

Trends and Orientations of Cameroonian Students upon Graduation from Chinese Higher Education Institutions

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Doi: 10.23918/ijsses.v8i3p269

Abstract: This study investigates the trends and orientations upon graduation of increasing Cameroonian students in China. Its purpose is to know where these students really choose to go after graduating from Chinese higher education institutions. By using a mixed method approach, including questionnaire and interview, the findings provide evidence that many Cameroonian students in Chinese higher education institutions do not show a real interest for returning home despite a tightened employment environment in China. Some of the respondents prefer to go in adventure in other foreign countries. Others do not have a pre-defined direction but will cherish the opportunities that may arise. Another group, on the contrary, would like to stay in China. The unconducive and hostile conditions in the home country were reported as demotivating factor for both the return and the contribution to the home country's development from afar. Thus, there is a critical need for Cameroon and African countries in general to create conditions for a good environment of competence transfer by these graduates even though they remain in their host countries or choose to go elsewhere.

Keywords: Cameroonian students, Student mobility, Trends and orientations, Chinese higher education institutions

1. Background

The internationalization of education has taken a tremendous step in today's globalization. It has dominated both research and policy at national and international levels. International student mobility has particularly received increasing policy attention in recent years' (OECD, 2018). However, the review of literature shows that there is a sharp decline in studies focusing on origin countries. Research mainly focuses, among others, on policy reforms, diversification and emergence of new destination countries, and issues related to international students in their host countries. The well-known brain drain question has caught less attention, yet the flow from less developed countries has ever known such an increase, with unfortunately an unclear positive impact on origin countries. Taking the case of Africa, studies reveal that

Received: July 19, 2021

Accepted: September 9, 2021

Guiaké, M., Mangué, C.L.D., & Gonondo, J. (2021). Trends and Orientations of Cameroonian Students upon Graduation from Chinese Higher Education Institutions. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies*, 8(3), 269-283.

even though African students account for a small share of the worldwide total number of internationally mobile students, African countries have higher rates of outbound students than any other region (Campus France, 2019; Kritz, 2016). In 2017, 4.5% of Sub-Saharan African students are in mobility compared to the world average of 2% (Campus France, 2019).

Moreover, the mobility of African students within region is not as important as it is in other parts of the world. The direction is mostly from Africa to other regions. The discourse portraying that students' mobility benefits both host and origin countries might let them no longer struggle for the retention, return, and contribution of their nationals abroad. A number of policy responses on brain drain had been put forward in some few countries but the results have not been clear. The migration from Africa, especially students' migration, has been continuously growing over time. Moreover, the demand for skills that African students go abroad to learn is still high on the continent.

1.1 Reasons of Increasing African Students in China

As the biggest sending country worldwide, China has become one of the fastest new emergent countries for study destinations. It is since 2015 the third most significant students' destination country in the world after the US and the UK (Lu et al., 2018; Jiani, 2016). With a vision of reaching 500,000 international students by 2020, which is already achieved since 2017 (Wen & Hu, 2019), China is attracting many international students across the globe (Huang, 2003; Jiani, 2016; Lu et al., 2018; Wen et al., 2017; Wen & Hu, 2019), with a large number of Asian and tremendous growth of African students. The rapid development of China-Africa relationship has increased Africans' flow to China and Chinese to Africa (Edeh & Tachago, 2019), with an impressive growth of African students in China (Li, 2018). Although the relationship between Africa and China has a long history, the emergence of the African student community in China is recent.

The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), with its educational cooperation branch, has given a remarkable move to African students to study in Chinese higher education institutions (Cabestan, 2015). Established in 2000, FOCAC is a multilateral cooperation platform with multi-level interactions between China and African countries. The education branch takes an essential place in FOCAC. From the first Ministerial Conference held in 2000 in Beijing to the 2018 Summit also held in Beijing, the education sector has been paid close attention. The action plan includes, among others granting scholarships to African students to study in China; establishing channels of communication between African and Chinese universities for mutual study; setting up an African human resources development fund for personnel; teaching exchange, expanding African disciplines and fields of specialization; establishing a platform for ideas and experience exchange in technical and vocational education and training (TVET); science and technology; agreeing on mutual accreditation of academic degrees, increasing the number of Chinese scholarships; teaching Chinese language in Africa by establishing Confucius institutes; encouraging African languages in Chinese universities (Gonondo, 2017). As a result, although very far behind Asia, Africa has become the second largest region of international students in China. The 2019 statistics from China's Ministry of Education revealed that 81,562 African students studied in China in 2018 (Chinese Ministry of Education (MoE), 2019). Yet, three years before (2015), African students in China occupied the third position behind Asians, and Europeans, (Ewentu, Lou, & Wan, 2017). According to a 2016

Chinese Ministry of Education report, Asia and Africa witnessed a rise of 6.5% and 19.47% respectively (Ewentu, Lou, & Wan, 2017).

Apart from the cooperation as a pulling factor, there are many other reasons, such as developing business connections and learn Chinese language presumed to be the rising international language (Breeze & Moore, 2017). China's education quality improvement due to a heavy investment in the sector (Kritz, 2016) and its flourishing economic development (Ding, 2016; Jiani, 2016) also play a significant role in China's attractiveness.

1.2 The Case of Increasing Cameroonian Students in China

Like at the continental level, the relation between Cameroon and China has a long history but has only grown significantly under FOCAC, with China becoming the first economic partner of Cameroon (Njoya Chapchet, 2019). The relation between both countries goes back to March 26th, 1971, with their establishment of diplomatic ties (Cabestan, 2015; Nordtveit, 2011). Since then, relations have experienced progressive development. Today, China's involvement in Cameroon includes areas, such as drinking water supply, medicine, road and port infrastructure, hydroelectricity, social housing, civil aviation telecommunications and, of course, education (Cabestan, 2015; Chine Magazine, 2018).

In education, namely higher education, the cooperation between Cameroon and China is excellent, according to a speech addressed by the Secretary General of Cameroon's Ministry of Higher Education, Wilfred Gabsa Nyongbet during a ceremony to bid farewell to 128 Cameroonian students who were going to study in China in 2019 under Chinese governments and Confucius Institute scholarships (China Global Television Network (CGTN), 2019). On the same occasion, the Chinese ambassador in Cameroon, Wang Yingwu said the number of Chinese scholarships awarded to Cameroonian students has been increasing since 2006, with 300 out of 3000 Cameroonian students studying in China are under Chinese government scholarships (CGTN, 2019). The calculation from these figures reveals that 90% of Cameroonian students in China are self-funding. This shows that Cameroonian are interested in studying in China independently of scholarship offer. With 3000 students studying in Chinese higher education institutions, China has become the third-largest study destination for Cameroonian students behind Germany and France. As shown in Table 1, Germany and France rank at the top with 7,214 and 4,773 students respectively (UNESCO, 2021), followed by China 3000 students.

Table 1: Top 10 Cameroonians most popular study destinations

Order	Destination	Number	Year
1	Germany	7,214	2019
2	France	4,773	2019
3	China	3,000	2019
4	Belgium	1,633	2019
5	Canada	1,257	2019
6	United States	1,219	2019
7	Italy	930	2019
8	Tunisia	697	2019
9	South Africa	625	2019
10	Morocco	584	2019

(Data compiled from UNESCO Institute of Statistics 2021 and (CGTN, 2019).

Thus, the cooperation between the two countries has significantly contributed to attract Cameroonian students to China. Studies show that the result of diversified educational, economic and cultural bilateral cooperation of China with the outside world has played a vital role in pulling international students to China. Jiani's (2016) survey revealed that many international students choose Chinese universities because of the "excellent" relationship between their home countries and China. Wen, Hu, & Hao (2017) confirmed that China's international relations engagement has expanded its inbound students. Moreover, it is important to mention that China does not only cooperate with African countries but also many countries across the world and, above all, with its Asian peers which constitute the biggest sending countries of international students to the country.

In a perspective of curbing the rate of staying in the host countries, this study looks, based on Cameroonian students' trends and orientations upon graduation, at whether the increasing inflow of African students to China can be considered as an alternative solution to get back African talents since the recruitment of international students after graduation is still low due to the tightened foreign residency and work permit policy. In fact, according to the Chinese authorities, they do not aim to retain international students but rather to train them so as they go back to serve their home countries. However, although this aim of training international students to serve their home countries, the non-improvement of pushing factors at home and some attractive conditions in the host countries remain a big challenge. This situation leads to the question: Where do Cameroonian students in Chinese universities go upon graduation? What is their plan when still studying?

The article begins with a background, including the reasons of increasing African students flow in China, and those of Cameroonian students specifically. It is followed by a literature review. After a description of the research method, the findings and discussion have been presented. The article ends by a conclusion that synthesizes arguments and major points.

2. Literature Review

Like the push-pull model that motivates students to study abroad, the direction to take upon graduation is affected by similar conditions at home and in the host countries, or even in other countries. The push-pull model which is mainly used to explain the factors that make them decide to pursue studies abroad, are also quite applicable when looking for the employment at the end of studies abroad. In this later, one can rather speak of keep-pull factors, with keep factors referring to the factors that retain graduates in their host countries, such as employment opportunities, conducive work environment and high income or salary. The pull factors, in this case, refer to the factors that may attract graduates from their host countries back home. It is a reverse movement to the “pull” when one decides to study abroad. The home country’s pull back factors may mean the improvement or elimination of push factors at home. That is because push factors sometimes are those factors that prevent graduates to return. In other words, once push factors are reduced or eliminated, not only students have less interest in studying abroad but also the return of national graduates abroad will be easier. In line with Oucho (2008) who argued that as long as the push factors in the home country will not be addressed, the massive outflow from origin countries cannot be slowed down; one can also say that as long as the push factors in the home country will not be addressed, the return from abroad cannot be possible despite the strengthening restrictions from some receiving countries preventing the stay upon graduation.

2.1 Overview of International Student Trends upon Graduation in the world

Plethora of data exist on inbound and outbound students across the world, but few existing studies show the availability of data on the rate of returnees and those who remain in the host countries. Do they return to the home country, do they stay in the host country, or end up in a new country (Bogdanovska, 2018)? It is a brain gain for the sending country in the first case, and a brain drain in the latter (Gérard & Sanna, 2017). The few existing adumbrations about some statistics showing the rate of remaining or returning students only focus on some institutions or fields of study from the host countries. According to a research carried out by Felbermayr and Reczkowski (2014) cited in (Gérard & Sanna, 2017), the average retention rate in a computed fraction of incoming students that stay after graduation in some Anglo-Saxon countries, including New Zealand, Australia, and the US, is about 70%. A quite same result was revealed by Van Bouwel and Veugelers (2014) when studying the migration pattern of European Ph.D. students in a US university. The investigation showed that around 70% of these Ph.D. candidates stayed in the United States for their first job (Gérard & Sanna, 2017). Young-Min Cho has also carried out cross-sectional survey research on Asian international students in the United States to know about their migration intention after graduation, whether they plan to stay in the US or go back. The researcher found that nearly 80% of them expressed a desire to stay in the United States, even if it is not to stay lifelong. Similar investigation conducted by Banjong & Olson (2016) on the issues and trends of international students in the United States found out that while some of the international students return to their countries of origin or move on to other countries to seek employment upon completion of their studies, a large number of them remain in the US.

The impact of those mentioned staying rate on origin countries is perceptible in many countries, especially African countries. Sonkeng et al. (2014) revealed, for example, that:

"Africa lost 60,000 professionals (doctors, university lecturers, engineers, etc.) between 1985 and 1990, and has been losing an average of 20,000 annually ever since [...]. There are, for instance, more than 21,000 Nigerian doctors practising in the USA alone while Nigeria's healthcare system suffers from a cruel lack of medical practitioners; 60 percent of the doctors and dentists, 20 percent of university lecturers, 30 percent of engineers, and 45 percent of surveyors had gone to work abroad".

Similarly, in Ghana at a certain time, 40% of university faculty positions, 60% of polytechnic faculty positions, 65% of elementary school positions became vacant (Manuh, Asante, & Djangmah, 2005) due to the talents' migration. Based on these numbers, one can conclude that the staying rate of African international mobile students is critical to the point of lacking qualified human resources in many sectors at home.

2.2 Direction's Trends of Cameroonian International Student upon Graduation

Like many other countries in the world and especially African peers, considered as sending countries, Cameroon is experiencing student mobility and its effects. It is ranked among the top first sending African countries (Campus France, 2017), representing in 2019, 8% of the total national enrollment in tertiary education, far higher than the world's largest sending countries, namely China and India possessing only 2.3% and 1.3% respectively (UNESCO, 2021).

With these high data on outbound Cameroonian students, which are at least known, there is no data on how many of them are coming back upon completion of their studies abroad. Only few studies reveal information on those who have made their way in the work milieu abroad. Data are not complete and exhaustive on how many really remain abroad.

According to a survey administered by the Cameroon National Medical Order, "if we train 100 doctors each year in our medical schools, nearly 1,000 young Cameroonians are knocking on the doors of medical schools outside the country" (Ndoumbe, 2018). Similarly, Tetanye Ekoe, a professor of medicine, stated that Cameroon counts only one medical doctor for more than 10,000 inhabitants. But, the number of Cameroonian doctors abroad, for instance, is estimated to around 500 doctors in Belgium, more than 1,000 in Germany, more than 3,000 in France, nearly 2,000 in the USA and Canada. It is also mentioned that nearly 30% of the young doctors trained in Cameroon emigrate each year to those countries Ekoe, T. (2015, December 3). Other studies have revealed that 40% of highly qualified Cameroonians work abroad, namely in Europe and the United States, with 12000 engineers working in Germany only. A study carried out by Ngwé (2014) on the Globalization and international mobility of Cameroonian students revealed that 43,9% of the students clearly expressed their choice of staying in the host country or at least work in international organizations in other countries.

In conclusion, in many countries in the world as well as in Cameroon, the directional tendency of international students upon graduation seems to be in detriment of sending countries. This is because neither return nor the contribution from afar to home countries is significant. Literature shows that compared to the sending countries, destination country's policies are more likely to be effective when it comes to the policies and strategies of student mobility and the benefits to make from. Strategies in

destination countries are very attractive and to some extent aggressive (Ding, 2016; Campus France, 2019).

The contribution of this study is however to examine the trends and orientations of students (Cameroonian students) in a country (China) where policies and strategies regarding the retention is not developed and even restricted. Many studies revealed that China's engagement in international education is different from other receiving countries' objectives of addressing declining fertility rates, aging population, and skill shortages in some key areas. Retaining international talents has not been for a long time their objective. The country's talent recruitment remains far behind many other destination countries that have even fewer international students. In fact, many scholars agree that China's primary motivation for hosting international students is attributed to the gain of international prestige and soft power (Lee, Jon, & Byun, 2016; Wen, Hu, & Hao, 2017; Parr, 2018). The aim is therefore to contribute to the literature on a probable difference that may exist on international students' trends upon graduation from such country and other countries which develop policies to retain talents.

3. Research Method

This study applies a mixed method design, in which apart from government documents that served as literature to get general information on higher education cooperation and an overview of student mobility trend, the questionnaire and interview were also used. Both tools' content distributed to Cameroonian students mainly examined the orientations and trends of increasing African students in China on their direction upon graduation. In total, 202 students from 90 higher education institutions participated in the study. Major investigations' themes include some basic information and their intentions and plan after graduation.

From the respondents' demographic information, 140 (69.31%) were males, and 62 (30.69%) were females. 45.05% of all respondents were between 26-30 years old, and this interval constitutes the youngest cohort. 27.23% was between 20-25, and 19.31 was between 31-35. Only two (2) respondents have less than 20 years old, and another two (2) above 40, but less than 46 years old. Regarding the study's qualifications, 54 (26.73%) were in bachelor programs, 79 (39.11%) in master, 37 (18.32%) in doctorate, and 15,84% non-determined.

The questionnaire was designed using a Chinese online survey system "Wenjuanxing" then distributed via WeChat to 4 different large groups of Cameroonian students in China from May 12th to June 28th, 2020. Semi-open-ended questions and closed questions, comprising various items such as scaled items, ranked items, checklist items, and free-response items, were formulated.

As for interview, it further involved 25 (among the total of 202 questionnaire's participants) selective Cameroonian students. The use of selective or purposeful sampling technique, which is commonly consistent with qualitative method, is due to additional information that might not be collected through questionnaire. For this reason, key participants have been identified to provide detailed information. The selection of interview's participants was based on some reasons that comprise among others, the type of scholarship and whether or not a participant is "information-rich", regardless of the scholarship. The former refers to all who applied through the Cameroonian Ministry of Higher Education, meaning those

selected by the Cameroonian government. This group of students possess additional information that other students may not have due to their status of scholarship students. They went through different process and contract with the home government. Due to the travelling restrictions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic during data collection period, we mostly conducted phone call interviews in order to reach 25 participants from different HEIs.

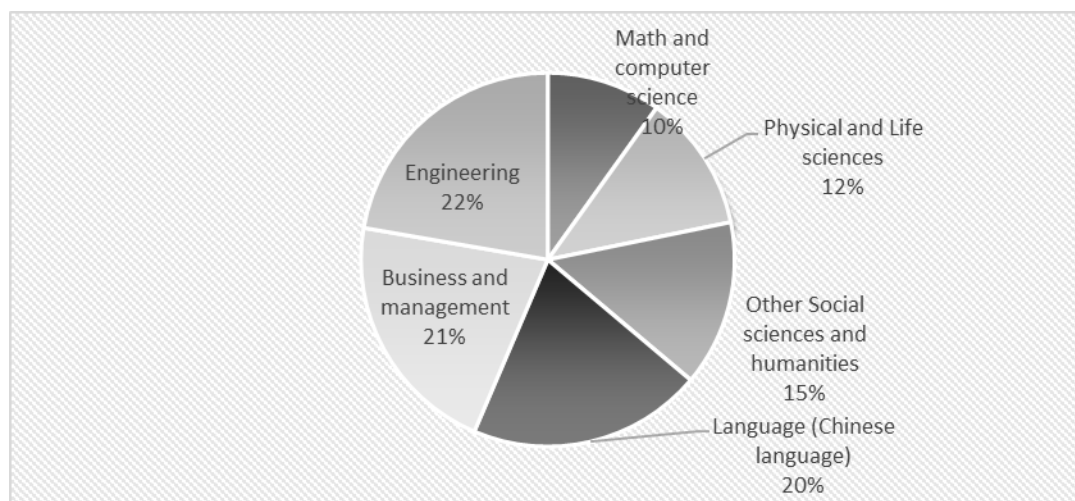
Upon data collection, we adopted a thematic analysis. Various themes were broken down into respondents' relevant profile, students' intentions and trends upon graduation, their fields of study, their opinion about the home country and its policies towards them. After a coding process, the researchers proceeded by describing, interpreting, and understanding data from each instrument in relation to the different mentioned themes.

4. Major Findings

4.1 Analysis of Respondents Relevant Profile

The debate on Cameroonian students studying abroad in relation to their plan upon graduation and, by extension their contribution to the development of their home country implies the analysis of many factors. These factors are among others the fields of study and the educational levels. These two factors are very crucial to know who can contribute significantly to development of the home country. In this perspective, of the data collected under demographic and basic information, the respondents' fields of study and the educational levels have been provided.

As for the respondents' fields of study, many have been reported. However, to facilitate the analysis, they have been categorised into six (6) main domains, namely engineering, mathematics and computer science, physical and life science, business and management, language (Chinese language), and other social sciences and humanities.



Source: Field Survey, 2020
Figure 1: Distribution of respondent by field of study

Engineering (electrical engineering, mining engineering, agricultural mechanization engineering, manufacturing, mechanical engineering, solar energy, hydropower) and business management (e-commerce, financial management, international economics and trade, and enterprise management) are the top largest disciplines that attract Cameroonian students in China, with both together representing 43% of the respondents.

Regarding the educational level, the human capital theory reveals that the more highly educated you are, the more contribution you can make to the socio-economic development. From this consideration, knowing the educational level of the Cameroonian international students in higher education institutions abroad is relevant. As mentioned above, the table 4 displays clearly the number and percentage of the respondents' educational levels.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents per educational level

Education Level	Number	Percentage%
Doctorate	37	18.32
Master	79	39.11
Undergraduate	54	26.73
Non-determined	32	15.84
Total	202	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2020

As it can be seen in this table, nearly 60% of the respondents are postgraduates. However, it is worth noting that although many students are highly educated and enrolled in innovative programs, being highly educated and enrolled in innovative and socio-economic development-driven programs do not mean willingness to return or to contribute to the country's development. The following part presents respondents' results on their intentions and trends after graduation.

4.2 Students' Intentions and Trends upon Graduation

Findings from survey questionnaire revealed that 32.67% of Cameroonian international students in China expressed their willingness to go back home and work in Cameroon upon graduation. However, most of them wish to go back after a certain period of working abroad to gain an international working experience. The second largest group (22.77%) reported their flexibility in working wherever the opportunity arises, whereas the third group (21.29%) expressed their interest in moving to other foreign countries. 16.34% of the respondents have not decided where to go after graduation. The last and smallest proportion including only 6.93% of the participants would like to work in China.

As for the interview findings, the vast majority of the participants clearly stated their intention of working abroad upon graduation. Few of them said that they will either follow the work's opportunity or return home.

The above findings' analysis on Cameroonian students shows that despite the return's interest of a slight majority group, only few would like to return right after graduation. Many of them wish to return after a period of time of working abroad. Moreover, with only 32.67% (although the majority share) of the respondents from the questionnaire who showed an interest to return, including those who first would like to work abroad, one notices that Cameroonian students are not really interested in returning home.

In fact, the 21.29 % of those who expressed their interest in moving to other countries would have chosen to work in China if foreign residency and work permit policy were not tightened. Thus, the fact that China does not recruit foreign talents due to the mentioned policy, does not really push Cameroonian students to return to the home country. In this regard, Njoya Chapchet (2019) revealed in a research that the majority of Cameroonian graduates from China either have to leave China or are committed to making choices that do not match their initial aspirations. The author surveyed on the migratory movement of Cameroonian diaspora in China and Canada, and found out that in China, it "is quite rare to find a Cameroonian student who completed his/her training and found a job in his/her field of training". The author revealed that "the majority of young Cameroonian students who graduated in China are generally employed as sales representatives of Chinese companies abroad, translators, interpreters or foreign language teachers" (p. 86).

Similarly, a critical analysis of those (22.77%) respondents from the survey and some interviewees, who reported they can work wherever the opportunity comes across, shows that they more likely end up being employed in those non-initial aspiration jobs because opportunities from the home country seem harder.

For almost all the respondents, including those who plan to return home, those who are not decided whether they will return or not, and those who are not ready to return, they expressed a real worry for the home country government showing no great interest in attracting and improving conditions for the contribution of talents and the diaspora in general.

4.3 Students' Opinions on the Relation of Home Country's Government with to Cameroonian Diaspora

The type of relation that may exist between the diaspora and its home country plays a very important role regarding the return and diverse contributions of the former to the home country. A good relation, for instance, favors the return and contribution of the diaspora. Unfortunately, in the case of Cameroon, many sources show that the relation between Cameroonian diaspora and its home country has been very tense in recent years. For Kenne (2020), the connection has been blurred recently between Cameroonian diaspora and the State of Cameroon. The relationship is visibly unfriendly, and many have somehow cut the umbilical cord with their country. To witness what is mentioned, a respondent said: "the government in place does not show enough willing to attract and improve conditions for contribution". He added that "starting one's own small business also seems challenging due to unprepared business environment, long and complicated administrative procedures". Similar to the above respondent's statement, another participant stated that:

There is just no any institution or policy in place aiming to involve Cameroonian diaspora in key development fields such as science and technology. The diaspora is just considered

as an ‘enemy’ and is regularly politicized while the debate is elsewhere. Thus, we have to fight ourselves.

During the traditional speech to the youth on the occasion of the National Youth Day celebrated on February 11th, 2021, the President of the Republic of Cameroon, aware of the importance of the diaspora for the construction of the country, said:

If you embark on the conquest of the world, come back to build your country. [.....]. It is in so doing that you will effectively contribute to building a strong, united, democratic, decentralized, and emerging Cameroon by 2035. I know you can do it. I count on you.

His call has raised an uproar of reactions in the media and social networks blaming him and his government for not making enough effort in that direction. Many diasporic communities think the president’s invitation is unfortunately limited to a speech. Real initiatives with practical engagement and appropriate conditions must be prepared for physical return or “virtual return” of Cameroonian talents abroad. One member of the Cameroonian diaspora in the United States, as a reaction to the speech in an online TV debate program, said:

If the government is committed, it must define for us priority areas in which we should contribute. It should put all appropriate conditions in place to make it successful because we are ready to contribute, each in his/her field of competence (Afrique Replay TV, 2021).

5. Discussion

When asking any African international student, the reasons of studying abroad, it is more likely to hear answers such as “I would like to learn advanced knowledge and skills to apply them in my country”, or “I would like to learn science and technology for my country”. These statements witness the lack of advanced knowledge and skills in Africa. Ehizuelen (2018) provided evidence that nowhere in the world skills and education are more in demand than in African economies. Similarly, African Economic Outlook report (2020) asserts that Africa still lags behind other developing regions in education and skill development despite some progress in recent decades.

However, despite the willingness of African international students to learn science and technology for the home country, neither their return nor their virtual (from afar) contribution in science and technology is really perceptible in many African countries. Even from China where talents’ retention is not really implemented like in many other destination countries, the return of graduates is not effective. Many of them, as mentioned, prefer to move to other countries or to stay in China but switch to do something not related to their educational background. On the other hand, others decide to pursue their studies in China, even though it was not the initial plan. Thus, many Cameroonian students (graduates) in China are not ready to return. Indeed, the experience shows that even those students who said they will return home after graduation, do not mostly return.

The opinions collected from the respondents in this study regarding the issue of return and contribution to the home country point an accusing finger on the home country’s governments and actors that do not facilitate them conducive conditions in this regard. The problem in Cameroon, according to AFFORD

(2020) is that national development strategies have not, so far, effectively taken into account the viewpoints and intellectual contributions of Cameroonian diaspora and contain few references to the diaspora. A country like China where Cameroonian students are increasingly inflowing, had relied on its talents in the diaspora and transferred scientific and technological competences for the country's development (Rotimi, 2018). Today, China's rise in science and technology has been remarkably influential. The experience of China should inspire many developing countries lacking science and technology to develop their countries. China has integrated science and technology as an important pillar for improving comprehensive national strength, facilitating production and bettering peoples' lives (MOST, 2014). It has since 2006 introduced an ambitious plan to transform the country's economy into a major centre of innovation by the year 2020, and a global leader in sciences and innovation by 2050 (Veugelers, 2017). In this move of realising the plan, African international students enrolled in Chinese HEIs may learn and transfer such innovation to their respective countries.

In almost all sectors in Cameroon such as industry, entrepreneurship, education, infrastructure, and health, the dearth of advanced science and technology is worrisome. The intervention of Cameroonian students, scientists, researchers, and entrepreneurs abroad in these areas can be of utmost importance. It is a matter of motivating them and improving the investment environment for the country's interest and, of course, that of the contributors. They are "ready-made people" who can respond to the many skills' demand in the country. Moreover, studies reveal that reasonable prices associated with transfer and self-grown technical capabilities gears nations to opt for the former (Rotimi, 2018).

6. Conclusion

Based on Cameroonian students, this study attempted to determine the intentions and trends upon graduation of the growing number of African students in Chinese higher education institutions. The investigation showed multiple trends on the direction to take by Cameroonian international students in Chinese HEIs. Trends are among others, (1) returning to the home country, (2) seeking for employment opportunities in other foreign countries, (3) returning to the home country but after a period of working abroad, (4) wherever the opportunities come across, and (5) staying in China. The analysis of these results shows little interest in returning after graduation. The experience shows that even those who openly expressed the willing to return after graduation, many of them may end up by not returning home. Thus, to the curiosity of whether international students may or not easily return from China since the country does not retain international talents, the results reveal that there is no difference from other receiving countries that retain international talents, when it comes to the return to the home country.

Therefore, the study calls for African countries and Cameroon in particular, to be aware that losing human capital costs significantly to the country and Africa, especially in such a case of highly skilled population in which their contribution from afar is controversial. They should put in place favorable conditions for the return and contributions of qualified diaspora to develop key areas of needs in the home countries. Thus, both measures regarding the reduction of mass outflow from home country and the transfer of competence should be a struggle for the continent.

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