIs is an important factor for the success of any regional development strategy. The University of Doula in Cameroon is an example of a growth center. The areas surrounding the university have seen a level of economic prosperity and development that makes the City of Douala attractive to investors and citizens looking for better opportunities. However, there persists a lack of a sophisticated and organized institutional framework in Cameroon to facilitate the development of growth centers. This difficulty manifests in where Cameroonian HEIs are established. The extreme centralization of political and administrative authority dictates how the regions should be developed. The decentralization of power to regional growth points, or growth poles, allows a coordination of a better regional development strategy than a centrally planned development that is inefficient in distributing resources.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Broadly, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is concerned with what is or should be the relationship between global corporations, governments of countries, and individual citizens (Ehrlich, 2000). A more restricted definition of CSR deals with the relationship between a corporation and the local community (Ehrlich, 2000). Corporate social responsibility became a national trend in America during the 1950s when corporations acted on their social role due to the increased demand of accountability (Foster, 2007). The central tenet of *social responsibility*, however, is the social contract between all stakeholders in society, which is an essential requirement of civil society. This is also described as *citizenship engagement*, however social responsibility extends beyond present members of society and into the future. In other words, CSR consists of maintaining economic viability, meeting the needs of the general populous, and

preserving natural resources in a way that will benefit both current and future generations (Foster, 2007).

Corporate social responsibility is expressed both inside and outside HEIs. Within the institution, values and principles of citizenship, good governance, human rights, and respect for diversity should be an integral part of education. Externally, institutions engage with local communities, businesses, and government agencies with the goal of tackling social issues in the community (Reed, 2004). Similarly, Ehrlich (2000) describes three principles of CSR:

1. The Principal of Legitimacy: Society grants legitimacy and power to business, and in the long run those who do not use power in a manner which society considers responsible will tend to lose it. For example, Blaise Compaoré (the former president of Burkina Faso) was forced out of office and resigned because he abused the power given to him by the people.
2. The Principle of Public Responsibility: Businesses are responsible for outcomes related to their primary and secondary areas of involvement with society.
3. The Principle of Managerial Discretion: Managers are moral actors within every domain of CSR.

Socially responsible corporations typically organize service projects in the community. The participatory nature of these projects allows the community to unpack the perceptions of the corporation and give the ability to the corporation to define its vision for the community (Brief, Guzzo, & Schneider, 1996; Hudson, 2001; Jacobs, 1984; Sagoff, 1996; Schoenberger, 1997; Wright, 1994). This process creates positive change within the community. Socially responsible actions may contribute to human and social development. For example, there are corporations that help rural communities in Cameroon by providing them new means to cook their meals and

to preserve the environment. Unfortunately, there have been instances where corporations have not acted in the best interests of the community. For example, many communities in Cameroon export fruits and vegetables to Western countries, while at the same time importing most of their food supplies from Western countries. Higher education institutions have similar responsibilities to the community as businesses in relation to social responsibility.

It's within the framework of corporate social responsibility that universities should build values that are relevant to the university staff, faculty, students and stakeholders. Acting in line with the above mentioned principles can help universities make decisions that act toward the betterment of local communities. The role of the university is often associated with the role that it plays as center of knowledge acquisition. This role can only make sense if it's associated to social needs and economic life. As partners of human and social development, universities are expected to meet the social expectations of their stakeholders. The social responsibility of the university is not only desired but also valued by stakeholders (Geryk &Junak, 2011).

Applying Corporate Social Responsibility to Higher Education Institutions

Despite its roots in the business world, CSR offers a transferable model for HEIs (Carroll, 1999). According to Wood (1991), there are examples of corporate social performance model components that speak to higher education's recent trend toward university engagement and responsibility. Higher education institutions can be neighborhood institutions that are involved in revitalizing the community, creating new jobs, reviving commercial activities, and establishing community centers. The social responsibility of Cameroonian HEIs is considered important not only because of the complexity of the social, economic, and political environment in which HEIs operate, but also because of the impacts that their activities have on the Cameroonian society. Even though there is an understanding that HEIs may have moral responsibilities to respond to

human and social development issues, there is little evidence on the nature of the responsibilities HEIs should assume in society.

Similar to corporations, social responsibility is an important pillar for HEIs. By adopting social responsibility as a framework, HEIs are more likely to transform communities (Mayfield, 2001). When HEIs respond to the needs of the community, they improve their reputation and they have an opportunity to get to know the community and deliver the type of education the community needs. Boyte & Kari (1996) noted that HEIs still have problems articulating their mission and purpose to the communities they serve. Some institutions respond to demands for social responsibility by offering internships, service learning, and research projects to students and faculty members. Other institutions have moved beyond courses and curricula to equipping students for democratic citizenship (Boyte & Kari, 1996; Ehrlich, 2000). More than just a cosmetic effort, the university should reach out with a holistic management model that invests in communities (Ehrlich, 2000).

Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, and Stephens (2003) maintain that there cannot be socially responsible civic actions without moral and ethical values. Higher education institutions, in their most active role, should teach and foster the human capacities necessary to fulfill the civic and moral responsibility to develop the nation. Colby et al. (2003) classified these capacities in three categories: (a) moral and civic understanding (e.g., elements of character that lead to ethical actions; understanding of how a community functions and knowledge of social, economic, and political systems); (b) moral and civic motivation (e.g., values, virtues, emotions, empathy, honesty, integrity, cooperation, and serving others); and (c) core skills for carrying out moral and civic responsibility (e.g., clear oral and written communication, critical thinking, and leadership skills).

Theoretical Engagement

This study utilizes Freire's work and postcolonial theory as critical discourses of education. These theories are connected because of the way they address schools as sites of social inequalities and transformation (Willis, 1981). One of the reasons Freire and postcolonial theories were considered in this study is that the reality of both emancipation and oppression is engrained within the practice of schooling in Cameroon. Freire's process of conscientization, for example, provides a means to become informed about political, cultural, and economic realities through formal or informal education with a goal of challenging the state of affairs (Bajaj, 2005). As such, a critical look within HEIs is crucial because it exposes power relations that often go unchecked in the sphere of higher education, or how sociopolitical and historical baggage may hinder or facilitate the contribution of HEIs in Cameroon. These theories thus helped me to understand how the contribution of HEIs can be maximized. Additionally, both theories address injustice and colonization at their core. This relates to Cameroon particularly, as HEIs in Cameroon continue to use the educational system left behind by its French and British colonizers. Historically, HEIs were created to address the human and social development issues Cameroon faced immediately after its independence. However, the context and needs of Cameroonians have changed because of a growing population with distinctive educational and social challenges that are different from the previous generation; therefore the contribution of HEIs must be contextualized and reconsidered.

Furthermore, HEIs established as growth poles are catalysts for transformational change and instruments for socioeconomic empowerment (Perroux, 1955). The goals of wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction, and value reorientation can only be effectively pursued when HEIs use their resources to establish stronger communities. That has been the case

with the University of Douala and other HEIs in Cameroon that have created a dynamic that established vibrant communities. As such, HEIs may comprise an integrated part of a growth pole system as viable and important assets for the community. The presence of students, faculty members, and staff in the community generates economic activity that may help to achieve economic stability. Since the basic purpose of this dissertation is to examine the contribution of HEIs in human and social development, applying the growth pole concept is appropriate in reviewing how a cluster of organizations including HEIs can maximize the socioeconomic impact of institutions in communities.

Applying Postcolonial Theory

In the context of higher education in Cameroon, postcolonial theory helps to understand how continuities from the past shape the present conditions of higher education (Browne et al., 2005). As stated earlier, the educational system of the colonizers is still used in Cameroon, suggesting colonization has not ended. Moreover, there is a strong presence of international organizations and corporations that may be labeled as “imperialist” in Cameroon, as they serve to protect the interests of Western countries such as France, United Kingdom or Spain. This further suggests a neocolonial context. Postcolonial theory is therefore useful to examine Cameroonian HEIs within its postcolonial and global (neocolonial) context. Indeed, in relation to this study, such analysis can be used to examine how international organizations (e.g., UN, the World Bank) support and drive educational priorities in Cameroon that impact human and social development (Crossley & Tikly, 2004; Ninnes & Burnett 2004; Tikly, 1999, 2001, 2003), along with the historical, cultural, and social assumptions impacting HEIs.

Applying Freirian Theory

Freirian theory addresses the education and empowerment of vulnerable people, and relates to this study's methodology. More specifically, the concept of problem posing was used to generate data and to create a mechanism of intervention. By using the problem solving approach during the photovoice project to collect data, participants and the researcher were able to listen and learn from each other and then plan for actions that maximize the contribution of higher education institutions. This led me to examine the methodological applications of Freirian theory. For example, Malewski et al. (2005) found that Freirian approaches can be used to give educators a better understanding of human and social development issues, and to understand how schools may use their assets to improve community conditions. In their intervention, Malewski et al. (2005) found that educators understood their teaching in new ways, constructing a praxis orientated curriculum. In another study, Baird (1999) used Freirian pedagogy to educate women in prison. These women were given a choice to attend a class where participation was not mandatory. Baird (1999) introduced the women to women's literature with topics relevant to their lives, to help them reflect and engage in problem solving. As a result, the prisoners engaged in their learning process, taking ownership of it and developing critical thinking (Baird, 1999). In a third example, Padilla (1992) used Freirian theory to collect and analyze data, to generate discussion as a research tool to generate themes from the participants. Padilla (1999) stated that when carefully used, the method can help set up themes for a given context, showing the participants' understanding of their world and actions. Finally, in an alternative context, Stigmar and Kornefors (2005) used problem posing to foster staff development in education, in order to stimulate the thinking process. These examples show the range of ways Freirian theory can be used to investigate the contribution of HEIs in human and social development. This study

consequently followed these examples, using Freirian theory to empower groups in the community, to gain a better understanding of the situation, and to collect and analyze data.

Applying Social Responsibility Theory

Higher education institutions share many of the same organizational structures with corporations in relation to their governance and the actions and expectations embedded in social responsibility practices. Applying the CSR concept to HEIs (to become USR), there is a need to examine further the nature of USR agendas. Such an examination must consider the mission and the role of HEIs in society and how their level of engagement may influence their contribution to human and social development. Furthermore, there is a need to develop strategies that engage stakeholders to maximize HEIs' contribution. In this study, the concept of social responsibility provides a means to understand Cameroonian HEIs' impact in terms of human and social development. It also provides a framework to implement HEIs' development efforts. As such, integrating social responsibility in this study includes questioning the role of Cameroonian HEIs, engaging stakeholders, and advocating for social responsibility as a core component of teaching and research. The key to this framework is the commitment of higher education institutions to national development.

Applying Growth Pole Theory

Higher education institutions play an important economic role in society as they create employment, generate business activities, and contribute to the quality of life of people in the local and regional areas in which they are located (Carboni, 1992). Through their interaction with multiple industries (e.g., technology, medicine, manufacturing, etc.), HEIs have a holistic impact. Therefore, HEIs create growth centers. Following this assertion, this dissertation connects two research areas: education and place-based regional development. To understand the impact of

HEIs in this study, the University of Douala, therefore requires an examination of its impact as a growth pole.

Use of the Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the study was used in three main ways throughout the study. First, it informed the data collection process, helping me to better understand the historical, cultural, and social context of the setting. Also, It provided an approach for generating questions during interviews and the photovoice processes, as well as the survey process. For example, problem solving was used as a technique to engage participants in discussions, while postcolonial concepts helped to generate the questions asked to participants. Second, the theoretical framework was used in the intervention to explore the contribution of Cameroonian HEIs in human and social development, particularly related to University of Douala's impacts in the community. Finally, the theoretical framework also helped to shape the discussion and recommendations presented in later chapters.

Summary

This chapter described and established a connection between the different theories used in this study and the framework they provided to address HEIs' contribution to human and social development in Cameroon. The chapter first examined the legacy of colonization in relation to education in Cameroon and postcolonial theory. The chapter then addressed the obstacles stemming from the colonizer-colonized relationship, and how to break free from oppression through Freirian theory. Next, the chapter examined how social responsibility relates to HEIs' contributions in human and social development and stakeholder engagement. Finally, the chapter reviewed the notion of HEIs as growth poles. In relation to the literature, this study extends existing scholarship to consider how the University of Douala influences the City of Douala and

its region. Chapter 3 explains in more detail the qualitative case study method used to investigate the contribution of the University of Douala in human and social development in Cameroon.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to describe the factors and conditions that characterize HEIs using USR in Cameroon. Toward that end, this study addresses the following research questions: (a) What is the contribution of Cameroonian HEIs in human and social development? and (b) How can Cameroonian HEIs increase their ability to engage with local communities? To achieve this goal and answer the research questions, I conducted a qualitative, multiphase case study of the University of Douala using two main methods of data collection: interviews (Phase 1) and a photovoice project (Phase 2). Each one of these methods included a survey containing predominantly structured questions

In Phase 1, I spent a total of 3 months in Cameroon and had multiple meetings with high-level administrators (e.g., university chancellors and/or chief academic officers), government and city officials, students, faculty members, and citizens. During this time, I recruited interview participants with extensive experience in education and development, who could recall the changes in the University of Douala, higher education, and human and social development issues in Cameroon over time. A purposeful sampling strategy was used to recruit 18 participants including community and faculty members, elected officials, staff, and students for the interviews (Maxwell, 2005).

In Phase 2, I used a photovoice approach (Wang & Burris, 1997). During this phase, I engaged a different set of participants to obtain a variety of views on the topic. Participants were involved in multiple meetings throughout the process to discuss photovoice techniques, receive training on how to use cameras, engage in dialogue as well as share their experiences regarding the role of HEIs in achieving human and social development. A purposeful sampling strategy was used to recruit the seven participants engaged in the photovoice process, which included

students, faculty, and community members (Maxell, 2005). This study reflects my ongoing cycle of observation, analysis, and action to find strategies that engage HEIs to fulfill their social responsibilities.

Case Study Design

I decided on a case study design because it is considered by various social scientists as appropriate for the study of a social phenomenon. First, a case study permits the researcher to discover reality and generate knowledge without necessarily conducting a large-scale or time-consuming study (Yin, 2003). Secondly, a case study is useful for research that is predominantly exploratory in nature, but also involves investigation of complex issues (Silverman, 2005; Yin, 2003). Finally, a case study allows the researcher to draw on multiple sources of evidence. As such, the exploratory nature of the present research made the case study approach an appropriate strategy for investigating the contribution of Cameroonian HEIs in human and social development, which is currently understood as a complex issue.

Case studies are often used across the social sciences (Yin, 2003). Yin (2003) suggests that a case study should be consistent with qualitative research paradigms and philosophies, and is used to understand complex social phenomena in their holistic and real-life conditions. Yin (1994) defines a *case study* as “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). Stake (1995) argues that this inquiry normally happens when the boundaries between the phenomenon being studied and the relevant milieu are not clearly demarcated. As such, case studies are the ideal means to examine contemporary human phenomena with a wide range of variables in context (Gillham, 2000). This means that the researcher investigates and aims to describe a case, such as a program, event, activity, or

process in depth and within its specific context. This study thereby represents an investigation within a specific context to discover and capture its most important activities. The need to develop a full understanding of the contribution of the University of Douala in human and social development issues was a key element in adopting a case study design for this research.

Site Selection

A contested issue in qualitative research is whether a single case or multiple cases can permit the generalization of the study findings over a study population (Bryman, 2004; Eisenhardt, 1989). However, as Silverman (2005) argues, a researcher's decision to use either a single-case or multiple-case strategy is not necessarily a fundamental issue in qualitative research, and does not make either strategy superior. For inductive research, the decision to select a case or a number of cases to study is largely guided by two major factors: (a) the uniqueness and intrinsic value of the case, and (b) the relative contribution the case is anticipated to make to the investigation of a particular phenomenon (Stake, 2005). In the present study, the goal was to develop an in-depth understanding of the contribution of HEIs in Cameroon within the limited time available. As such, the decision to select one case for this study was exclusively based on the specific attributes of the case. The underlying assumption was that by selecting the University of Douala as the sole site, the researcher would be able to generate insights through more in-depth analysis to develop a broader picture of the contribution of HEIs in human and social development in Cameroon than would be possible with multiple cases.

Douala is the largest city in Cameroon. The city is currently experiencing many challenges including housing shortages, rapid population growth, congested streets, air pollution, inadequate basic services, and poverty. Despite these challenges, the city is proud to host one of the biggest HEIs in the country. The University of Douala provides employment, services, and

commercial activities in neighborhoods around its campuses. As an institution located in the urban core, the University of Douala witnesses first-hand many human and social development issues.

I purposefully selected the University of Douala as a case study site for the following reasons. First, I had a comprehensive knowledge about the institution and familiarity with the city as I was born in Cameroon. I had relatives who work at the University of Douala with whom I talked to before, during, and after the research project. I was therefore familiar with the research setting as both an insider and outsider. Secondly, staff and faculty members expressed interest and excitement about participating in this study and its relevance. Finally, the urban location of the campus presented an important opportunity to investigate the contribution of HEIs in human and social development. This university is socially engaged and serves as a resource to the community as well as a catalyst for economic growth. The urban context also provided greater framework for human and social development issues affecting Cameroon on a larger scale, as Douala is the country's economic center. The cultural diversity of the city also added depth to the study.

Prior to collecting data, I contacted the Ministry of Higher Education in Cameroon, the Rector of the University of Douala, and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Letters, and Social Sciences for permission to conduct the study in Cameroon and at the University of Douala. All requests to conduct the study were approved. Before going to the site, I exchanged communication with the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Letters, and Social Sciences for a few weeks about the nature of the study and logistical arrangements via e-mail.

Researcher's Positionality

My decision to pursue a study in Cameroon originated from a story that I heard on National Public Radio (NPR), which discussed the high rates of HIV/AIDS transmission in Africa. This story inspired me to use my skills, as well as my passion for social justice issues, and contribute to human and social development issues in Cameroon, such as HIV/AIDS. My personal goal is to share strategies generated by the local people that illustrate how universities can contribute toward human and social development issues.

Born in Cameroon, I have spent the vast majority of my life outside of the country. However, I remained connected with my family and often visited them. I was fortunate enough to travel throughout Europe, Asia, America, and Africa, where I was exposed to different standards of living and educational systems. Also, my experience working in the most vulnerable communities as an urban planner heightened my sensitivities to poverty and challenges facing marginalized members of the community. My desire to conduct a study about higher education and development is essentially empowering in nature. It was important to keep that in mind throughout the entire research process in order to avoid bias in the analysis and findings. At the same time, my dream was that this study would be transformative and impact a great number of people as well as HEIs.

During the investigation, I was both an insider and outsider. As a Cameroonian native, I was familiar with the setting and culture. It was fairly easy for me to gain access to the research site because of connections established before my arrival in Cameroon. However, I was also intentional about initiating informal conversations with strangers. I wanted to belong. So, I went to people and learned from them. As a result, I gained the trust of many people and developed good rapport. Being an insider allowed me to better understand the role of the University of

Douala in the community. However, despite my familiarity with the setting, I was still considered an outsider, and the locals treated me as a foreigner. For example, I was expected to pay people to gain access to certain information whereas the same services would be free for a local person. In Cameroon, there is a general belief that everyone that comes from a Western country is rich—expectations are different. As nonlocals, individuals may be taken advantage of because of their limited knowledge of certain aspects of everyday life.

Phase 1: Interviews with School, Community, and Government Leaders

I conducted in-depth qualitative interviews in Phase 1 of the research. These interviews were conversations guided by standardized, open-ended, unstructured questions. Qualitative interviews are conversations with a purpose. Interview types depend on structure and the latitude of the interviewee (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). According to Rubin and Rubin (2005), an in-depth interview is about obtaining specific information for further analysis. Consequently, the interviews took the form of a strict division of roles whereby I guided the conversation (interview) and the interviewees responded. Essentially, the interviewee was the center of attention and the questions were based on his/her views, not those of the researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Interview Participant Sampling

The study began in June 2014. After a few days on site, I met with a professor of geography at the University of Douala and her students. During the meeting, we talked about logistical issues related to space needs, staff schedules, organizational activities in which I could participate, and access to organizational documents. After that initial meeting, I was connected with community, government, and civil society stakeholders.

For the interview process, participants were deemed appropriate if they met the following inclusion criteria: (a) passion for human and social development issues, (b) willingness to participate in a research study that would generate strategies to establish a USR advisory board, and (c) knowledge of the community. These criteria for sampling helped to identify only those participants with knowledge of the community and the capability to assess the perceived contribution (or lack thereof) of the University of Douala in human and social development. In addition to gathering the sample, I also spent the first week familiarizing myself with the surrounding areas.

Potential participants for interviews were identified through initial interactions and were invited to participate in the study. The interviews with university administrators, government, and city officials were challenging to schedule due to the reluctance of their scheduling staff. Therefore, I had to use unconventional ways to access interviewees. I started by building rapport with their schedulers to gain their trust and confidence. I showed up every day around lunchtime for approximately a week and invited them to lunch each time. After a few days, they were willing to help schedule interview meetings at days and times that worked for both parties. As I met with potential participants, I introduced myself as well as the study. After giving copies of the informed consent form and a list of the interview questions, I encouraged participants to review both documents and decide whether to participate or not. An approval was obtained from The University of Cincinnati's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The study was not experimental design and did not sample children; therefore, The Institutional Review Board (IRB) identified this study as "not involving human subjects."

A total of 25 participants were initially earmarked for the interview process, but only 18 participated for the qualitative portion. In addition, there were a few participants from the

university who were asked by their supervisors to provide me with the information relevant to the phenomenon. The final number of participants interviewed was 18 based upon the availability of the participants and data saturation. Data saturation refers to the moment during the interview process when the researcher begins to hear repeated information on a particular topic or experience, thus negating the need for further interviews as they likely will not add to the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Interview Procedures

The interviews were based on an interview guide containing the open-ended unstructured questions, available in both English and French. The majority of participants felt more comfortable being interviewed in French. Interviews lasted approximately 2 hours and were held at the University of Douala or a location convenient to participants. I used a tape recorder for the interviews. Tape recording, according to Rubin and Rubin (2005), constitutes one of the differences between an ordinary conversation and an interview. It helps to ensure accuracy as it records the information for subsequent analyses. Rubin and Rubin (2005) note that tape recording can change the mood of respondents by making them shy. During the interviews, the presence of a tape recorder seemed to affect the confidence of respondents and made them tense. This tension is an indication of the level of freedom and latitude Cameroonians have when sharing information. Also, participants may not have been familiar with the technological aspect of recording an interview. At the end of each interview, I provided participants with a bulleted summary of their interview to ensure that I captured all of the major points of the interview. Participants were allowed to make changes and/or add supplementary comments to the summary and return it to me.

I also used a combination of a notebook, pen, and computer to record field notes. The purpose of the field notes was to complement the recordings, which were the starting point of analysis. Field notes facilitated the retention and mastery of the data while digital recording saved it for later analysis. Field notes also helped me to stay focused and fully engaged in the interviews.

Survey Questions

Complementary data was obtained using a survey (Appendix F) developed by the researcher. The researcher-developed survey was used because it was tailored specifically for the research objectives (Arys et al., 2006). The survey included close-ended questions, some of which had an option to specify an alternative response. Comparative rating scales and Likert scales were included as some of the close-ended questions. The questionnaire was one page front-and-back and included the same consent used for both the interview and photovoice project. Paper questionnaires were used to increase and ensure higher response rates among participants.

The survey was divided into seven categories that allowed for respondents to address the research objectives. The first category addressed participant's demographics. The second category of the survey addressed participants' familiarity with human and social development issues. The third category addressed specific activities around human and social development issues. The fourth category addressed the university partnerships to improve human and social conditions. The fifth category addressed the university engagement with local community. The sixth category includes a comparative rating scale addressing the university engagement through workshop, academic amenities. The last section included the university investment in human and social development issues.

Participants were asked to direct any questions concerning the survey or any of its items directly to the researcher and to refrain from comparing answers. The researcher provided a brief overview of the main sections of the survey as well as instructions on how to complete it. Upon completion of the survey, a quick check was done to ensure that all pages of the survey had been completed. Participants who had skipped questions from the survey were asked whether they had any questions and, once possible questions were clarified, they were asked to complete the missing questions of the survey. The researcher administered the surveys before each interview and photovoice session and the participation rate was 100 percent. It took approximately 10 minutes to complete each survey.

Interview Questions

Interview questions (Appendix A) began with a presentation of generalized views and global constructs relating to human and social development issues, followed by a discussion of poverty reduction and higher education. These generalized views were presented as assumptions to stimulate the conversations in an open and general manner, so as to not influence or narrow the contextual conceptualization of participants. In terms of the general design, interviewing took a combination of the “responsive” and “elitist” approaches of in-depth interviewing (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The responsive model suggests that the interviewer and interviewee are both human beings and so form a relationship during the interview. This approach is flexible and adaptive (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The elitist approach is based on the necessity to select interviewees based on certain level of knowledge, criteria, and the theoretical framework (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). For instance, interviewees were selected from the Ministry of Higher Education, the top management of the universities, and city officials.

Because participants of the study were targeted, it was necessary to adapt the interview questions to the perspective or the level of complexity and/or knowledge with which participants were responding. This adaptation produced four versions of the interview guide. For instance, if an interviewee was a government appointee or city official, the questions were framed in such a way that he/she was encouraged to talk about the national higher education system in relation to other sectors and the national/local economic development policy. Similarly, university staff and faculty members talked about general university policies and USR. Students and neighborhood residents were asked similar questions. These questions were framed in a way that allowed respondents to share their experiences about the University of Douala and their familiarity with human and social development issues or the UN's MDGs.

The interview guides were structured in multiple orientations. First, all respondents had to answer general questions on HEIs, human and social development issues, and the role of HEIs in communities. This was meant to elicit the respondents' general views on the research topic and also those views pertaining to their specific operational levels. The general topic was followed by questions related to subtopics and themes drawn from the theoretical and analytical framework. This included discussions about the mission of HEIs, structural adjustments, governance reforms, institutional and cultural reforms, incentives, and infrastructure in relation to their social responsibility. These sub questions, termed "follow-up" questions (Rubin & Rubin 2005), were important in providing more detailed answers to the general questions and reflected the differences between participants.

The conversational aspect of the study was enhanced through several means. There were situations where another issue emerged in the responses related to the theoretical framework or subsequent questions, prompting follow-up questions. In such situations, the interviewee

proceeded without following the predetermined sequence of the questions. There were also situations where the respondent cited a commonly known phenomenon or practice, which was in the theoretical framework and needed confirmation from the interviewer. In some instances, the respondent asked to know the practices in other contexts. For instance, one participant asked, “This is how we do it here in Cameroon; what is the practice in the United States?” Such questions led me to contribute ideas to the interview in order to enable the respondent to continue his/her discussion.

The problem-posing method developed by Freire (1993) allows both the teacher and the learner to equally generate knowledge through an open discussion. Problem-posing was used during data collection, following the approach used by Stigmar and Kornefors (2005).

Interviewees were questioned in relation to their different capacities, and problems posed to them were intended to raise their critical awareness. For instance, staff, faculty members, and students were challenged as to why they were not creating partnerships with the community. Similarly, the way senior staff members were respectful with higher ranking staff members and not with junior staff members (dehumanizing) was challenged, and faculty members were questioned as to why they were simply accepting whatever was decided for them by the administration and not formally requesting to be involved in the process of decision making. Finally, faculty members were questioned as to why they do not contextualize their teaching methods to address human and social development issues more efficiently. This process helped the researcher to better understanding the problems faced by HEIs in their attempt to fulfill their mission, making clear the issues related to dehumanization, oppression, and the banking style of education. This process was not expected to solve the problems, although it was hoped that it would encourage people to start changing their situations.

Phase 2: The Photovoice Project

Photovoice is a participatory research methodology that allows participants/co-researchers to be at the center of the study by encouraging them to co-lead the research process as they visually represent and narrate their everyday experiences (Foster-Fishman, Nowell, Deacon, & Nievar, 2005). Wang and Burris (1997) developed the photovoice methodology in the early 1990s as a means to engage people from marginalized communities to actively participate in the political arena and to discuss issues that directly impact their community (Wang and Burris., 1994). Via the medium of photography, photovoice participants document and represent the strengths and concerns of their community from their own perspective. Problem-posing was used through the photovoice process as well to encourage participants to critically think about their situations and to organize themselves to improve their conditions. This was a process in which questions were asked back and forth between participants to gain a better understanding of the photographs.

Photovoice follows the tradition of including visual representations in research because of its capability to communicate messages (Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison, & Pestronk, 2004) and to engage in social conversations (Stanczak, 2007). According to Stanczak (2007). Visual “images help us ask what we know about the social world and how we know it” (p. 9), and they are an important resource to communicate various aspects of social structure (Emmison & Smith, 2000). Additionally, photovoice mobilizes individuals to become change agents in their community. For these reasons, two key underlying assumptions about photovoice are that visual images can influence policy (Wang et al., 2004), and that photography is an effective way to initiate dialogue with policymakers. Using photovoice in this study helped to capture photographs related to human and social development issues, engage in critical dialogue

about USR, share preliminary findings with the community, and reach policymakers to enact social change toward community improvement (Wang & Burris, 1994, 1997).

Others have described photovoice as a democratic process. The whole process, from the use of a camera to developing and printing, is easy to learn and accessible to almost anyone. During the photovoice process, everyone I worked with was able to use the camera regardless of his or her age or socioeconomic status. They were all members of their community. Everyone that was given a camera during this project was very happy to be a part of the project and proud of the pictures they took (Ewald & Lightfoot, 2001; see also Ewald, 2000).

Photovoice Recruitment

When using photovoice, it may be difficult for an outside researcher to gain access to participants. In such cases, purposeful or convenient recruitment tactics may be necessary to recruit enough participants for the study, and this may include partnering with local organizations (Hergenrather, Rhodes, & Bardhosi, 2009). I went back to Cameroon on June 7 2015, to complete the final stage of this study. On June 14, 2015, I met with the Executive Director of Afrique Avenir, a nationwide organization involved in tracking the progress of the MDGs in Cameroon, as well as human and social development initiatives. This organization has transnational linkages to local grassroots organizations, schools, universities, and government agencies. During that meeting, I talked about the overall aim of the study and asked for help with recruitment strategies for the photovoice project. In response, the director offered his staff to help recruit participants. I indicated that 10 participants would be ideal, but seven would be sufficient for the study. Wang and Burris (1997) recommend having 7–10 participants for a photovoice project to encourage in-depth group conversation. I went back to see the director of Afrique Avenir the following day to follow up on recruitment. He told me to come back on June 21 as he

had arranged for the seven participants to meet at his office. Through that collaboration, I gained access to important insights and recruited participants for the photovoice project.

The recruitment procedures for the photovoice project began on June 21 with the seven participants. There was no obligation to participate in the study, participation was voluntary, and participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time. In addition, I mentioned to the participants that the decision of whether or not to participate would have no consequences on participants' employment for those who were employed by the University of Douala. Because of the excessive time demands that photovoice projects require, attrition is sometimes an issue (Castleden & Garvin, 2003). No attrition occurred in this project, and all participants who initially agreed to join the project participated for the entire duration of the project. Participants in this project included community members, students, staff and faculty members at the University of Douala.

Due to the time commitment involved in photovoice projects, researchers may provide money, photo albums, food, and gift cards as forms of compensation (Hergenrather, Rhodes, & Bardhoshi, 2009). In this study, I provided monetary stipends, meals, and gifts for participation. The researcher recognized that participants in this study had limited financial resources, and that the time spent in group meetings as well as the time dedicated to taking photographs was time away from their jobs and families. I felt that in this context it was appropriate to offer stipends for participation as well as to provide meals and gifts. Each participant received 5,000 CFA (US\$10) for each of the 7 weeks of participation for a total of 35,000 CFA (US\$70). As requested by participants, the money was paid as a lump sum at the end of the last meeting. Additionally, I provided participants with food and beverages during meetings as well as gifts I brought from the United States, which were distributed after the final presentation to the

university and the community. The director of Afrique Avenir also received a gift for his help in the recruitment process. In addition, participants kept the digital cameras and memory cards as a token of my appreciation for their time and effort. I also donated extra digital cameras and memory cards to the Department of Geography at the University of Douala as well. I felt that giving away the tools for photography (i.e., cameras) at the end of the project was empowering and may ignite interest for the University of Douala and the community to explore photovoice to enact change in the community.

Consent Process

I provided participants with full consent information (Appendices B, D & E), and obtained their voluntary consent orally. Participants were asked whether or not they wanted to document their consent to link them to the study. Had any participants chosen to do so, I would have provided them with a copy of the consent form that they could sign either with a written signature or with a thumbprint, if they were unable to provide a written signature. However, all participants only gave verbal consent and no participant chose to document their consent. Prior to the beginning of the process of obtaining consent, I asked participants for permission to audiotape the session. When I was permitted to do so, I recorded the verbal statements on a microphone. If permission was denied, I recorded a written statement testifying the witnessing of informed consent given by the participants. Fortunately, recording written statement only happened once.

I provided participants with a written version of the informed consent form 3 days prior to the first meeting. This gave the participants time to read it and ask questions for clarification. The consent form that was used in this study covered all ethical protocols deemed necessary by the University of Cincinnati IRB, making it clear to the potential participants that their

participation would be voluntary, and the potential benefits and harm that may result from the study, as well as the overall goal of the study. The wording of the consent form was simplified as I had anticipated that participants might not understand several of the words included in academically oriented consent forms. As I read the consent form, the potential participants asked questions. I clarified the information included in the consent forms and addressed any other questions/concerns that the participants had. When I finished reading the informed consent forms, I asked if there were other questions yet to address. There were none.

After informing participants about the study and detailing the research process, all the participants that were present at the meeting said that they wanted to participate in the study. Specifically, each participant was asked to say either, “I want to be in this study” or, “I do not want to be in this study.” All seven participants gave verbal consent to participate in the study. They were also asked to state whether or not they agree to have research-related discussions audiotaped as well as state whether or not they agree to have me take photos of the research process, which may include photos of them in the meetings. All participants gave verbal consent to be audio recorded and have their photographs taken.

Participants were asked multiple times, most notably at the end of the project when discussing dissemination options, for permission to use their photographs (i.e., the photographs that they took as well as the photographs that I took of them) in publications and other possible forms of public distribution. Consistent with photovoice methodology, I asked for their permission to publish the photographs that they took so that they retained control of their photos. This way, they could decide which photographs the researcher could access and disseminate. One participant identified an inappropriate photograph she took for public viewing. The image included a close-up of a woman urinating on a pile of trash, which was taken without the

woman's consent. This participant wanted to share the image of what was in the background, but it was of utmost importance to her that she not violate the photographed person's privacy. Therefore, she asked me to cut the woman from the photograph so that she could still show the pile of trash in the background. I cropped the photo, omitting the woman, and deleted the original photograph. The current photo stored is only of the inanimate image in the background. The participant approved of the new version of the photograph and gave permission to use all other photos as is. The other six participants gave permission to publish all of the photographs they took.

Camera Training and Technology

Since photovoice is not focused on the quality of the photograph, but rather the content of the photo and the meaning that the photographer attributes to it (Wang & Berris, 1997), the primary purpose of the camera-training workshop was to teach participants basic camera operations and functions. I conducted the workshop during the second meeting, providing the minimal mechanical training necessary for the scope of this study. This involved how to orient the camera, how to turn the camera on and off, which button to press to take a photo, how to zoom in and out, how to keep the camera steady to avoid creating blurry images, and how to review the photos taken. Since the photographs were a means for participants to communicate their everyday experiences to others, I also provided instructions on the aesthetic composition of images. I explained how images can be framed to evoke a certain response from the viewer in the attempt to tell the story the photographer wants to tell. During this meeting, participants practiced taking photos in the meeting room and outside on the street. To practice further, they decided to take photographs of their family members when they went home, which the group examined together at the next meeting.

As Ewald (2000) points out, image-based research is limited by the boundaries of tangibility. This is true for photovoice, which asks participants to address an issue via photographs. They capture observable images that are frozen in time, thus photovoice participants are forced to conceptualize and represent only observable phenomenon. With a little creativity, however, the participants found ways to represent intangible concepts in their own photographs. The group spent a considerable amount of time discussing how to take photographs to depict abstract concepts. During the second meeting, I showed the participants two books published by photovoice.org as examples of past photovoice projects, and also to demonstrate how abstract ideas could be represented through photography. Additionally, they talked about how to represent some of their abstract ideas through photography.

There are several options regarding the type of camera that can be used in a photovoice project, including disposable cameras, autofocus film cameras, medium format Holga cameras, and digital cameras. This study used Canon digital cameras powered by AA batteries. I brought a 2-month supply of disposable AA batteries for the project. The cameras have user-friendly controls, making them suitable for beginners while still maintaining the quality of the photographs. Each camera was furnished with a 3GB SD memory card. This storage size was sufficient for movies as well as photographs, and as a contingency, I had extra SD cards with me. The photographs were uploaded and viewed on my laptop computer as well as backed up to an external hard drive.

Photovoice Meetings

As a participatory methodology, photovoice extends beyond issues such as selecting photography assignments and guiding focus group conversations; it is also inclusive of the logistical aspects of the research process. The meeting times and locations were determined in

advance by participants and took place at Afrique Avenir's office. Participants were very familiar with the meeting location, which provided a relaxed atmosphere. The meeting schedule was minimally disruptive to participants' daily home and work lives. The room at Afrique Avenir's office had previously been used for meetings. It was equipped with a small chalkboard on the wall and a white screen with a projector. The room was large enough for 30 people and was equipped with a sound system and comfortable chairs. The instruments (pens, pencils, chalk, markers, crayons, flipcharts, easels, and clipboards) for the research activities were stored there as well. After the photovoice process, the remaining materials were donated to Afrique Avenir.

An introductory meeting with participants was conducted on June 21, 2015 with five people present. The purpose of the meeting was to talk to participants about scheduling. A second meeting for participants who could not meet on June 21 was scheduled on July 4, 2015. During the introductory meetings, participants established the meeting schedules for the study. Having told them that I was scheduled to be in Cameroon for a total of 2 months, they decided to hold meetings for a minimum of 5 weeks, with the possibility of extending it beyond this time period. Five weeks was declared as the initial length of the project because participants were willing to commit their time to the project only until mid-August, as their children were getting ready to go back to school, and they wanted to make sure that they were able to focus on their home lives. Each participant discussed his or her availability, and they collectively decided that the regular meeting dates and times for the project would be Fridays and Saturdays at 5pm. The group met a total of 10 times over the course of 5 weeks, July 10 to August 15, 5:00 to 7:00p.m. In addition to the regular meeting schedules, the group also met for 2 hours on Friday, August 1, 2015 to present preliminary findings of the photovoice process in a forum organized at the

University of Douala. The forum was well attended with the participation of the university community, neighborhood residents, and elected officials.

Shorter photovoice projects lasting up to 2 weeks (Hergenrather, Rhodes, & Cowan, 2009) may require that participants take all of their photos in only a few days. Typically, researchers who conduct these short-term projects ask participants to address a singular, broad question through their photographs. In contrast, longer projects may last up to 1 year (McIntyre, 2003). In these longer projects, participants have multiple periods of time in which they photograph. For either time period, participants complete a photo assignment that addresses a particular aspect of an issue. In this format, participants of this study decided on the theme for each photo assignment in the preceding group discussion. Participants completed the first photo assignment by the second meeting. They were asked to tell a story related to the reasons why they thought the university should serve the community. This storytelling exercise was meant to create a creative and comfortable environment for group discussion.

Half of the participants shared their photographs during the third meeting, and the other half shared theirs during the fourth meeting. After the first week of sharing photos, participants decided to share their photographs on the same day. Thus, in the subsequent weeks, the amount of time they had to take photos varied between 3–6 days. They had to complete the photo assignment topic before the following meeting. They all then shared their photos with the group during the meeting. At the end of each meeting, the group decided on the next photo assignment. They then had 2 days to photograph, as they would be sharing pictures during the following meeting. Because there was very little time to photograph for each assignment, I encouraged them to continue to take photographs on previous photo assignments throughout the project if they had an idea for a photo after the sharing of that particular assignment had occurred.

The Photovoice Research Process

The research process that characterizes photovoice is participatory in nature, flexible, and can be adapted to best fit the participants' specific needs as well as the socio-political context of the community in which the project is situated (Wang & Burris, 1997). Thus, there is no universal format to dictate the procedures for implementing a photovoice methodology. This flexible research design allows for increased responsiveness to the participants identified needs, as well as for the exploration of new areas of discovery as they emerge (Patton, 2002). Though this methodology lacks a regimented uniform structure for implementation, Wang and Burris (1994, 1997) outline certain procedures and a general framework. The framework below guided the data collection and analysis processes used in this photovoice project:

1. Introduce photovoice methodology to participants;
2. Obtain informed consent;
3. Decide on an initial theme for taking pictures;
4. Train participants on using camera and distribute;
5. Provide time for participants to take pictures;
6. Analyze the data;
7. Select and recruit a target audience of policymakers or community leaders; and
8. Plan with participants a format to share photographs.

During the initial meeting, the project was introduced, the photovoice methodology explained and the responsibilities and risks of being a photographer discussed. In the first part of the meeting I presented a brief overview of the theoretical premise of photovoice and gave examples of past projects. I emphasized that photovoice is a methodology oriented toward social improvement and that participant roles may potentially include advocacy activities. I encouraged

participants to be assertive and make the most of project-related decisions, including the dissemination and advocacy activities. Thus, I indicated that the vision was to provide guidance while encouraging participants to give input according to their own desires. The second part of the meeting focused specifically on the intent of the project. I outlined my vision for the project, describing my ideas about meeting regularly, having discussions about the role of HEIs in Cameroon, taking photographs about topics related to human and social development, and creating a forum to share their photographs and narratives with others. During the third part of the meeting, I discussed the responsibilities associated with photographing people and events in the community with respect to the power and the ethics involved. Specifically, I addressed safety issues as they relate to their role of being photographers in the community in order to minimize the possibility of participant harm. I emphasized that “no picture is worth taking if it begets the photographer harm or ill will” (Wang, Cash, & Powers, 2000, p. 87).

Photovoice researchers typically choose an initial general topic before asking participants to decide on the specific questions, problems, and/or issues that they would like to address in relation to that topic. The general topic that the researcher chose for this study was USR as it relates to human and social development. Social responsibility is a broad term, encompassing many subtopics with multiple, fluid meanings. Accordingly, I first asked participants to discuss what social responsibility meant to them. Once their perceived meanings of the term were clear, the group applied the term to the project by discussing how universities can contribute to human and social development issues. Additionally, in order to focus the topic, the participants explored subthemes in their photo assignments, including the mission of HEIs and their impact in society, university engagement in local communities, technical assistance, and empowerment through investment, employment, and education.

Analysis of the Photovoice Project

A key component of photovoice is the sharing of photographs. Contrary to Collier's (1967) argument "the facts are in the pictures" (p. 68), photovoice values the interpretation of the photographs more than the actual photographs themselves (Wang & Burris, 1997). The images convey participant representations of a topic however it is the accompanying narratives that teach others about participants' views about their community's concerns and strengths (Hergenrather, Scotta, & Rhodes, 2009). Thus, in addition to taking photographs, photovoice participants also engage in crucial dialogue in which they share their photos and accompanying stories with the group in an effort to situate the content of the photographs in their own experiences.

In this study, participants met immediately following the completion of each photo assignment to engage in critical group dialogue. I asked participants if they wanted to choose a select number of their photos to share with the group or if they wanted to share all of the photos that they had taken. They decided that each person would share every photo they took and contextualize each image. During the photo sharing session, I used Wang and Burris's (1999) technique "SHOWeD" to facilitate the sharing of images. "SHOWeD" is an acronym of the questions participants were asked to answer about each photograph that they shared:

1. What do you **S**ee here? (Description)
2. What is really **H**appening here? (Interpretation)
3. How does this relate to **O**ur lives? (Contextualization)
4. **W**hy does this situation, concern, or strength exist? (Politicization)
5. What can we **D**o about it? (Action) (Wang, 1999)

Participants had two prompts related to USR and human and social development to respond to: What are the most pressing social issues in your neighborhood? and What is the role of the university? After the first photo sharing session, it was apparent that participants did not prefer sharing photos according to the SHOWeD method. For all subsequent photo-sharing sessions, each participant spoke freely about each photograph they had taken for that particular photo assignment, detailing what was happening in the photo. The selected photographs were projected on a screen to allow all session participants to discuss the photographs and their accompanying stories. Participants shared why they took the photo, why they felt that it was an important issue to document, and connected the photograph to the general topic of the photo assignment. The researcher or other participants sometimes asked for clarification and specific questions about a particular photograph to be elaborated, though discussion typically waited until all participants had shared their photographs.

Within the context of photovoice, the participants primarily perform data analysis. Relying on participant-defined themes and issues for analysis purposes “avoids the distortion of fitting data into a predetermined paradigm” (Wang & Burris, 1997, p. 382). During the group dialogue, participants drew connections between various photographs, relating their own to ones that others had taken. They also discussed issues that they thought were important and had not been represented in their photographs. They performed content analyses of each photo assignment by discussing the general themes that emerged from the collective photographs and testimonies.

Following each meeting, I transcribed the discussions and added captions to the photos by writing underneath the photograph everything that was said about it. I read through the transcribed data and did preliminary analysis of the themes that the participants identified and

created additional themes by making connections between things that had been said in previous meetings.

Preliminary analysis “helps the field-worker cycle back and forth between thinking about the existing data and generating strategies for collecting new . . . data” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 50). As such, the preliminary analyses of the data allowed the researcher to form new questions to ask in subsequent meetings. Participants were approached with a constructed narrative to member-check the validity of the analysis. They were asked if they agreed with the analysis of the original story and were asked to elaborate on any of the discussed concepts or to clarify narrative themes that were misinterpreted.

Preliminary findings were presented in a forum organized by the University of Douala. I created a Microsoft PowerPoint slideshow of the participants’ photographs and corresponding narratives. Participants decided the structure of the presentation, how to organize it according to the topics of their photo assignments, which photographs to include, the order of the photographs, and how to begin and end the slideshow. I made the slideshow outside of the meeting time, and showed it to the group during the last meeting. The group watched it twice, once for participants to get familiar with the entire presentation and the second time to be critical of what was being shown and not shown. I made the appropriate changes to the slideshow, some during the meeting but most outside of the meeting, and showed the new version before the presentation. During this meeting, participants also shared photographs and discussed the topic of the final photo assignment. Accordingly, after this meeting, I added the new photos to the slideshow and showed the group the almost-final version. Participants made only minor changes to the presentation after this point, such as correcting the spelling of one participant’s name.

Sharing Preliminary Findings with the Public

An underlying assumption of photovoice is that the sharing of the project's photographs and corresponding narratives with a public audience leads to policy change (Foster-Fishman et al., 2005). Therefore, an important part of this methodology is identifying and selecting a target audience to whom the findings will be presented. The target audience may include peers and the general public, but ideally should also include people and/or agencies that hold enough power to initiate political discussions and/or change (Wang & Burris, 1997).

Participants in this study expressed a strong desire to share their work with an audience, both in their community and on a larger scale nationally and/or internationally. They expressed two primary reasons for this desire. First, they wanted to use the dissemination process as a form of advocacy that would directly benefit communities in Douala and throughout Cameroon. They stated that sharing the photos locally with HEIs and the community at large was necessary to achieve this goal. Second, they wanted to share this project with people beyond their local community so that they could, in an attempt to educate people, communicate their various experiences with HEIs, human and social development, and the collaboration between HEIs and the community.

At the local level, two forums were organized, one by the University of Douala and the other by Afrique Avenir. Participants wanted these forums to be interactive and to allow a discussion between the audience and participants. The goal was to directly involve decision makers during these forums. The questions that emerged during these discussions were about how people can seek more knowledge on human and social development and how the University of Douala can provide technical assistance to their neighborhoods. Specifically, the staff and faculty members at the University of Douala asked to be in contact with participants with the

idea of forming an observatory of social responsibility at the University of Douala. Also, they wanted to address some of the issues that could easily engage students in these neighborhoods.

Though the forum showcased each participant's individual experiences, participants responded to questions and comments as a collective. They were assertive with their line of questioning and in detailing how they would like to engage the University of Douala.

Disagreements were expressed in a passionate but respectful tone. During these forums, I took notes. Each session lasted 70 minutes and the conversation continued during the reception that included food and soft drinks. I don't have an exact head count of how many people came, but to be safe, close to 70 people showed up each time. The discussion points included: the role of the University of Douala, university community engagement, employment, entrepreneurship and health. Later, I met with the Rector of the University of Douala who thanked me for conducting such a project at the University of Douala. He stated that the undertaking was well done and created a forum for discussion that is important for the university. Finally, he offered me a job at the university as adjunct faculty in the Department of Geography.

Data Analysis

Data analysis, according to Miles and Huberman (1994), involves performing the following process-based activities: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions from the data. In order to perform these activities, Bryman (2004) identifies a variety of approaches for analyzing data in qualitative research, emphasizing two approaches: analytical induction and grounded theory. However, the choice of a data analytical strategy in qualitative research depends on a variety of factors, including the data type, purpose of the research process, and human factors (Bryman, 2004; Miles and Huberman, 1994). In the present study, two principal factors guided the selection of the analytical strategy used: (a) the nature of the phenomenon

under study, and (b) whether the phenomenon under investigation had been subjected to considerable and thorough theoretical advances. Overall, the data analysis aimed to develop a coherent story about the drivers, processes, and practices of the contribution of HEIs in human and social development, while consistently bearing in mind the social responsibility agenda of HEIs. This study, drawing heavily on the work of Miles and Huberman (1994), followed four principal steps to analyze the study data: (a) transcription of the interviews, photographs, and documents; (b) coding; (c) memoing; and (d) analysis of major thematic issues and trends.

Survey Data Analysis Procedures

The entire survey included seven questions. Uniform scales were used as often as possible. Responses for Likert-style questions included the following scale: *Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree*. The comparative rating scale included, *Extremely Familiar, Very Familiar, Moderately Familiar, Slightly Familiar and Not at all Familiar*. The demographic questions included respondent professional status, relationship to the university and the city. Finally, eight MDGs (human and social development issues) to choose from in order to determine which one were the most important to respondents.

All data from the survey was stored in the researcher's portable computer. Upon collecting data, I manually entered all questionnaires in excel. I analyzed the data descriptively using SPSS. I created frequency tables and presented the information in a graphic form (bar chart).

Interview Analysis Procedures

The information in this section is a representation of the results of coding assigned initially as free nodes that overlapped in tree nodes, showing the process along which themes became evident. The following thematic considerations demonstrate the way the researcher

understood and categorized the participants' responses. Recommendations from Corbin and Strauss (2008) guided the process: the researcher ought to "walk a fine line between getting into the hearts and minds of respondents, while at the same time keeping enough distance to be able to think clearly and analytically about what is being said or done" (pp. 80–81) As a result, I decided to keep a journal to record my perceptions, thoughts, and ideas as they arose in relation to particular events, observations and interactions. From the respective themes and properties, I made inferences based on the range of responses that resulted from participants' perceptions of community, development, quality of life, engagement, responsibility, leadership, and the role of the university. These inferences stemmed from the data and were shown to interview participants to ensure clarity and validity.

Transcripts of interview discussion sessions with students, neighborhood residents, elected officials and faculty/staff, and journal field notes were used to conduct the analysis. Participant descriptive data were manually summarized using the background questionnaires completed by the researcher. The thematic considerations and properties demonstrate the way I made sense of and categorized the participants' responses as well as many overlapping themes from the research and analysis. The theoretical framework also guided the study. The relevance of these theories was established by relating to the themes drawn from the findings.

Coding for participant interviews was done manually and the analysis conducted through open, axial, and selective coding. Detailed analysis was conducted with the aid of coding, a process of organizing data that involves "taking text data, segmenting sentences into categories and labeling those categories with a term, often a term based in the actual language of the participant" (Creswell, 2003, p. 192). The first round of coding resulted in 650 references from students, 540 from neighborhood residents, 320 from faculty members, 260 from elected

officials, and 190 from staff. This also included 600 nodes from students, 321 from neighborhood residents, 320 from faculty members, 290 from elected officials, and 90 from staff. Finally, there were a number overlapping themes. Students generated 110 overlapping themes, 102 from neighborhood residents, and 40 from staff members. Table 1 indicates the results from the first round of coding and free nodes. The themes and patterns came together into theoretical ideas that were then assigned codes, resulting in 45 codes. A second analysis was done with a few patterns and themes merging from these codes. The results was further analyzed and clustered with three major themes:

1. HEIs as a catalyst for human and social development,
2. HEIs and barriers to human and social development, and
3. Citizen participation in HEIs and its role in human and social development.

Table 1

First Step Coding as Free Nodes

Data Sources	References	Nodes	Overlapping Themes
Student responses	650	600	110
Resident responses	540	321	102
Staff responses	320	320	40
Elected official responses	260	290	2

Source: Author

Photovoice Analysis Procedures

The participants for the photovoice project shot 210 photos. These photos were reviewed exhaustively, and duplicate, random, and inappropriate photos were removed. This left 98 photos in the database. With the help of participants, I compared the chosen pictures for thematic similarities in the development of the codes and categorical themes based on the primary codes that were both determined by participants and the researcher to identify the main themes from

the photos (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Initially, the following prevalent themes emerged from the photos: (a) HEIs as community builders and leaders, (b) involvement, (c) lack of resources, and (d) HEIs as community organizers. Due to the commonalities found between the photovoice project and interview data analyses, themes were combined to avoid redundancy. Based on those commonalities, the only new theme remaining was: HEIs as community builders and leaders. The themes answered the research questions.

Validity

Qualitative research lacks a single, uniform standard by which to judge its quality (Rolfe, 2006). This is especially true for visual interpretive inquiry that presents its own unique difficulties in trying to decipher the quality of an image or study (Emmison & Smith, 2000). However, Trainor and Graue (2012) suggest that qualitative research presents a range of characteristics essential to the nature of qualitative research, such as flexibility, variation, critique, and innovation. The following section addresses how I worked to collect useful data. As the researcher, it was important to address issues of trustworthiness and credibility in the study so that readers can have good faith in the outcomes of the study. I further identified below two validity threats with respect to the research design (reactivity and bias) along with three possible threats to interpretation (descriptive, interpretative, and theoretical validities).

Addressing Reactivity and Researcher Bias

Reactivity is the influence of the researcher on the site or individuals studied (Maxwell, 2005). My personal relationship with the Dean may have influenced some of the participants' perceptions about the study. Participants may have viewed me as someone collecting information for the Dean. I addressed this threat by introducing himself to each participant and sharing my interest in higher education and human and social development. I made it clear to participants

that they were being interviewed because of their unique perspectives about the topic based on their experiences.

As a Cameroonian educated in the West, I was able to see higher education and human and social development issues in Cameroon through the wider perspectives and multiple lenses of my background while still trying to maintain neutrality. I addressed this issue by carefully assessing the implications of the research goal and any bias corresponding to my personal desires. This was also addressed through my ability to read, observe, and understand as well as my knowledge of what to look for, how to evaluate the study, and how to derive meaning from participants' involvement accurately and critically.

Descriptive, Interpretive, and Theoretical Validities

Descriptive validity refers to the accuracy of the facts of the study as reported by the qualitative researcher (Crowson, 1993). As described in the data analysis section, I wrote memos and utilized a digital recorder to ensure the reliability of the information. I developed themes only when I could triangulate them across the experiences of the participants. This allowed me to use multiple sources of data (Crowson, 1993). Guba and Lincoln (1989) stated that member checks allow researchers to verify their interpretations of the data with participants after data analysis. In addition, member checks give participants the opportunity to “correct errors of interpretation and offer additional information” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 122). Member checks were conducted during interviews and photovoice sessions. During that time, I reviewed narrative summaries, vignettes, and bulleted segments of data from each participant's interview. I verified the accuracy of any information on the transcript in subsequent interviews or during the final member checks. If a participant disagreed with my interpretation of the data during the

meetings, I asked him/her to clarify what he/she meant, and also asked for an example or story to illustrate their thinking.

Theoretical validity ensures that a theory or theoretical explanation developed from the research study fits the data and is, therefore, credible and defensible (Johnson, 1997). Maxwell cautioned researchers to be aware of alternative theories about phenomena and to conduct a comprehensive study of the topic (Maxwell, 2005). Consequently, I actively looked for discrepant data. I had conversations with individuals not involved in the study to receive feedback on discrepant data and understand alternative interpretations. I didn't find any discrepant data.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a practice in qualitative research based on a methodical approach of data collection, rigorous analysis procedures, research ethics, a level of accountability and rigor of the findings, and other aspects of the study (Creswell, 2003; Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Toma, 2006). Trustworthiness is applied by taking the necessary steps during research design, data collection, and analysis to ensure that the findings are credible, dependable, confirmable, and transferable (Toma, 2006). It is also a source of credibility (Toma, 2006). The dependability and transparency of this practice is achieved through a demonstration of a clear chain of evidence (Toma, 2006). Throughout this study, trustworthiness was established through my interactions with participants as well as how I recorded notes from this case study. To enhance dependability, my doctoral committee reviewed the interview protocol to make sure that it matched that data sought through the research questions.

Trustworthiness in data analysis is referred to as conformability (Toma, 2006). Often, this is enhanced through member checks. I requested that participants confirm categories and themes

that emerged from the data and the interpretation of the data. I summarized key points at the end of every interview and distributed these to participants in the study for review. Negative case analysis, meaning the description of instances of disagreement with my interpretation, is an imperative of conformability and credibility of qualitative research and was undertaken during the analysis of the data.

Data Triangulation

There are five types of triangulation: data, investigator, theory, methodology, and environment (Guion et al., 2001). Methodological triangulation was used to validate this study. Methodological triangulation involved the use of more than one data collection method. For internal consistency, I crosschecked the interview data and triangulated across data sources with interviews from faculty, staff, student community members, and elected officials (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Results from the interviews and photovoice project were then compared with data from published articles and dissertations to support the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2014). When qualitative researchers locate evidence to document a code or theme in different sources of data, they are triangulating information and providing validity to their findings (Creswell, 2014).

Prior to the data analysis, I transcribed the interviews verbatim and populated the case study database by using Microsoft Excel. I then sorted and arranged the data into different types according to the source of the information. I also arranged data according to where it was obtained. I read through all of the data to obtain a general sense of the information and to reflect upon its overall meaning. I maintained analytic memos that brought together data from across the sources of evidence for emergent insights (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

Another step in the data analysis was reviewing the analytical memos. Maxwell (2005) endorsed memo writing to organize the researcher's ideas on paper for later reflection and analytical insight. Analytical memos are an important tool for researchers to develop thoughts, track reflexivity, collect and analyze data. I contextualized the data by developing narrative summaries and vignettes for each participant and, in turn, used vignettes and narrative summaries as contextualization strategies. Narrative summaries are often [used] in a qualitative research report as an accompaniment to categorizing analysis (Barone, 1990). Vignettes are short narratives that display a limited aspect of a participant's experience (Maxwell, 2005). These vignettes were generated as respondents answered the analytical questions. Narratives reduce the data to distill participants' stories (Maxwell, 2005).

Although the analytical questions and vignettes helped me make connections, there was a risk of overgeneralizing the information or losing participants' stories (Mishler, 1986). Here, I made special effort to maintain the contextualized information for each vignette and narrative. I also wrote memos during data collection and analysis as a primary method of tracking and organizing my growing understanding about the phenomenon. This allowed me to slow down my thinking process so that I could reflect on the learning in an organized and critical way. Searching for and identifying codes was an ongoing process throughout the data analysis.

Concerning the photovoice project, additional considerations arose. In an attempt to determine the quality of a photovoice study, which has no explicit intent to be reliable or generalizable to other contexts, I abandoned the positivist epistemological criteria of systematic researcher-analyzed data (Wang & Pies, 2004). Respecting the differences in individual and collective interpretations, photovoice researchers abandon the search for an absolute truth and embrace the notion that multiple truths exist. Appreciating this multiplicity and multivocality, I

drew upon Richardson & St. Pierre's (2008) concept of crystallization to provide an understanding of experience in an attempt to determine the quality of a photovoice study. The image of the crystal, "which combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multi-dimensionality, and angles of approach" (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2008, p. 478), takes into consideration the complexity of the role that experience plays in defining our own realities: "Crystallization, without losing structure, deconstructs the traditional idea of validity; we feel how there is no single truth, and we see how texts validate themselves. Crystallization provides us with a deepened, complex, and thoroughly partial understanding of the topic" (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2008, p. 479).

Wang and Pies (2004) claim that there is currently no existing framework that is appropriate for judging the quality of a photovoice study. In addition, they assert that participatory research models should not be judged according to positivist criteria of quality. They argue instead in favor of process-oriented assessments or participant evaluations to determine the quality of a study. Because the overall aim of photovoice is to benefit participants and communities involved, participants' satisfaction is prioritized over the project's potential contribution to scholarly literature (Wang, Yi, Tao, & Carovano, 1998), and the concept of validity in photovoice ought to be stated in practical rather than academic terms. As such, participant evaluations of the research process may be the most appropriate measure of a study's quality.

Time constraints prohibited me from conducting a formal evaluation of the project's impact on participants and their communities. However, participants and others voluntarily offered their comments related to their involvement in the project. All seven of the participants reported great satisfaction with the project, having said that they learned new skills and that they

had the opportunity for the first time to have an honest dialogue about important issues. At the end of the forum, participants publicly thanked the researcher for the project and expressed their happiness for the opportunity to participate. Thus, based on their comments, I believe that participants would evaluate this project as being of high quality, as it impacted them in a positive manner.

Summary

This chapter provided a summary of the process employed in this study. This qualitative case study collected data through interviews, survey and a collaborative photovoice project. This chapter described the reasoning and analysis of the case study, the research methodology, and how it related to the study. The chapter also explored aspects of this qualitative methodology including the selection of participants, the data collection and analysis procedures, and addressing concerns of validity, credibility, and trustworthiness. Overall, the assimilation of individual interviews, survey and photographic data made an important addition that included a productive triangulation process, the contextualization of each circumstance surrounding the phenomenon studied, and a merging of the central characteristics of the phenomenon that enhanced the trustworthiness of the findings. The next chapter presents the main findings from the qualitative data collected from this study.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The intent of this study is to explore the contribution of HEIs in human and social development through the concept of USR. For the purpose of this study, selected MDGs were used as a frame of reference to represent human and social development issues. In this way, the findings represent one possible interpretation of the implementation of the MDGs. The role of HEIs was established within the framework of the different activities connected to these human and social development issues (MDGs). This chapter presents the findings of this study, highlighting the diversity of the participants (university faculty and staff, neighborhood residents, and elected officials). The descriptive results related to participants' demographics are first discussed, followed by aggregate results, which establish what participants' view as constituting human and social development. The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings. The interpretation and discussion of the findings follows in Chapter 5.

Findings from the Survey

In order to gauge the interest, relevance, and awareness of this study, I administered a survey to narrow down the scope of the study and establish the human and social development issues identified from the MDGs. The categories below were considered during this process:

1. Breakdown of participants' demographics,
2. Participants' familiarity with MDGs (human and social development issues),
3. Activities around specific MDGs (human and social development issues),
4. University partnerships to improve human and social conditions,
5. University engagement with the local community,
6. University engagement through workshops and academic amenities, and
7. University investment in human and social development issues.

Participant Characteristics

This study sampled a total of 25 people for the interviews and photovoice project. The sample was heterogeneous, represented an age range of 21–75, and provided variations in perspectives. This heterogeneous group helped to capture commonalities as well as differences across gender, age, ethnicity, education, experience, and socioeconomic status. Figure 1 indicates that a little over half of participants (56%) were affiliated with the University of Douala (faculty members, staff, and students). The second largest group of participants was neighborhood residents (32%), followed by city and government officials (12%).

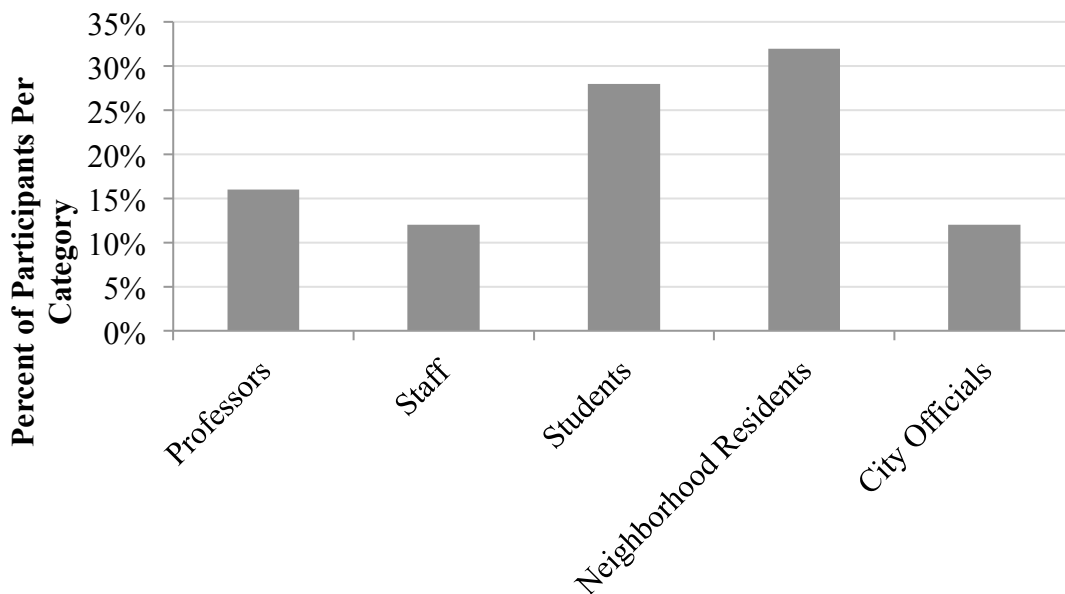


Figure 1. Breakdown of survey participants.

Source: Author

Millennium Development Goal Priorities at the University of Douala

Figure 2 shows which human and social development issues participants considered to be a priority. The highest priorities included eradicating extreme poverty and hunger (24%) and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases (24%). The results of the survey indicated that participants who were directly or indirectly involved with the University of Douala felt that the

university was already involved in community projects, but that they would like to see a greater involvement in the following four MDGs (human and social development issues): (a) eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; (b) combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; (c) achieving universal primary education; and (d) ensuring environmental sustainability. Furthermore, some participants said that ending poverty and hunger was a priority because it is the prerequisite for people to be healthy and educated. Others argued that child health was the most important because healthy children will be educated and contribute to society. Also, there was a discussion about education being a priority because people need to be educated to apply good behaviors.

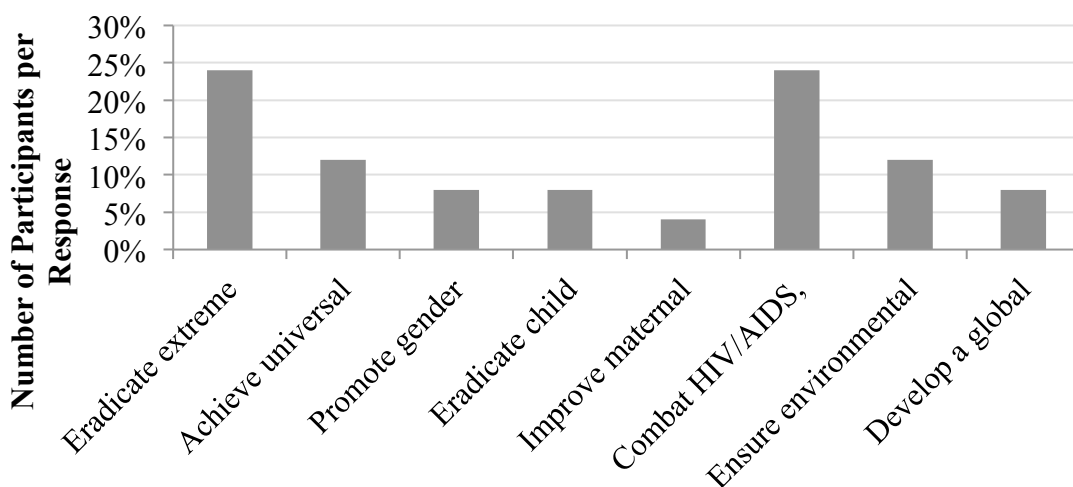


Figure 2. MDGs importance at the University of Douala.

Source: Author

Participant Familiarity with Millennium Development Goals

Figure 3 indicates that 36% of the participants were still not familiar with the human and social development issues included in the MDGs. However, 36% were extremely or very familiar with these issues, and 16% moderately familiar. Of those participants familiar with human and social development issues, the vast majority were professors and students.

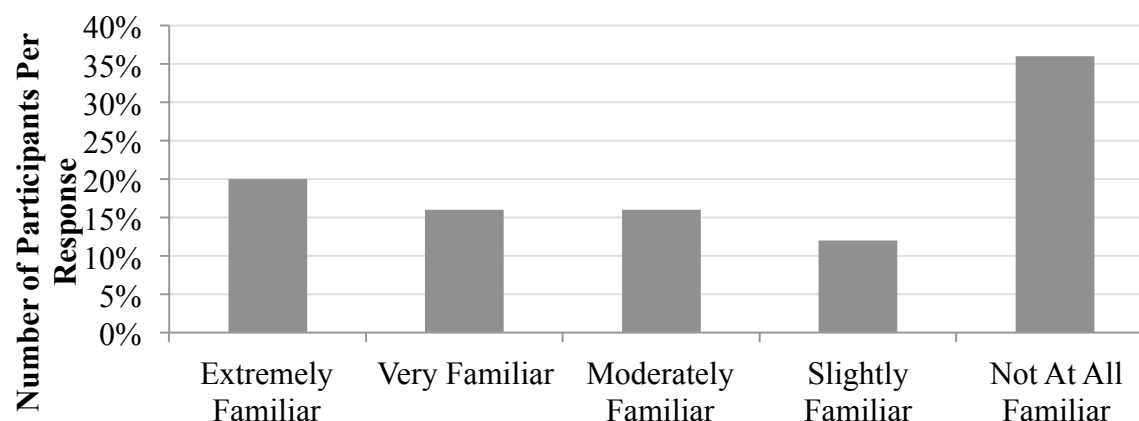


Figure 3. Participant familiarity with the MDGs.

Source: Author

The Ideal Role of the University of Douala

Participants' identified an overwhelming need for the University of Douala to play a role in human and social development (see Figure 4). Regardless of their socioeconomic status, 72% of the participants saw this as an important role for the university to fulfill. Participants indicated that the University of Douala has the capacity to lead and facilitate projects that can transform neighborhoods and citizens.

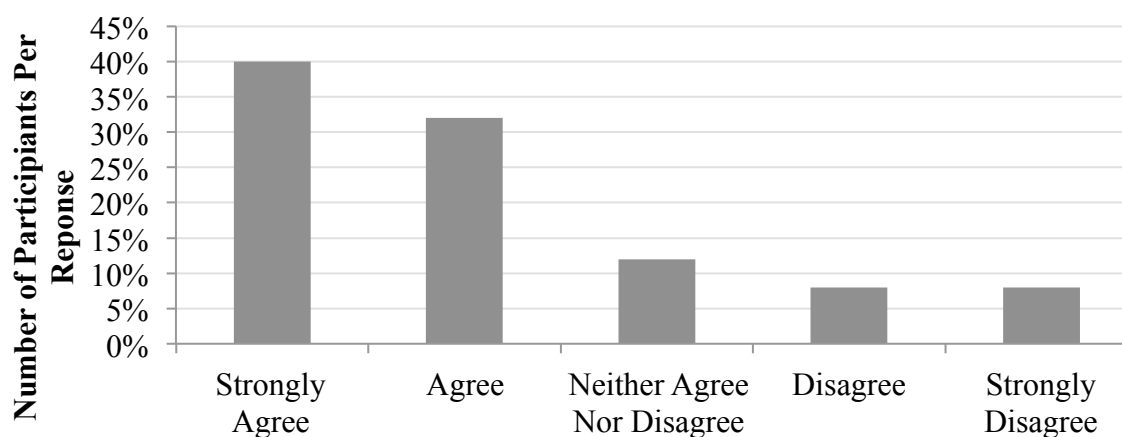


Figure 4. Role of the university.

Source: Author

Figures 5, 6, and 7 indicate that participants widely endorsed the idea of a partnership between the university and the community. The need of the university to build the capacity of community residents reached 76% in agreement (“agree or strongly agree”), making it the activity with the highest percentage. However, the percentage was considerably lower for activities that the university led in the community. Participants remained split about their knowledge of the university involvement in communities: 36% agreed or strongly agreed and 28% neither agreed nor disagreed with having a familiarity with the university’s activities. The majority of participants (72%) agreed or strongly agreed that the university should partner with other entities to improve human and social development conditions.

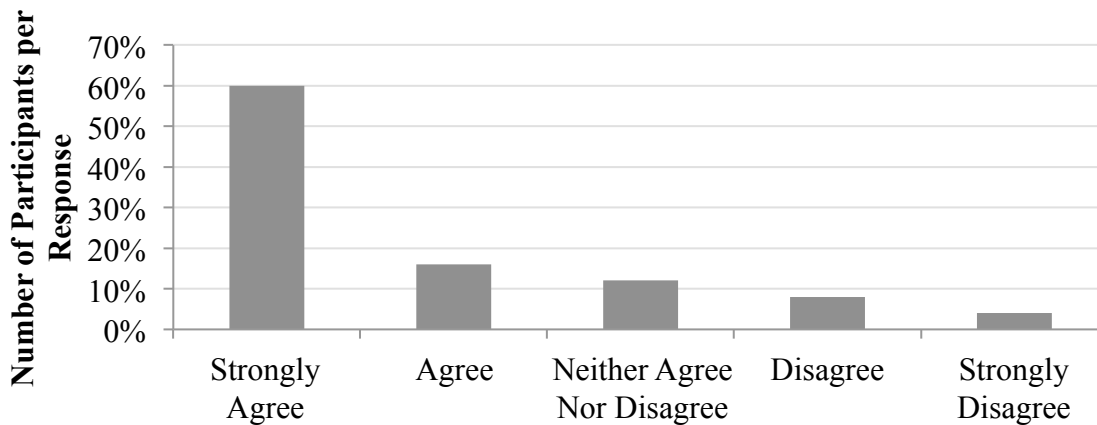


Figure 5. University of Douala as a convener.

Source: Author

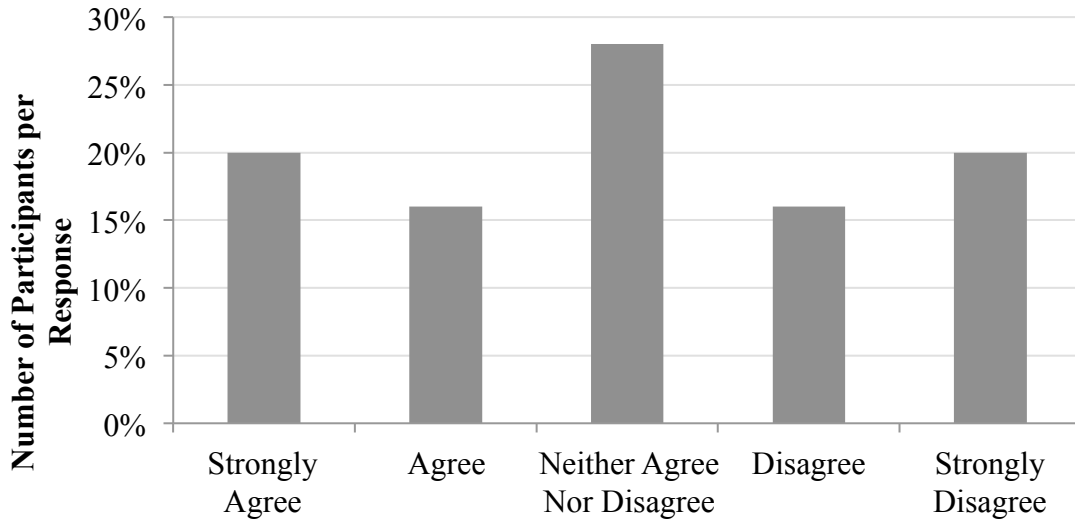


Figure 6. University of Douala as a social agent.

Source: Author

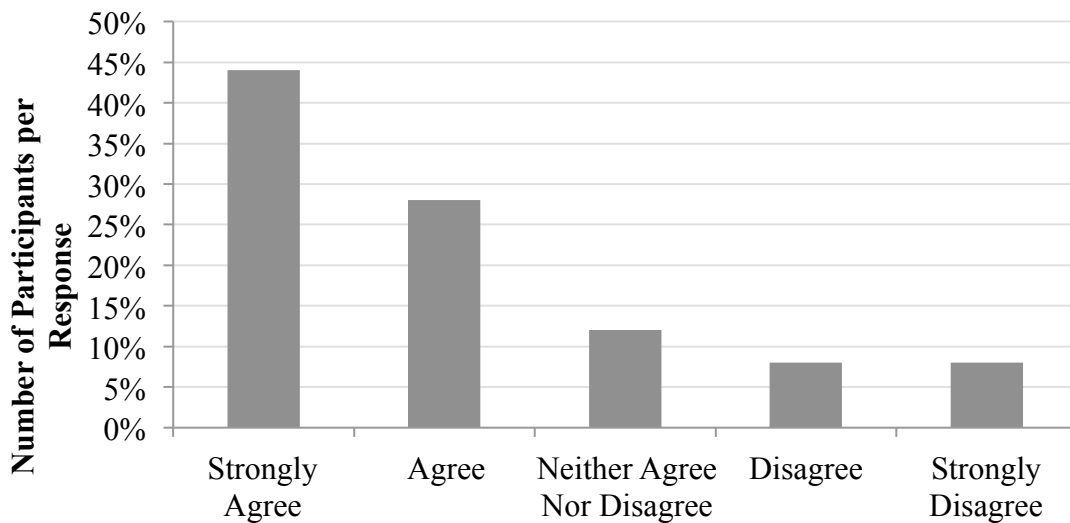


Figure 7. University of Douala as a partner.

Source: Author

Interview and Photovoice Findings

Participants' responses from the interviews and photovoice project revealed four major themes concerning how the university: (a) is a healthcare service provider, (b) supports innovation, (c) is an advocate and supports service learning, and (d) promotes capacity building

within the community. The findings also highlighted stakeholder engagement and the social responsibility agenda of the University of Douala.

Healthcare Service Provider

The interview data revealed that the University of Douala provides multiple services contributing to the human and social development of the surrounding communities. Respondents reported that the University of Douala occupies an important place in the community, providing services such as cultural resources, healthcare, sports and recreation, educational programs, and technical assistance. Participants spoke at length concerning how the community has been able to use the university health center and received high quality services from healthcare professionals and medical students. Participants talked about how safe and comfortable they feel when they go to the university health center because some of the staff and students live in the community. The participants also referenced the proximity and low cost of primary care services.

The transcript excerpts below provide an understanding of how the university health center has been able to contribute to human and social development. In order to protect the identity of the participants, only pseudonyms are used. J. B., a doctoral student who had been enrolled at the University of Douala for 10 years, spoke about the university health center's role in the fight against HIV/AIDS among students:

During my first 2 years at the University of Douala, I had a few classmates who were dying of HIV/AIDS. I was not really paying attention until my best friend contracted AIDS. I had a conversation with the director of the university health center who told me that HIV/AIDS was one of the leading causes of death among students at the university. He then asked me if I would like to be part of an awareness campaign to educate students about the danger of HIV/AIDS. This campaign included sex education and free condom distribution programs at the university. It appeared that students were reluctant to talk about sex education at first, but over the years, they became more comfortable so I went from talking to a few students and handing out about a hundred condoms a year to expanding the program to 30 sex educators reaching more students. I don't have the exact numbers but I know that the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among students has decreased due

to the work the University of Douala is doing through the university health center. Youth is the future of this country so it's important that students stay healthy.

Suzanne, a community member, described a situation where she almost died delivering her fifth baby. She stated that she was thankful to medical students from the University of Douala who were working at the university health center. These medical students knocked on her door to invite her to an open house at the university health center:

I have had various complications during my pregnancies. Also, it was really becoming a burden for me to raise five children as a single mother. So I wanted to avoid becoming pregnant again but I couldn't afford contraceptives. Through the university health center, I was able to enroll in program where I received contraceptives at a very affordable cost. Now, I control my pregnancies. I am able to work and provide for my children because of the service the university health center is providing to people in the neighborhood.

Professor B. A. works for the University of Douala. He described the university health center as a win-win situation:

We believe that the university is the strongest weapon against diseases. It's for that reason that we make sure that we contribute to the production of healthy, qualified, and productive graduates to make sure that they are able to support the community. Our goal is to strengthen the prevention of certain diseases by involving the community around us. The university is providing these services at a lost cost using the best in their fields. The University of Douala offers a broad spectrum of services across multiple fields that include education. The university has been offering community education as well as free tutoring services in rural areas to raise attainments and increase employability.

These interview comments from participants revealed that the University of Douala, through its health center, joined the efforts aimed at preventing diseases by providing affordable health care services to the community as well as through advocacy.

The photovoice participants additionally indicated that community health was an important aspect of human and social development. Many of them shared that they had either participated or were aware of health programs that had been initiated by the university to provide primary care to students and the community. Throughout the discussion, participants revealed that Cameroon needs healthy and educated youth for a sustainable future.



Figure 8. Photograph of healthy youth.

Source: JM

Alex is a student at the University of Douala. He took the picture above (Figure 8) and said the following:

I believe the university is making a good investing (*sic*) by providing services that help students and people in the community to stay fit and healthy. The university health center and all the recreational and sport activities on campus have motivated me and other students to stay healthy.

Innovation

In addition to providing services, respondents revealed that the University of Douala acts as an innovation center. Through a partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, the university offers extensive programs that advise people on their business ideas. Community members are working with students and faculty to solve real-world problems. By the virtue of their abilities, they can act more efficiently and quickly than the government. Edie is a senior staff at the University of Doula, who spoke to these partnerships:

The University of Douala provides a space for community members and students to develop their ideas. Through a university-community partnership, students in the electrical engineering program have been able to launch a pilot project to solve power outage[s] in Douala. They installed solar panel systems in some neighborhoods to help alleviate the power challenge that the City of Douala is currently facing. [see Figure 9]



Figure 9. Solar panel project initiated by the university.

Source: MS

Edmond is a mechanical engineering student that is hoping to improve the lives of farmers:

I have been engaged on a project to guide farmers on the best practices to adopt and improve their agricultural output. For example, my class has been working to develop a tool that will increase palm oil production. Through our interaction with farmers, we help them live sustainable livelihoods as well as boost their agricultural practices. As a result, these farmers have been able to meet their basic lives and have decent lifestyles.

Simon is an elected official who stated that the University of Douala plays a major role in improving education by applying innovative ideas where the government is not present:

Through a university-city partnership, the university and the city are working to increase literacy and gender equality by building the habit of reading among primary school children in lower income neighborhoods as well as empowering girls to go to college. We have started a Room to Read program in schools and neighborhoods and the outcomes of

the program are amazing. Knowing how to read and write build self-confidence in people and allow them to make better decisions in life.

The discussion of the photographs revealed that one of the main functions assigned to the University of Douala by the government is research. It appears that the university provides a unique environment for faculty members, students, and the community to create and achieve ideas. The University of Douala has played key roles in providing free business coaching to anyone with a business idea. Robert is a resident who is part of the solar panel pilot project (Figure 9). He shared:

For the past 2 years, the neighborhood has suffered from power outage[s] due to the complexity of the country's electricity distribution system. This situation has increased crime in the neighborhood. So we went to the university in search of solutions. And we learnt that sunlight could be converted into electricity. Consequently, our neighborhood association got together to discuss deployment of low cost solar lights. We worked with the university to develop a pilot project that would bring the light back to the neighborhood using solar power. The immediate results were seen in the increase of households using solar power and businesses staying open late.

Advocacy and Service Learning

The interview data revealed that the University of Douala has partnered with a number of organizations to advance the rights of the most vulnerable people in the community. For example, a wave of urban crime led to people being unfairly imprisoned. In response, law students established a number of advocacy projects. In this role, the University of Douala has served as a bridge between the government and the community by bringing group concerns to public attention and pushing for policy and social change on behalf of vulnerable groups. Emmanuel, a law student at the University of Douala, stated how proud he was for his involvement in advocacy projects at the university:

As a law student, being involved in the human rights project allowed me to work with experience[d] lawyers to assist clients that have been wrongfully accused and detained. While doing interviews and legal research for clients, I was able to gain experience as well as restoring justice for people who wouldn't otherwise have a fair trial.

Anne Marie, a faculty member at the University of Douala, described how service-learning projects can benefit everyone involved:

As a faculty member here at the University of Douala, I have been able to design courses that include a service-learning component. While working on those service-learning projects, we have been able to build collaboration and partnerships with the community to tackle issues that matter the most to them. For example, we have worked with a number of organizations to create awareness campaigns by designing logo[s] and preparing newsletter or flyers to be distributed in the community.

As the City of Douala grows, population density can have major impacts on public transportation. The photovoice project revealed that participants were concerned with the number of accidents, injuries, and deaths associated with road transportation (see Figure 10). Didier, a student at the university, explained how it was hard to come up with a solution that was going to solve the problem immediately because it is normally through physical improvement and institutional development that the management of road transport system is strengthened. Didier had an idea and decided to involve his classmates:

As someone who uses public transportation everyday, most buses going to the university carry more than their rated capacity. As a result, it becomes not only dangerous but also uncomfortable to ride those buses. So students at the University of Douala decided to take the issue to elected officials. Also, we started an awareness campaign asking students to boycott those buses. After negotiations between elected officials, bus owners, and students, it was decided that the seating capacity of each vehicle should be respected. And the safety project was then born to reduce the rate of accidents and make it more comfortable for students to ride the bus to the university.



Figure 10. Overcrowded bus.

Source: DC

Community Development and Capacity Building

The findings of this study so far have highlighted the role of the University of Douala as being a service provider and advocate for the community. These are intentional activities in which the University of Douala aims to make fundamental changes in the community.

Consequently, respondents revealed that the University of Douala is constantly seeking a way to connect, engage, and address human and social development issues in the community. The insights provided by the following interviewees demonstrate some of the approaches the

University of Douala uses to leverage its resources. Jean, a university official expressed:

The University of Douala has been very intentional about its business and financial practices to make sure that the community is positively impacted. We encourage employees to spend their money in the community and the university as an institution is purchasing from local vendors as well. Also, the university has brought private investors in the community to invest in real estate to close the gap that exists in student housing. By investing in the community, the university is contributing towards economic development.

Another testimony of business practice geared toward community economic development comes from Annie, a staff member at the University of Douala:

After graduating from the university, I wanted to stay in the neighborhood to be closer to my family and I heard about this program at the University of Douala that was targeting recruitment that prioritized the hiring of local residents. A total of 10 local residents went through 3 months training and ended up being employed by the university in various capacities. I think this has changed the way the community views the University of Douala. It does establish a positive relationship with the university and encourages future investment in the community.

The interviews also revealed that the University of Douala has been progressively incorporating sustainable development practices and values. Patrick J., a Professor of Geography, has been involved in sustainable projects aimed to improve the community:

In an effort to reduce waste in the neighborhood, the University of Douala organized a team of staff, students, faculty, and community members to raise awareness and to tackle littering in the communities surrounding the university. What we found by organizing clean-up days is that people lacked knowledge of the impact that littering has on the environment and the neighborhood. As an institution, it's important to lead by example.

The interviews further showed that the University of Douala has sought to address some of these human and social development issues by building the capacity of neighborhood residents. The university is providing technical assistance and capacity training to assist community organizations. Albert is a neighborhood resident who leads a nonprofit, and stated the following:

I am very thankful for everything I have learnt through some of the leadership development classes that I have taken at the University of Douala. These trainings have helped me strengthen my abilities to lead and implement programs that bring transformational change in the city.

Finally, the photovoice projects revealed that the University of Douala has become a key player in providing opportunities for active living. However, the level of contribution of the University of Douala is correlated with its ability to secure funds. For example, the University of Douala plays an important role in identifying efficient ways to help farmers in the transformation of palm oil. Faustin, a mechanical engineering student, decided to change his final project after

witnessing how farmers were processing palm oil in his village (see Figures 11 and 12). He is currently working with his professor to build a palm oil presser machine that will make it much easier for farmers to process palm oil:

Through this final thesis project, I hope to increase the production of palm oil among struggling farmers. I will work with the university to license the palm oil presser kit and make it affordable. I am very excited about this project, and I am thankful to receive the support of the University of Douala. Also, training will be provided to farmers to learn how to use the presser. I think every student in this program should think about [their] senior project as a mean of contributing to human and social development.



Figure 11. Palm oil processing I.

Source: AO



Figure 12. Palm oil processing II.

Source: AO

J. K., a staff member at the University of Douala, also spoke of the important role the university plays in community development:

As a university, we have a vested interest in building strong partnerships and relationships with communities that surround us. We have to become more relevant and responsive to the community. By doing so, we will certainly contribute to the public purpose and civic mission of HEIs. As the university is becoming more aware of its impact in the community, this will encourage the university to be more involved in practices such as service learning, community partnerships, leveraging assets, and meeting community needs. I understand that some community members are still skeptical that this can be achieved. However, there is growing and deeper understanding of the role of higher education institutions in human and social development. By giving students and faculty members the opportunity to interact and work with the community, the educational goals are achieved at the same time.

Stakeholder Engagement

A staff member at the University of Douala revealed that the notion of *stakeholder* was elusive, which gives rise to a number of issues. Since the community is not always organized, it becomes difficult to identify with whom the university can interact. This is especially a challenge when multiple leaders claim to represent the same community. A staff member explained:

The university is always reminded of its obligation to work with the community. However, it's never an easy task because certain individuals don't act in the best interest of the community. As a result, it takes longer for the university to get involved in a community project. Currently, our capacity doesn't allow us to work individually with people. We will rather work with interest group[s] that represent the needs of the community.

Stakeholder engagement involves university responses to the needs of the community. It becomes important for the university to have a strategy that engages stakeholders.

Social Responsibility Agenda

The study revealed that there are a number of factors that shape the social responsibility agenda of the University of Douala, including pressure from the community, community expectations, and management. There has never been an agreement between the community and the University of Douala about its commitment to social responsibility. During the photovoice discussion, a student at the university said:

When students organize protests, it becomes clear to us that the university is not committed and willing to contribute to human and social development issues. This may be debatable but at the end of the day, the university always finds ways to negotiate with the protesters. And we celebrate when the university [is] able to change their thinking because of the way they are confronted. I feel like they take their social responsibility lightly.

A community member added the following:

It seems like we cannot rely on the government too much. Our community has suffered for a long time. We have a clinic in the neighborhood but not big enough for the size of the population. Now with the presence of the university in the neighborhood, we expect them to assist us because whenever we ask the government to build a bigger clinic, they say they don't have the money.

Such expectations and the spirit of charitable giving to those in need are strongly embedded within the Cameroonian cultural and religious value systems and norms.

The study revealed that there is no social responsibility department at the university. The social responsibility at the university is left to the student activity office and sometimes headed

by the rector of the University of Douala. As noted by the government official, it is apparent that there is no implementation of social responsibility at the university driven by a specific entity:

I have worked with the University of Douala on multiple projects. Different individuals at the university coordinate their projects. I worked with student activities, faculty members, and staff at the office of the president. I think it would be a good approach if the university [were] to establish a social responsibility office to implement the projects on their behalf.

Summary

The findings suggest that the University of Douala is doing its best in providing a multitude of services to the community given the resources they have. These findings show the contribution of the University of Douala in human and social development. The findings indicate that the University of Douala is a service provider, an innovation center, an advocate, a leader, and a community builder. Participants identified collaboration and partnerships between the University of Douala and the community as a factor that generates investment and development toward civic engagement. The results of this study indicate that the University of Douala has conducted a number of activities around the selected human and social development issues from this study.

Despite results showing that the University of Douala is involved in many key and distinctive activities, the record of its accomplishment in human and social development is not without difficulty. The involvement of the University of Douala in community-based projects is limited because of the lack of funding. More importantly, the university has not developed a reasonable systematic approach to assess the needs of the community and address them in a holistic or efficient way. Finally, the findings suggest that stakeholder engagement appears to be a challenging aspect of the contribution of the University of Douala in human and social development issues, and the social responsibility agenda includes a number of drivers.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This chapter provides insights into the contribution of the University of Douala in human and social development and engagement with local communities. The chapter discusses the ways in which HEIs promote human and social development, its stakeholder engagement and social responsibility, as well as barriers that inhibit HEIs to successfully contribute to human and social development. First, however, the two research questions that guided this study are answered.

Research Question 1

The first research question asked: What is the contribution of Cameroonian HEIs in human and social development? The findings showed that the infrastructure, resources, and amenities available at the University of Douala make the university an important asset in the littoral region. The presence of over 40,000 students at the University of Douala has transformed the urban, economic, cultural, and social vitality of the region. As such, the University of Douala is an actor working in community development. For example, the university has sponsored clean-up days that include multiple neighborhoods. Other actions include combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases by making the university health center available to the community. The university has also supported and promoted primary and secondary educations, which have significantly improve student literacy. This was accomplished by training teachers who will serve in urban and rural areas where there is a need for teachers, as well as by providing tutoring programs. Through its intellectual capacity, the university serves as an innovation center where ideas are fostered. The presence of the university in the community has created economic vitality, therefore facilitating the creation of businesses and employment.

The university actively works on a framework that focuses on sustainability efforts to make the City of Douala clean and green. As a result, it contributed to the production of the

environmental outlook report of the city of Douala. This document has brought to the forefront the most critical environmental issues the city faces, which include a lack of potable water, waste management and recycling, and environmental pollution. The production of such a report further supported decision-making and learning. However, dissemination of information is not enough to ensure that people across the country and in Douala in particular become involved in the environmental sustainability process. Another contribution of the University of Douala is building the capacity of the residents by organizing various workshops for them. The university understands that equipping residents with the tools they need to face challenges is the best contribution to human and social development. These attributes of the university have contributed to the social, cultural, and economic vibrancy of the city, though they could be maximized through better engagement with the community.

Research Question 2

The second research question asked: How can Cameroonian HEIs increase their ability to engage with local communities? The approach used by the University of Douala to contribute to human and social development shows that not much consideration is given to the sustainability or long-term impact of programs and activities initiated by the university. There is no structure or system in place that capitalizes on the work accomplished in the community. The way the University of Douala contributes to human and social development has to change. Developing ways to integrate the local community in all aspects of higher education system would create opportunities to maximize time, resources, and talents. Social responsibility should be taken at the same level as teaching and research, making it a practice upon which teaching and research depend (Vallaey, 2009).

Achieving these opportunities will require reevaluating social responsibility at the University of Douala. This includes setting goals and evaluating them as a way of effectively contributing to human and social development. Projects should be measured in the form of quantifiable activity outputs, such as the number of projects accomplished, number of service hours provided, people served, and so on. Transformational change in neighborhoods requires a strategic approach to data collection and analysis. Both the university and the community are eager to know whether their efforts are successful or not. For example, tutoring provided by university students may increase graduation rates, however if the news media only reports the difficulties that primary and secondary education is facing, graduation rates may appear to be a problem. This is a case where the university is not sharing success stories with the community and the media. Factual information may provide a confidence booster within the university and the community. This has the potential to influence funding and encourage people to participate in community projects.

The University of Douala has many campuses throughout the Littoral region, contributing to the social, economic, and cultural life of the region. Local projects involving the community and the University of Douala are viable when resources from the university and citizens have been developed collectively and they both participate in the implementation and evaluation of projects. The participatory approach of USR ensures the involvement of all citizens for representation, efficiency, and effectiveness. Additionally, USR requires assessment to guide policymakers and informs citizens, affirming the responsibility of HEIs. At the University of Douala, there is no documentation evaluating or otherwise measuring the impact of the university in the community. To address these limitations, the University of Douala needs a new engagement paradigm and, hence, stronger leadership.

A partnership between the university and business or private institutions such as telephone providers and insurance companies may help to strengthen its ability to invest more in neighborhoods and ultimately create sustainable communities where everyone thrives. These organizations and individuals constitute the assets that will help the university build its future. By adopting a meaningful partnership with others, the university will be able to make continuous improvement with resources and capabilities directed to projects that are the most important. Working together with other organizations increases the ability to achieve what may seem to be an impossible task, as well as helps to build a level of community accountability and credibility.

The University of Douala is a player in local and regional development, and there is a growing interest for the University of Douala to collaborate with the business world to achieve better outcomes. In fact, agreements have been signed between the university and the Chamber of Commerce to design training for entrepreneurs, with the university receiving financial support in return. Therefore strategies used by the University of Douala should be based on strong leadership. The university leadership must seek to enable and create an environment where faculty members, staff, and students share their gifts and talents with the community. The social responsibility of the university should be guided by a vision that builds the capacity of the community. This study generated a number of significant findings that have implications in the contribution of HEIs in human and social development, as further discussed below.

Higher Education Institutions as a Catalyst for Human and Social Development

The University of Douala has recently emerged not only as a service provider but also as an actor for urban development. As an instrument of regional development, the university has recreated income and amenities resulting in enhancing the quality of life of neighborhood residents. Economic and social activities happening around the university have made the

university a growth pole (Perroux, 1974). As a growth pole, the university promotes positive economic growth in communities and provides expertise and solutions that improve local infrastructure, health issues, and overall environmental sustainability. As an economic center in the city, the University of Douala has attracted many developers in search of business opportunities. It also serves as a tool for urban development for a diversified economic base. Additionally, the facilities of the University of Douala constitute an asset to the community, which is an indication that the university can support some aspects of human and social development. The University of Douala reflects the socioeconomic and cultural landscape of neighborhoods. The influx of students in the City of Douala has increased the number of cultural and sporting events organized in the city. These activities bring together local residents and students. Local shops and vendors have largely benefited from the influx of students and all activities that come as a result.

Through service learning and university organizations, students volunteer their time and share their talents with the community. More importantly, student engagement has addressed human and social development needs in the community and provided hands-on experiences (Stacey, Rice & Langer, 1997). Despite the fact that service-learning programs are not being implemented by many instructors at the University of Douala, these programs have served as examples of engagement between the University of Douala and the community. An engineering student shared the following:

Service learning gave me a greater insight into my future because science is my strength and after my service learning I decided to concentrate on a scientific career. When I first started tutoring kids in the community, I wasn't sure if that was what I wanted to do. Later, I was able to realize how much help this was to the kids, their parents and the community in general. I have never worked in the community before so this experience was good for both the community and me. I shared the knowledge received from the University of Douala, and I was happy to engage with people that I would not have [engaged with] before the service-learning project.

Students are thus part of an influential social group that takes part in the everyday life of the neighborhoods of Douala.

Discussions with respondents indicate that the university has intensified its efforts to educate people about the HIV/AIDS pandemic resulting in positive impacts on health outcomes in the community. HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases is another set of important issues threatening human and social development (UNDP, 2003). HIV/AIDS is one of the most serious pandemics affecting the world. The CNIS (2014) indicates that this disease has had significant impacts in Cameroon, and it is one of the biggest threats to the achievement of human and social development. Many HEIs such as the University of Douala are combatting HIV/AIDS in their own institutions by writing policies and engaging in outreach activities, integrating HIV/AIDS knowledge in their curriculum and research. The role that the University of Douala plays in the fight against HIV/AIDS and other diseases can make a difference. Christelle, a senior at the University of Douala, shared that as part of a student organization, they were able to host “trainings, drama, festivals, lectures and sport activities as efficient methods to help change behaviors.” The efforts made by the University of Douala to combat these diseases could be aligned with national development goals to maximize impact and make a better use of available resources. The HIV/AIDS fight is the most visible as well as important contribution of the University of Douala in human and social development. However, there are internal and external challenges that hinder the contribution of HEIs in human and social development.

Higher Education Institutions and Barriers to Human and Social Development

The contribution of the University of Douala is influenced by the colonial past of the higher education system just like many other HEIs in Cameroon. Participant narratives recognized that the university could do more; however, it faces multiple barriers. These include:

combating the persistent effects of colonialism, being too tied to government instructions and goals, identifying how to contextualize human and social development issues to a culturally Cameroonian environment, weak leadership within HEIs, limited financial investments, adequately responding to the surge in student enrollment, addressing persistent gender inequality, community understandings of human and social development issues, and how community intervention are tracked.

Persistence of the Effects of Colonialism

Participant narratives suggest that the University of Douala, like many other HEIs in Cameroon, still suffers from the aftermaths of colonization. Respondents openly spoke about the current conditions of the Cameroonian higher education system that are connected to its colonial past and which have changed the trajectory of the country. Participants believed the University of Douala should adopt a collective model of education, where learning is about observations and experiences. This model of education should be contextualized to the culture and history of the country (Altbach, 1996). It is through a deep connection with the environment in which we live that we can easily make changes that improve human conditions (Altbach, 1996). The current model of higher education was established by major colonial powers in Africa (i.e., France and England). This has been the case for all colonized countries (Bok, 2003). Marcel, an elected official, shared the following: “Europeans have for a long time not considered the African higher education system as a business model or an instrument of development because HEIs still operate as if they serve a colonial power.”

Historically, in Cameroon and in other parts of Africa, HEIs were a prerequisite for development (Altbach, 1996). Unfortunately, they became a costly colonial leftover with decreased governmental funding (Bok, 2003). This made it difficult for those institutions to live

up to human and social development expectations. Therefore, HEIs rely on international organizations to contribute to human and social development. Unfortunately, these organizations do not always know the local realities and require that HEIs use international development models that do not necessarily reflect the local reality. Furthermore, the implementation of basic programs and projects in Cameroon is still led by international organizations instead of local organizations. This usually happens when international development organizations provide the funding to complete the project. As an asset in the community, HEIs may perhaps conceive and implement these initiatives better than international organizations because local organizations are more familiar with the issues that people face in the community. For example, the University of Douala worked with international organizations to provide Internet access on campus. Unfortunately, most students do not have portable computers to access the Internet. They usually use cyber-cafes. As such, the project failed. As participants were reflecting on the ability of the University of Douala to serve the community better than international organizations do, Ella, a third-year student in geography who lives on campus, argued that the university can do better than international organizations because they know the area, the issues, and the people better than any outsider.

Effects of Weak Leadership on Human and Social Development

The management and leadership capacities at the University of Douala can hinder the achievement of human and social development. A discussion with academic leaders revealed that USR is a new concept to them and they are not trained to maximize the contribution of HEIs to human and social development. In general, leaders do not excel in strategic planning, advocacy, market research, financial planning, networking, and partnership building. The right systems and policies have not been formed to coordinate funding issues or to engage with various entities to

support USR. For example, Jeremy, a professor in the Business Department, noted that some businesses surrounding the University of Douala do not promote academic excellence:

The University of Douala is surrounded by many pubs open 24/7 that put academic goals at risk and distract the university community from being involved in the issues that matter to people. It doesn't take an expert to understand that the proliferation of pubs around the university is dangerous and not conducive for excellence in studies. Furthermore, this has become a place for prostitution that involves students. The multiple attempts to close those pubs have not been successful. Alcohol continues to flow on campus.

He argued that the leadership of the university should make stronger attempts to close down these businesses and deter promiscuity around campus. The proliferation of pubs around campus might slow down the efforts of the university to combat human and social development issues such as HIV/AIDS.

The university receives limited funding for dealing with human and social development issues. As a result, the University of Douala has to generate its own income for programming. This situation essentially means that the university has to decide whether to write a fundraising mandate for social responsibility explicitly. Consequently, it requires the university to raise outside money to expanding its social responsibility role. There is no evidence that the University of Douala has been involved in fundraising efforts for this purpose. However, in an attempt to bring more money into the university, the university has diversified its course offerings to attract more students.

Even though faculty members and students work on human and social development issues, the findings showed that the involvement of the University of Douala in human and social development issues remained overlooked and somewhat obscure. S. J., a university administrator, stated:

The contribution of the university to human and social development issues is still theoretical to many people. There is a need to educate people about what the university represent[s] to the community and its social responsibility. I think getting out of the

university context and meeting people where they are will increase the awareness on the assets of the university. The university has to publicize its actions, especially those that contribute to human and social development to showcase what the university is able to do and use that opportunity as a self-promotion strategy. Bottom line—the University of Douala has to become more visible. The connection between the university and its social responsibility is not always easily established.

Understanding Social Responsibility at the University of Douala

The social responsibility of HEIs has grown from being a Western concept to an increasingly popular idea in developing countries. Rugman and Doh (2008) note that social responsibility is a new way of doing things such as holding institutions accountable for meeting their human and social development obligations. Consequently, there is a need to understand the nature of social responsibility for an institution like the University of Douala to pursue it. Furthermore, it is important to understand how various actors and factors influence how the university engages in human and social development issues, as well as their strategies to engage stakeholders in order to realize the outcomes of the social responsibility agenda. Finally, such an understanding must consider whether the university social responsibility (USR) agenda is grounded in a narrow perspective of achieving human and social development issues.

Having examined social responsibility at the University of Douala, the initial understanding was that the university undertook human and social development issues as normative given their mission to assist the development of communities and their expectations for a better quality of life. For the University of Douala, its social responsibility agenda used to come in the form of philanthropic activities. However, it gradually grew to involve transformational change in communities. The projects implemented throughout the city are short-term projects. Despite some initial success, concerns remain whether short-term projects are enough to generate community participation and, consequently, empowerment. The decision to engage in USR is usually the decision of the rector of the university who serves the interests of

the government. As such, the government empowers the rector to make strategic decisions and provide funding for human and social development activities. However, social responsibility is driven by the expectations of the stakeholders. Their engagement will determine the direction of USR into the future.

Stakeholder Engagement

Citizen engagement is not a new concept. It has been used by a multitude of actors (community, private, government, and HEI) to support various endeavors (Thomas, 2004; Thomas & Cross, 2007). Greenwood & Levin (1998) define *stakeholder engagement* as “practices that an institution undertakes to involve stakeholders in a positive manner in institutional activities” (p. 315). Greenwood’s definition implies that stakeholder engagement, despite its moral foundation, is a morally-neutral concept, especially when one considers that not all institutions that engage with stakeholders do it for the right reasons. The notion of stakeholder engagement is increasingly understood as integral to the achievement of an institution’s objectives. The need for institutions to engage stakeholders becomes more crucial, especially when their activities are seen as posing social issues in society (Noland & Phillips, 2010). Higher education institutions are subjected to increased pressure for accountability and responsibility in society. The basic premise is that by engaging stakeholders, HEIs can not only have a better understanding of stakeholders’ needs and expectations, but also enhance communication with stakeholders about social responsibility activities (Pater & Lierop, 2006). Institutions that engage their stakeholders are likely to foster a healthy relationship with them, which may be vital for their survival (Frooman, 1999).

However, at the University of Doula, stakeholder engagement has not been maintained clearly. In the face of a very complex world, HEIs have to consider the place and power that is

given to citizens to effect change. This is especially relevant to human and social development issues because of the lack of participation to solve these issues. A participatory approach to human and social development has been presented as a model that refers to a multitude of objectives and practices as part of the discourse on achieving human and social development (Thomas, 2004; Thomas & Cross, 2007). This approach contributes to the empowerment of disadvantaged groups and focuses on issues that affect them. Despite abundant literature about citizen participation and higher education (e.g., Boyer, 1996; Boyte & Kari, 1996; Colby et al., 2000, 2003; Ehrlich, 2000), this literature does not demonstrate the gap between rhetoric and the actual dynamics during project implementation involving HEIs and citizens. In that respect, the question to be answered is whether participatory approaches implemented by HEIs are able to foster both the self-development of local communities and the reconfiguration of power in favor of greater participation of the poor in the decision-making process. While HEIs remain vague on how to achieve effective participation, however, service learning projects in communities have been used to connect both the university and its community.

Stakeholder engagement at the University of Douala provides a way to ensure the sustainability of projects as well as to empower the population. A neighborhood resident who worked with the University of Douala on various projects noted:

When the University of Douala is involved in community projects using a participatory approach, we as citizens feel empowered and this makes us real actors of development. So we become aware that development begins with us. Therefore, it's important for the university to always engage us in almost all community projects to guarantee development.

By doing so, citizens are more likely to participate and see the project succeed. However, this ongoing process must be adaptive to the will and skills of the citizens. From the perspective of the participants interviewed, any development projects supported by the University of Douala

should be owned by the community. As explained by one professor during an interview: “The citizens have to see that any help provided by HEIs is there only to support their own initiatives to contribute to their betterment. Citizens want to feel empowered and find ways to celebrate their own achievement.” While the University of Douala does not have an office of civic engagement, the university has institutionalized student organizations, community services offices, and volunteer centers to prepare their graduates for civic life.

Discussions with participants confirmed that the contribution of the University of Douala to human and social development emerges from educating students, involving citizens, and fostering community-based research. These practices have led to an increased demand for research projects in communities that aim to tackle real-world problems. While most participants agreed that the University of Douala is slow to make changes in many issues, they also acknowledge that the university has been that institutional base from which individuals and organizations develop initiatives. While it is true that the University of Douala focuses primarily on educating students and generating research, the findings presented show that the contribution of HEIs to human and social development can grow if the institution engages with citizens. On the other hand, participants shared their disappointment with the reality that until now, the central government has not made any consistent policy to ensure diverse groups serving on university boards include local citizens. However, one participant stated that the University of Douala sometimes consults with major stakeholders in communities, a conversation that has happened to drive interest.

An important consideration for the study has been to explore the existing form of participation and how citizens participate, which prompted a focus on whether people getting involved are prompted to participate with the hope of gaining something. The answer to this

question has indicated that citizens themselves do not often initiate participation, but rather individuals within HEIs that have an interest in addressing social and human development issues initiate the programs.

Additional aspects of stakeholder engagement should be considered. There is no strategy for engaging citizens or strengthening the level of accountability and responsiveness to the university to human and social development issues. The process of enabling the creation of formal or informal structures for good governance has been either nonexistent or inadequate. Most participants were in agreement that the achievement of human and social development requires a strong citizen engagement strategy. A neighborhood resident commented:

We have been around the University of Douala for a long time, but we don't know how to work with the university; it should be known that the help that the University provided to the community has come to us with mixed blessings. On one hand, the University of Douala has found a way to reach out to local people; however, on the other hand, the local people are yet to find ways to reach out to the university. As it stands now, there is the absence of a structured and formal arrangement or partnership between the university and the community. I don't want the university to use a top-down approach to stimulate citizen participation.

This demonstrates a key insight gained during the interviews with participants regarding the need for more interaction between the university and citizens. During the presentation of the photovoice preliminary findings, higher education leaders heard firsthand from other participants what concerned them and what might solidify the relationship between the university and the community. Furthermore, they learned about the perspectives some citizens hold of the University of Douala, including a sense that the University of Douala operates like an 'ivory tower.' On the other hand, community members felt that faculty members and university administrators truly listened to their concerns and recognized the need for change in higher education culture and practices. This researcher views this as the first step in building trust and removing misunderstandings. In the end, what emerged from the exchange was a consensus

about the nature of the relationship between the University of Douala and the community. Much has been said about what constitutes civic participation in higher education and what outcomes can be considered from engaging teaching and research in the community. Higher education institutions must move beyond traditional roles to understand how the community views citizen participation.

Lastly, the researcher's discussions with participants created a new understanding of the social responsibility of the University of Douala: there are not enough citizen voices to advocate for human and social development issues. This lack of citizen voices may result from the corporate nature that the university has adopted, which tends to suppress public advocacy. This corporate nature of the university slows down the decision making process. The University of Douala has justified this attitude by the fact that the needs of the community may not always be aligned with the mission and priorities of the university. On the other hand, participants believed that the University of Douala is a "super-organization" with endless resources. Given its size and assets, these expectations are understandable. The reality is that the University of Douala is struggling financially and often does not have available resources to make a significant impact in the community. Over the years, a number of faculty members at the University of Douala have given serious consideration to the concept of citizen participation. They created a group of faculty members and staff to explore areas of common interest and make suggestions to enhance the university's efforts to contribute to human and social development.

Summary

This chapter discussed the findings presented in the previous chapter with regard to the contribution of the University of Douala to human and social development as well as strategies to engage stakeholders. Also, the barriers that negatively impact the contribution of the

University of Douala to human and social development were discussed. In sum, the University of Douala acts as a community development agency, providing important support to the community. In order to maximize its contribution, the university has to create an appropriate environment and consider stakeholder engagement and partnerships as strategies aiding its efforts to achieve national development goals. The real challenge is developing strategies for the University of Douala to capitalize its resources and to reform an educational system that follows colonial models.

The next chapter will provide a summary of chapters, reflective comments on the contribution of the University of Douala in human and social development, implications for future research, limitations, recommendations and closing remarks.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

This study investigated the contribution of HEIs to human and social development within the Cameroonian context through a qualitative case study of social responsibility at the University of Douala. Interviews and a photovoice project provided data to answer the research questions. Overall, the participants thought that the contribution of HEIs could be maximized and have greater outcomes with better community engagement and further consideration of the sociohistorical context of the country. This chapter summarizes the main points of the previous five chapters. Implications of the findings as well as recommendations to help HEIs capitalize on their resources and effectively contribute to human and social development follow.

Summary of Chapters

Chapter 1 presented the many human and social development issues that Cameroon currently faces. The overall purpose of the study was to examine the contribution of HEIs to human and social development through the lenses of USR. Chapter 1 contextualized the study by providing background information about Cameroon and defining key terms such as USR. Finally, Chapter 1 introduced the main questions that guided the study: (a) What is the contribution of Cameroonian HEIs in human and social development? and (b) How can Cameroonian HEIs increase their ability to engage with local communities?

Chapter 2 situated this dissertation in the literature of postcolonial, Freirian, growth pole, and social responsibility theories. I explained my conceptualization of postcolonial and Freire theories, and argued that these theories should come together to understand what has historically framed the contribution of HEIs such as the University of Douala. I reviewed the literature concerning growth pole theory, with a particular focus on HEIs as socioeconomic agents instrumental in generating income, employment, and general prosperity in the areas in which

they operate. Lastly, the concept of social responsibility was discussed, with the view that the contribution of HEIs is enhanced if the tenets of social responsibility are considered.

In Chapter 3, I presented the methodology, showing how the qualitative case study approach is especially relevant for the types of questions proposed in this study. I discussed my positionality, laying out the methods used in the interview and photovoice components of the study for data collection and analysis.

Chapter 4 provided the findings of this study. In this chapter, human and social development issues were framed within the MDGs. The findings included the voices and experiences of participants to make sense of the contribution of the University of Douala. In addition, a survey established the focus of the study. I highlighted the main findings of this study, which identified the University of Douala as a healthcare service provider, innovation center, advocate, and service learning and capacity building agent. The findings also concerned stakeholder engagement and the development of a social responsibility agenda.

The discussion of the themes of this study was the focus of Chapter 5. In this chapter, I provided personal insights on the findings based on the research questions. I presented details of the contribution of the University of Douala in human and social development, factors that could maximize that contribution, as well a number of barriers to this contribution. These barriers included the educational system inherited from the colonial past and poor leadership. Overall, this dissertation draws attention to the potential contribution of Cameroonian HEIs, but more specifically to the University of Douala in human and social development.

Retrospective

Since Cameroon achieved its independence in 1960, HEIs have been under the authority of the Ministry of Higher Education. This ministry prepares and implements government policies

on higher education and scientific research. Beyond their basic function of creating and disseminating knowledge, HEIs assume a civic role. Playing a supporting role to the community is a core mission of all public HEIs in Cameroon. Therefore, teaching and research activities must contribute to human and social development issues. The main contribution of these efforts after independence was to prepare the population to manage government entities, schools, universities, and private institutions, and to deal with the challenging issues of society. In the implementation of that mission, USR has the ability to become a connector between such knowledge and practice.

The University of Douala provided the case study to examine the contribution of HEIs to human and social development via social responsibility. Until a few years ago, social responsibility in Cameroon was a term used only in the corporate world to express corporations' efforts to share benefits with the community. The concept of CSR has encouraged corporations to start paying attention to human rights, the conditions of their employees, consumer protection, and environmental issues. It is within the same context that the University of Douala has found a way to unify their resources and join forces with the community to solve human and social development issues framed within the MDGs. Although the University of Douala has not fully or officially adopted the concept of social responsibility, the university continues to engage its citizens. For students, USR means doing service-learning projects while receiving college credit; for staff, it means creating a working environment with both a vibrant campus life and the implementation of social action projects. However, there is no specific entity at the University of Douala that manages its social responsibility. The University of Douala hopes to extend its activities and become more visible in the community. By doing so, the university will become more liable for its actions, accountable to society, and invested in social responsibility.

Implications for Future Research and Practice

The findings generated from this study have implications for future research and practice. In Cameroon, the social responsibility of HEIs is relatively weak. This section focuses on the consideration that future researchers and practitioners should give to the role of HEIs in communities. This study is a snapshot of the contribution of the University of Douala in human and social development. A longitudinal study that includes both public and private institutions from various regions of Cameroon over a year could provide interesting insight into how different HEIs fulfill their social responsibility and how they adjust to the needs of their surrounding communities.

The transferability of the findings of this research may be strengthened by identifying specific activities that have been conceived by the University of Douala to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues suggested by participants in this study. Additional research might also compare how Cameroonian HEIs and Western HEIs fulfill their social responsibility, therefore encouraging these organizations to learn from each other. What potential new forms of civic engagement can HEIs pursue in order to widen their contribution? These findings suggest that there are engagement possibilities for HEIs. Partnership between HEIs, the government, the private sector, and civil society has the potential to have a lasting impact on the population. The same partnership can assist the community in leveraging local resources to shape a better future for neighborhood residents. These partnerships and collaborations may accomplish more than what a single organization can. As stated, HEIs have come to be recognized as important contributors to the landscape of human and social development. However, they must become more active in a wide range of specialized roles such as democracy building, conflict resolution,

and human rights work. To that end, a number of HEIs have specialized in community-based participatory research to frame the problem and solutions with the people affected by the issues.

In general, activities conducted at the University of Douala to support the community have had a great effect on health, education, community and economic development, and environmental practices. To further improve human and social development, practitioners should be aware that HEIs are a pillar of development and that the government and nongovernmental agencies alone cannot drive the development agenda of Cameroon. Activities that appeared to be successful at the University of Douala are those that brought together practitioners such as faculty members, staff, administrators, businessmen, elected official, students, and community leaders. The implementation of service-learning projects was a practical way for the community and the university to yield results. Also, it is important to target the population and their specific needs to maximize the impact of each activity. For example, in this study, the University of Douala worked with farmers to improve their palm oil production; students fought the proliferation of HIV/AIDS through education programming; and neighborhood residents were provided with electricity as a result of a solar panel project.

Limitations of the Study

This case study, inductive-based methodology provided a unique epistemological base for an exploratory study of the contribution of HEIs in human and social development. However, this process is not without limitations. This section discusses the principal limitations of the study. The first principal limitation of this study is that it employed only one case study. Studies that use small numbers of cases may be criticized for generating findings that are context-specific, and therefore lack the ability to be generalized to other situations and contexts. In this study, the findings are not representative of all Cameroonian HEIs or HEIs more generally.

However, in studies that are aimed at developing an understanding of issues like the contribution of HEIs in human and social development, it is the depth of the understanding gained that is of importance in case study research.

The second limitation of this study was the limited amount of time the researcher spent in the field. The researcher went to Cameroon twice for a total of 6 months. Data collection began as soon as the researcher arrived, however, due to the help of community stakeholders. Time constraints further prohibited formal evaluation of the photovoice project's impact on participants and their community. However, participants and others voluntarily offered comments related to their involvement in the project.

Finally, I reviewed a number of documents with information stating that the University of Douala has been looking for a way to develop and sustain partnerships with the community. Some documents indicated that the university hopes to work with businesses by providing consultancy, academic or graduate placements, professional development, and entrepreneurship coaching. Through the review of those documents, it appeared that the University of Douala supports talented athletes living in the community who are not enrolled at the university. In the near future, the University of Douala is looking to expand its health clinic to accommodate the growing number of students as well as community members. The documents mentioned above did not have reliable and consistent information to be included as a data source for this study. As mentioned previously, the university does not have a data collection system in place to track all its involvement in the community and its impact.

Recommendations

The following recommendations aim to help HEIs in Cameroon to maximize their potential as an agent of development to create transformational change:

1. HEIs in Cameroon should coordinate and facilitate activities that invite community/university collaboration. Through these activities, the university provides highly trained professionals that work with neighborhood residents to improve their quality of life. This also makes the university more accessible. The university needs the support of all sectors.
2. The relationship between HEIs in Cameroon and the community is not always clear. University social responsibility needs to be explained to the larger public, which means that HEIs in Cameroon need to evaluate their role in society regularly.
3. Service learning should be redefined in order to identify areas of improvement. Service learning should be used as an opportunity for HEIs in Cameroon to bring real-life experience to students by engaging students in neighborhood projects.
4. Each HEI in Cameroon needs to create a university social responsibility team comprised of faculty members, students, staff, community members, and government officials to define strategies that will ensure that the university is fulfilling its mission. This will reinforce the role of the university in the community.
5. Cameroonian HEIs need to provide a space for faculty members, staff, students, and the community to reflect on various human and social development issues. This should include producing documentation for all activities that include the involvement of HEIs as well as the teaching of social responsibility so stakeholders' perceptions of social responsibility can be determined before designing programs.
6. Cameroonian HEIs need to provide their administration and community leaders with knowledge and skills to advance human and social development and manage policy

reforms. This will improve their social involvement and facilitate institutional and community participation and commitment.

7. Cameroonian HEIs should engage in practical initiatives that show their commitment to human and social development. Consequently, they should adopt a system integrating social responsibility that promotes a routine that will allow institutional change.
8. Cameroonian HEIs should promote, manage, and facilitate the organization of a network of stakeholders that encourage the collaboration of HEIs and the community, to which they can contribute highly skilled individuals.

Dissemination of Recommendations

The methodology used in this study allowed for an early dissemination of the findings. Photovoice participants presented preliminary findings of the study in the neighborhoods surrounding the university and to the faculty members, staff, and students at the University of Douala. Photovoice participants agreed to do additional presentations and use the techniques learnt during the photovoice process to engage more people and bring awareness to the role of HEIs in society.

My goal is to share the knowledge generated from this study with the hope that Cameroonian HEIs will make use of the recommendations proposed in this research. Hence, I will create awareness and gain exposure about the work that has been done in this study as well as look for collaborators to organize an observatory of university social responsibility. I intend to return to the University of Douala and facilitate the creation of a network of HEIs in Cameroon aimed at researching and promoting USR. This network will be comprised of different stakeholders that implement strategies to engage Cameroonian HEIs to contribute more to human

and social development issues. Through this network, research about USR will be conducted, developing best practices and policies for a broader dissemination.

Closing Remarks

This study established HEIs as partners and contributors to human and social development. By nature, HEIs have social responsibilities because of their mandate to teach, research, and support the community. If businesses are motivated by profit, in a way, HEIs have no other responsibility than to contribute to human and social development. Even businesses have to figure out a way to fulfill additional responsibilities to society that go beyond merely making a profit for shareholders. This has been the context in which social contribution (CSR) arose: charitable giving, volunteering, and advocating to support the common good. One could argue that most of these efforts are public relations; however, even if this is the case, good things still come out of it.

Social responsibility is very different within HEIs because they have always held a role to contribute to society. To ask whether HEIs have social responsibility that goes beyond teaching and research can be related to CSR. However, this is often met with a degree of resistance in the university community. The rate of participation of HEIs in community projects or charitable giving is lower than many corporations, and there is a greater lack of clarity about the social responsibility of HEIs. One explanation is that HEIs conceive that they are already doing plenty in their society, educating young people and doing research that is important for society. Therefore, feelings of outrage may arise about external or internal forces demanding more. However, at its core, the mission statement of each university includes its faculty, students, and staff engaging together with the community in problem solving that involves community work with community outcomes. Even if HEIs did not engage in community work, it would not

undercut the social responsibility that HEIs already have to educate and train young people to engage in socially important research. So the fundamental framing of the contribution of HEIs to human and social development is only worthwhile if HEIs do, in fact, fulfill both their traditional mission and social mandate. First and foremost, the traditional mission must be clear to lead faculty, staff, and students in their social responsibility.

The challenges and opportunities confronting HEIs are that they are under the harsh glare of economic difficulties, and they are dedicating themselves more and more to training and less and less to educating. Sometimes students can go through an entire program and get very high quality of training and very little education. While some attempts have been made to encourage students to take electives to achieve breadth in knowledge categories, these attempts do not achieve this aim with any coherence: students lack a powerful, integrated view of their civilization and the role they must play within it. In this sense, HEIs have a social responsibility.

My personal view is that HEIs are doing relatively well in training but not that well in educating, as stated above, and demonstrating short term-economic gains from a liberal arts or humanistic education is hard to accomplish. This is not something that can be converted into financial currency. However, this type of learning provides the background people need to be effective leaders and to care about human and social development. Overall, HEIs are embedded in the city and in the community. Their faculty and staff live in that place. They are affected by the fate of that community. For this reason, HEIs must be very vigilant in knowing how the community around them is doing. The University of Douala especially has to be aware of the community as it is one of the main and stable employers in the city of Douala and has become one of the major stakeholders of the city as a result.

A university's social responsibility stems both from it caring about its surrounding communities and also from an enlightened self-interest—this is why the University of Douala has been engaged in neighborhood projects. It realized that it could contribute to the human and social needs of citizens. My personal view is that people should continuously push the university to be more effective in its social responsibility and therefore more helpful in terms of the university's effort to improve internally and externally. However, there are differences of opinion as to what constitutes improvement. This is where the university should be self-conscious and ask itself ethical questions such as, “what should we be doing now?” Also, HEIs should ask how the community is doing. This recursive process requires that HEIs ask both questions at the same time.

Neighborhoods and HEIs have their own strengths, resources, and assets that can be meaningfully brought together to tackle human and social development issues even though each represents different cultures, values, and beliefs. The integration of these partnerships into the everyday university activities of research, teaching, and community service benefits community improvement projects of all kinds. In the case of HEIs in Cameroon, creating partnerships between community organizations is important. It is a way of linking HEIs' assets with community opportunity and challenges. As such, all HEIs in Cameroon should be encouraged to foster those kinds of partnerships. As a strategy to help establish that link, HEIs can use service learning as a pedagogy for students to develop their intrinsic ability to lead and contribute, which is part of the mission of HEIs: to create people who will be helpful in their communities.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Guide

1. Introduction and appreciation

Thank you so much for allowing me to interview you today. Before I begin this interview, I would like to briefly introduce myself, my study and clarify some confidentiality issues.

2. Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role/contribution of Cameroonian HEIs in human and social development. Specifically, I am interested in your perspective on the relationship between the University of Douala and its community.

3. Confidentiality

I will only write about your experiences and use a pseudonym to identify you. I will record the interview and audio files will be stored on my laptop. I will be the only one with access to the password. You do have to answer every question. The findings of this study will be made public in the form of presentations and publications.

4. Recording

I will make occasional notes during the interview to give you my full attention. With your permission, I will digitally record our conversation so that I can have the interview transcribed by a professional transcriber. I want you to know that the only people that will listen to the recording will be the transcriber and myself. The transcriber is bound by a contract to only listen

and type out our recorded conversation. If you want to see any part of the transcript, I can provide you with a copy. I will share summaries of this interview with you.

5. Informed Consent Form

Research Title: University Social Responsibility: Achieving Human and Social Development in Cameroon

Researcher: Bertin Ondja'a

This consent form contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate.

Your participation is voluntary.

Please consider information about your participation carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and will receive a copy of the form.

Purpose:

The purpose of this research study is to investigate the role/contribution of Cameroonian HEIs in human and social development and the relationship between the University of Douala and its community.

Procedures/Tasks:

This informed consent document is presented to you prior to your interview to enable you to understand the purpose, risks, benefits and confidentiality associated with this study. With your permission, your voice will be recorded with a tape recorder during the interview. The recording

will be done to make sure that we accurately record and interpret your views. If you do not wish your voice be recorded, please let the researcher know and your responses will be written down on paper instead. Your participation in this study will help generate knowledge about the contribution of HEIs in human and social development.

Duration:

Interviews will last between 50 to 80 minutes.

Risks and Benefits:

You will not encounter risks while participating in the study. The knowledge generated as a result of the study will be important in providing a framework for understanding the role/contribution of the University of Douala in its community. There are no direct benefits to individual participants. The results of the study may be generally beneficial in promoting USR concept in Cameroon. As a token of my appreciation for your participation in this project, you will receive a gift, daily free meal and transportation. If you choose not to receive anything, you may still participate in the study. As a participant, you will not be responsible for any cost associated with this study.

Confidentiality:

No identifiable data will be collected. Precautions will be taken to ensure that interviews recorded do not include identifiable data.

Participant Rights:

You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty. If you choose to participate in the

study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty. An Institutional Review Board (IRB) responsible for human subjects research at the University of Cincinnati has reviewed and approved this research project.

Signing the consent form:

I have read this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.

Printed name of participant _____

Signature of participant _____

Date and time _____

Investigator: _____

I have explained the research to the participant before requesting the signature(s) above. A copy of this form has been given to the participant.

Printed name of co-investigator _____

Signature of co-investigator _____

Date and time _____

6. Interview Questions

The following questions address Cameroonian notions of university social responsibility, civic engagement, and social justice and further address the role of Cameroonian universities in society and how universities can contribute to the achievement of human and social development.

Key: Q: The questions will be available in English and French (Cameroonian's Official languages).

STUDENTS

Selection criteria: Current student at the university of Douala.

Q: What does 'social responsibility' mean to you?

Q: What does 'university social responsibility' mean to you?

Q: What does "community engagement" mean to you?

Q: What does "social justice" mean to you?

Q: What does "millennium development goals" mean to you?

Q: What is the role of your university in the community?

Q: What are the social issues in your community?

Q: How does the university of Douala engage with the community?

Q: What Kind of social issues your university has been engaged in?

Q: Do you think social issues ought to be solved by the university? Please explain.

UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS (FACULTY, STAFF OR ADMINISTRATORS)

Selection criteria: Faculty, staff or administrator members of at the university of Douala

Q: What is the role of Cameroonian Universities in society today?

Q: What does “University Social Responsibility” mean to you?

Q: What are the mission and goals of the university of Douala?

Q: What does “ the millennium development goals ” mean to you?

Q: How can the millennium development goals be achieved through university social responsibility?

Q: How does your university prepared students for “social responsibility”?

Q: What does “social justice” mean to you?

Q: What are the responsibilities of your university?

Q: What does “community engagement” mean to you?

Q: What does your university do to fulfill its social responsibility mission?

Q: What are the characteristics of a social responsible university?

Q: What activities has your university done to fulfill its social responsibility?

Q: What specific activities, programs or services would help students engage actively in

community service?

Q: What social, political, financial, cultural or other challenges would be encountered in designing and implementing social responsibility programs?

Q: Describe your University.

Q: What specific characteristics do you want others to know about university social responsibility at your university?

P: What recommendations would you make to enable Universities to contribute to the achievement of the millennium development goals?

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Selection criteria: Resident members

Q: What does “ university social responsibility” mean to you?

Q: What does “community engagement’ mean to you?

Q: What does “social justice” mean to you?

Q: What does “citizenship” mean to you?

Q: What are the responsibilities of a citizen?

Q: What are the responsibilities of the university in regards to the community?

Q: What does “leadership” mean to you?

Q: What is the role of Cameroonian Universities in society today?

Q: How do you think Cameroonian Universities fulfill their role in society?

Q: How should Cameroonian Universities assist the community?

Q: What makes your Community unique?

Q: Describe your Community.

Q: What specific characteristics do you want others to know about your Community

Q: What recommendations would you make to enable Universities to achieve their mission in society?

APPENDIX B

Invitation to Participate in a Photovoice Project

I would like to invite you to be a part of a photovoice project titled: *University Social Responsibility: Achieving human and social development in Cameroon*. You will use a camera as an investigating tool to explore the contribution/role of HEIs in Cameroon. This experience would inform you about USR concept, social issues, the University of Douala as well as help you become an active citizen. Each photovoice session includes discussions about photographs and reflective essays. Please review the consent forms to decide whether or not you want to participate in the study.

B. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role/contribution of HEIs in achieving human and social development in Cameroon. I am especially interested in your perspective on the relationship between the University of Douala and the community. If you are interested in taking part in the photovoice activities, your involvement in the project will last 3 weeks. Approximately 3-5 sessions will take place during that time and each session will last up to two and a half or 3 hours. You will be given a camera for a time frame of two weeks during which you will be asked to take photographs that reflect ideas and issues that you would like to convey to the university or community. There will be no penalty to you if you decide to leave the study.

C. Risks and Benefits

You will not encounter risks while participating in the study. You will be reminded to consider your safety, the legality of taking photos at certain locations and ethical issues while conducting the project.

There are no direct benefits to individual participants. The results of the study may be generally beneficial in promoting USR concept in Cameroon. The knowledge generated as a result of the study will be important in providing a framework for understanding the role/contribution of the University of Douala in the community. As a token of my appreciation for your participation in this project, you will receive a gift, daily free meal and transportation every time there is a photovoice session. If you choose not to receive anything, you may still participate in the study. As a participant, you will not be responsible for any cost associated with this study.

D. Procedures/Tasks:

If you agree to participate in the photovoice project, you will be asked to join other participants to learn about photovoice techniques, how to use a camera and collect photographs that reflect experiences about your community. Each photograph you select to share should have a caption. You are not required to have your name on the photograph. Using those photographs as reference, you will be asked to discuss and write narratives describing the photographs. Also, you will be expected to keep a journal about the photos and what they represent to you. The notes and copies of the journals will be destroyed by cross shred machine. The researcher will keep the photos taken as part of this research project and use them for publications or presentations. Applying the “SHOWED” guideline, you will be asked to choose three photographs and reflect on their meaning.

APPENDIX C

SHOWED Handout

What is really HAPPENING here?

How does this relate to OUR lives? WHY does this problem or strength exist?

How could this image EDUCATE the community or policy makers?

What can we DO about it?

During the photovoice sessions, you will be asked prompt questions to guide the discussions:

Q: What are the missions of HEIs? And which one speaks to you?

Q: Has the University of Douala ever implemented USR concept? If yes, please explain how.

Q: Please talk about the social issues your community faces.

APPENDIX D

Photography Consent Form

I, (print name) _____ agree to have my photograph taken as a part of a photovoice project to explore the contribution/role of HEIs in achieving human and social development in Cameroon. I understand that the photographer is participating a photovoice project to express their perspectives on the role of the University of Douala in its community. I understand that this photo will become the personal property of the photographer and will not be used for any financial gain. I understand that the photographer may share the photo with others as a part of the workshop discussion.

I understand that the photo and narrative may be included in a dissertation and subsequent research reports, professional publications, and other exhibits at national or international venues to disseminate the findings from the study and call for social action. I understand my name will not be used under any circumstances if the photo is included. I understand I can withdraw my consent for this photo to be included in the dissertation report or any subsequent professional publications prior to their being printed or exhibited.

This consent form and any information on it will be kept confidentially in a password-protected computer. The principal investigator will be the only one with access to the computer. I understand I am being given a copy of this consent form to keep for my own records.

Signature of person being photographed Print name Date: _____

Signature of photographer Print name Date: _____

APPENDIX E

Photo Release Form

University Social Responsibility: Achieving Human and Social Development in Cameroon

I give permission for public dissemination of my photograph and narrative titled:

I took this photo and wrote this narrative as a participant in the photovoice workshop at the University of Douala to convey my perspective on the contribution/role of HEIs in achieving human and social development in Cameroon carried out by Bertin Ondja'a.

I understand that the photo and narrative may be included in a research report and subsequent professional publications, and other exhibits at national or international venues to disseminate the findings from this study.

I understand that I may choose to have my name listed as the photographer of this photo and the writer of this narrative may choose to have the photo and narrative displayed anonymously or I may choose to have a pseudonym used.

Include this photo and narrative in the research report and subsequent professional publications with my name listed as the photographer/narrator.

Include this photo and narrative in the research report and subsequent professional publications as taken by an anonymous photographer/narrator.

Include this photo and narrative in the research report and subsequent professional publications as taken by a photographer/narrator with a pseudonym.

Include this photo and narrative in any exhibit/presentation with my name listed as the

photographer/narrator.

Include this photo and narrative in any exhibit/presentation as taken by an anonymous photographer/narrator.

Include this photo and narrative in any exhibit/presentation as taken by a photographer/narrator with a pseudonym.

I understand at any time prior to the printing of the research report, I may choose to withdraw my consent for this photo and narrative to be included.

I understand that I may also decide to change the way I am identified as the photographer/narrator at any time prior to the printing of the report or subsequent professional publications. Once the report or subsequent professional publication is published, I may choose to withdraw my release of this photo/narrative for possible future publications.

I understand I may withdraw my permission for this photo to be included in any public or professional exhibit at any time prior to the opening of such exhibit.

I understand I may decide to change the way I am identified as the photographer/narrator at any time prior to the opening of such exhibit.

I understand that I am being given a copy of this consent form for my own records.

Photographer/narrator signature Date: _____

APPENDIX F

Survey Questions

Question 1

Demographics

Professors

Staff

Students

Neighborhood Residents

City Officials

Question 2

How well are you familiar with the millennium development goals (MDGs)?

- a) Extremely Familiar
- b) Very Familiar
- c) Moderately Familiar
- d) Slightly Familiar
- e) Not at all familiar

Question 3

In addition to teaching and research, should the UD invest in human and social development issues (health, housing, education, employment, women issues, poverty, etc)?

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree

- c) Neither Agree
- e) Disagree
- d) Strongly Disagree

Question 4

Should the University build capacity of neighborhood residents by providing free workshop and access to university's amenities?

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neither Agree
- e) Disagree
- d) Strongly Disagree

Question 5

To your knowledge, has the university ever been involved in a community projects?

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neither Agree
- e) Disagree
- d) Strongly Disagree

Question 6

Do you think the university should partner with neighborhood residents and other entities to improve human and social conditions?

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree

- c) Neither Agree
- e) Disagree
- d) Strongly Disagree

Question 7

The MDGs deal with 8 human and social development issues, which one would you like the university to focus on?

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality
4. Eradicate child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development