Journal of Higher Education and Academic Advancement
Homepage : https://journal.antispublisher.id/index.php/EJHEAA
Email : admin@antispublisher.com

e-ISSN : 3032-1123
JHEAA, Vol. 3, No. 6 June 2026
Page 9-35

Women in University Governance: A Gender Perspective of Financial and Social Leadership in Anglo-Saxon Public Universities in Cameroon

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DOI : https://doi.org/10.61796/jheaa.v3i6.1813

Sections Info

Article history:
Submitted: March 07, 2026
Final Revised: April 26, 2026
Accepted: May 18, 2026
Published: June 02, 2026

Keywords:
Women
University governance
Gender
Financial and Social Leadership
Universities
Cameroon

ABSTRACT

Objective: *This study assessed from a gender perspective, women's financial and social leadership as indicators of university governance in Anglo-Saxon public universities in Cameroon.* ***Method:*** *Guided by two specific objectives and hypotheses relating to financial and social governance; the study employed a concurrent nested mixed-method research design, sampling 411 university stakeholders -including administrative, academic, and support staff, as well as students from the Universities of Bamenda and Buea. Quantitative data was analyzed using R version 4.3.1, while qualitative data was processed through thematic analysis.* ***Results:*** *For financial governance, findings revealed that 74% of stakeholders were generally positive about women's leadership in this domain. While female stakeholders showed a higher approval rating (75%) compared to males (69%), the difference was not statistically significant (p = 0.5772), thereby upholding the null hypothesis. With respect to social governance, the findings reflected widespread agreement (74% overall) on women's contributions. Although female stakeholders were more positive (90.1%) than their male counterparts (78.8%), the difference in mean scores was not statistically significant (p = 0.0847), also upholding the null hypothesis.* ***Novelty:*** *The study recommended that higher education authorities provide more opportunities for women's voices and skills to be integrated into university governance, as they have proven their effectiveness in administration within the institutions under consideration.*

INTRODUCTION

Education remains a fundamental pillar for the economic, social, and political development of any society; and Universities, as the highest centers of formal education, are responsible for molding human resources to meet societal demands. National and international debates have increasingly supported gender equality and meaningful female participation in leadership as essential components of sustainable development, which is corroborated by frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Beijing Platform for Action[1][2]. Despite the intentional measures aimed at fostering women participation, women remain significantly under-represented in senior academic leadership within the Cameroon's higher education sector[3]. While women are often praised for relational leadership styles - characterized by collaboration, caring, and intuition, they continue to face systemic barriers in their attempts to contribute to University governance not only in Cameroon but largely across Africa and the world[4]. This has however not stopped most governments in Africa (including Cameroon) from continuously making structural reforms aimed at integrating women into school leadership and management at all levels of education. This is because, the presence of women in educational leadership roles contributes to sensitivity within the educational system towards the wellbeing of adolescent girls, and help them to begin considering carrier choices with role models of decision makers and leaders [5]. This of course, can only happen if stakeholders' assessment of the role of these women is encouraging. This paper assessed from a gender perspective, women in university governance, focusing specifically on the financial and social leadership roles of women leaders in the Anglo-Saxon public universities of Cameroon.

Historical and conceptual underpinning

Historically, women in pre-colonial Africa often occupied positions that were complementary rather than subordinate to men. In many traditional societies, they served as rulers or public officials with institutionalized power, and the society was largely egalitarian. For instance, the Bantu ethnic groups in the grasslands of West Africa and societies like the Ashanti of Ghana accorded significant power to matriarchs. However, this status was significantly altered with the coming of colonialism, which led to the introduction of patriarchal social institutions. This new system redefined women's societal roles, and primarily relegated them to the domestic sphere and maternal responsibilities [6][7][8].

According to Oni, Joshua[9], the period of colonialism marked the beginning of the advancement of "masculinity of leadership" and the formal marginalization of women from the mainstream of society. Very little has changed since the end of colonialism - African nations have ratified and domesticated numerous international conventions and protocols relating to gender equity and equality, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); but the expected benefits remain limited due to a reluctance to translate these protocols into meaningful and actionable reforms[10]. While women now constitute a large percentage of the teaching corps in education, they remain a minority within the high-level governance structure of educational institutions - including universities[11].

Governance involves the structures, processes, and patterns of authority used to direct and control institutions while ensuring accountability to stakeholders[12]. In the context of higher Education,[13] describe university governance as the structure, processes and policies through which Higher Education Institutions are directed, controlled, and held accountable. It encompasses decision making mechanisms that balance academic autonomy, stakeholder interest and institutional effectiveness. In this piece of work, university governance refers to how decision making in financial and social aspects of governance are handled by university leaders effectively and efficiently.

Financial governance is the "backbone of any organization, ensuring financial stability, compliance with laws, and ethical management of funds and investor confidence. At its core, financial governance refers to the systems, policies and processes that govern how finances are managed within an organization"[14]. University financial governance ensures effective operation of university financial management system, which leads to the achievement of strategic goals and organizational growth [15].

According to Fiador [16] financial governance is crucial to the success and stability of an organization. It involves managing an organization's financial resources to ensure that they are used effectively, efficiently, and in compliance with legal and ethical standards. One of the primary reasons why financial governance is so important is accountability. Notably, a robust financial governance framework provides transparency and accountability to stakeholders, including shareholders, regulators, and the general public[17].

Goddard[18] describe university social governance as the policies, structures, and processes through which HEIs address their social responsibilities including equity, inclusion, community engagement and ethical leadership. University social governance is considered as that aspect of governance where the university leader ensures university's contributions to societal life is beyond academic output. Where the university leaders' interaction with stakeholders is measured, bribery and corruption, maintenance of peace, respect of ethical principles and promotion of diversity and inclusion are all measured. Abaka, [19] posits that university social governance refers to practices adopted by universities to manage their relationships with the broader community and their impact on society. It encompasses how a university integrates social responsibility into its decision making, operations, and overall culture, ensuring their actions align with societal needs and values.

Gender refers to the socially and culturally constructed differences between men and women, boys and girls, which give them unequal value, opportunities and life chances [20]. It also refers to typically masculine and feminine characteristics, abilities, perspectives and expectations about how women and men should behave in society. These characters are time bound and changeable. The concept recognizes that women and men have different needs, views and power, and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalance between the sexes [21]. Gender perspectives in the context of university governance therefore refer to the different views held by female and male university stakeholders on institutional governance issues – and in this case the social and financial governance practices within the university.

Theoretical underpinning

The theoretical framework for examining women's participation in university governance in Cameroon is built upon four interlinked theories. Liberal Feminism Theory, rooted in the work of John Stuart Mill [22] and John Locke, advocates for gender equality through legal reforms, meritocracy, and equal access to education and leadership within existing institutional structures; the theory posits that women's capacity to reason is equal to that of men and that any perceived intellectual inferiority is a product of unequal education rather than nature [23]. The study is also underpinned by the Glass Ceiling Theory, coined by Marilyn Loden [24]. It identifies invisible, artificial, and attitudinal barriers that are rooted in cultural stereotypes and "closed-ranks" male fraternity, that prevent qualified women from advancing to senior leadership roles despite their skills and achievements. Stakeholder Engagement Theory, proposed by Edward Freeman [25], argues that an organization must create value for all individuals or groups who can affect or are affected by its objectives (such as students, staff, and the community) rather than focusing solely on central management or shareholders[26][27]. Finally, Inclusive Leadership Theory emphasizes the role of institutional culture in promoting the representation of marginalized voices and diverse perspectives in decision-making, asserting that leaders are instrumental in actively confronting biases and fostering equity within gender-rigid environments[28][29].

The implications of these theories for the study are profound. Liberal Feminism implies that the under-representation of women in university management is a result of discriminatory practices and gendered norms rather than a lack of qualified candidates among the female academic folk, justifying the need for gender-sensitive policies and affirmative action to ensure women operate on equal terms with men. The Glass Ceiling Theory explains why, despite having equivalent qualifications, women in the Universities of Bamenda and Buea often remain stagnated at the "sticky floor" of mid-level management or are appointed to "token positions" with limited influence on decision-making. The Stakeholder Engagement Theory justifies the involvement of the entire university community in assessing governance, suggesting that inclusive leadership involving women leads to better transparency and accountability in financial and social governance. Lastly, Inclusive Leadership Theory implies that for meaningful transformation to occur, institutional authorities must dismantle systemic inequities and foster a nurturing academic environment where diverse leadership styles, characterized by collaboration and empathy, are recognized as essential for institutional excellence and social cohesion

Contextual grounding

The higher education landscape in Cameroon is currently shaped by a system of eleven state-run universities, with the University of Buea (established in 1992) and the University of Bamenda (established in 2011) serving as the two primary public institutions modelled on the Anglo-Saxon (British) educational system. Located in the South West and North West regions respectively, these universities operate within a distinct socio-political and cultural milieu where English is the primary official language of instruction [30]. Governance within these universities is regulated by national frameworks, such as the Law of Orientation for Higher Education (Law No. 005 of 2001) and the more recent Law No. 2023/007, on Higher Education Policy; both of which explicitly identify the promotion of gender equality as a core institutional mission. Cameroon is also a signatory to numerous international protocols, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action, which advocate for a minimum of 30% female representation in decision-making bodies [31].

Despite these legal commitments, a gender perspective reveals a significant gap between policy and practice. Women remain starkly under-represented in senior academic and administrative roles; out of all state universities, only four women have ever served as Vice-Chancellors. Statistical data highlights this disparity: in 2017, women held only 20.6% of administrative appointments at the University of Bamenda. Furthermore, because the central government retains the autonomy to appoint and terminate public officials, leadership selection is often driven by political motivations and entrenched patriarchal norms that marginalize women[32]. The specific assessment of women's participation in financial and social governance is critical within this context. Financial governance involves the systems and policies for the effective and transparent management of institutional resources. From a gender perspective, stakeholders generally view women as being more accountable, transparent, and risk-averse in managing budgets[33][34]. Social governance encompasses the processes through which universities manage equity, inclusion, and community outreach. Women are frequently credited for fostering social cohesion and maintaining peaceful societal operations, qualities that are highly valued in the human society and within institutional governance like the Anglo-Saxon universities in Cameroon.

Despite the domestication of national laws and international conventions promoting gender equality, women continue to face structural barriers such as the "glass ceiling" and "sticky floor," alongside institutional biases that question their authority in different sectors of national life. There is a lack of political will to translate gender-neutral policies into meaningful quotas or support systems and so they remain significantly excluded from the highest levels of governance within larger space of the Cameroon Education system and particularly at the higher Education level. However, within the two Anglo-saxon public universities of Bamenda and Buea, the few women have over the years been given the opportunity to govern. But from observation, the opinions of stakeholders on their effectiveness in the execution of their leadership functions like financial and social governance often differ depending on the gender of the stakeholder. Mindful of the need for an empirical bases of such opinions and coupled with the need to inform government policy improvement on gender inclusion in national leadership and university governance in particular, there is an urgent need to examine how stakeholders perspectives of women in the financial and social governance of the two universities under consideration differ in terms of gender. This could go a long way to leverage and enhance government effort towards gender equity, equality and social inclusion in the recruitment of university leaders in Cameroon's public universities.

Objectives of the Study

1. To establish whether gender is a determinant of stakeholders' perspectives on female leaders' financial governance practices in Anglo Saxon public universities in Cameroon.
2. To examine whether gender is a determinant of stakeholders' perspectives in female leaders' social governance practices in Anglo Saxon public unities in Cameroon.

Research Hypothesis

1. **Ho1:** There no significant difference in the gender perspectives of stakeholders on female leaders' financial governance practices in Anglo Saxon public universities in Cameroon.
2. **H02:** There is no significant difference in the gender perspectives of stakeholders on female leaders' social governance practices in Anglo Saxon public universities in Cameroon.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research was both a qualitative and a qualitative study that made use of the concurrent nested mixed method. The study areas were Bamenda and Buea in the North West South and West Regions of Cameroon respectively. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected inclusively from selected stakeholders of the Universities of Bamenda and Buea – the two Anglo-saxon public Universities in Cameroon, according to Law No. 2023/007 on Higher Education Policy in Cameroon. University stakeholders were most concerned in the study because they were the reliable people from whom relevant information on the issues under consideration could be gotten. Consequently, 411 university stakeholders were purposively and radomly sampled from the population of selected groups of stakeholders from both universities - academic staff, administrative staff, student leaders, and support staff.

For the instruments of data collection, the researcher developed a structured closed ended questionnaire for respondents and an unstructured interview guide with open ended questions for respondents to further expatiate on their views. The questionnaire adopted the four scale likert type respond options – strongly Agree (SA), Agree(A), Disagree(D) and strongly Disagree (SD), with items that sought to assess female leaders' financial and social governance practices in the two public universities under study. The questionnaire and interview guide underwent face and content validity by the supervisors of the study, other lecturers and a data management expert and analyst. Reliability was ensured using internal consistency reliability and the reliability coefficient computed using crombach Alpha, with a reliability coefficient of **0.791** – thereby confirming justifying the reliability of the questionnaire. After data collection, the returned questionnaires were then coded and the data entered in an excel sheet, checked for completeness, and coded appropriately for statistical interpretation. Quantitative data were analysed using R version 4.3.1. The four points likert scale was weighted as: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree.

Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data and present an overview of respondents' characteristics and perspectives. For inferential analysis, independent samples t-tests were employed to compare mean scores between the two gender groups (males and females), and one-way ANOVA was used where more than two groups were compared (across different academic stakeholders). Post-hoc tests were performed where necessary to identify pairwise differences following significant ANOVA results. Additionally, chi-square tests of independence were conducted to assess associations between categorical variables such as gender, academic status, or age group and levels of agreement with financial and social governance –related items. Statistical significance was evaluated at an alpha level of 0.05, and results with p-values ≤ 0.05 were considered statistically significant.

For the qualitative data, the researcher employed thematic pre-coded analysis, a qualitative research method that involves identifying and categorizing themes within qualitative data prior to analysis. This process began with the development of a coding framework based on existing theories or prior research, allowing the researcher to systematically organize the data according to predefined themes. By applying these codes during data collection, the researcher was able to efficiently analyse patterns and highlights within the responses. This approach streamlined the analytical process, making it easier to draw comparisons and extract meaningful insights while remaining open to emergent themes that may not fit into the initial coding framework. Overall, the thematic pre-coded analysis combined structure with flexibility, aiding in the systematic exploration of complex qualitative data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Objective One: To establish whether gender is a determinant of stakeholders' perspectives on female leaders' financial governance practices in Anglo Saxon public universities in Cameroon.

Table 1. Respondents' perception of women's participation in university financial governance

Item	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Collapsed		Decision
					A/SA	D/SD	
Women who have handled leadership positions in this university have been very transparent in their financial transactions.	125 (39%)	112 (35%)	74 (23%)	10 (3%)	237 (74%)	84 (26%)	Agree
Women in university leadership positions over the years have always put in place measures to prevent fraud in the	207 (64%)	44 (14%)	66 (21%)	4 (1%)	251 (78%)	70 (22%)	Agree

Item	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Collapsed A/SA	Collapsed D/SD	Decision
management of the budget.							
Women in any leadership position in this university over the years have been very accountable in their management of finances.	174 (54%)	60 (19%)	78 (24%)	9 (3%)	234 (73%)	87 (27%)	Agree
Women in university leadership positions over the years are known to have always worked in compliance with the financial laws/policies of the country.	164 (51%)	81 (25%)	70 (22%)	6 (2%)	245 (76%)	76 (24%)	Agree
Women, who have governed this university in different capacities, are known for their adherence to well-structured realistic budgeting processes.	211 (66%)	51 (16%)	59 (18%)	0 (0%)	262 (82%)	59 (18%)	Agree
Women in leadership positions on campus have over the years shown proof of good ethical conduct through due diligence in their financial transactions.	183 (57%)	72 (22%)	66 (21%)	0 (0%)	255 (79%)	66 (21%)	Agree
In the management of the university budget/finances, women in leadership positions have often ensured	184 (57%)	32 (10%)	74 (23%)	31 (10%)	216 (67%)	105 (33%)	Agree

Item	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Collapsed		Decision
					A/SA	D/SD	
equal treatment to all university stakeholders.							
With women in leadership positions in this university over the years, there have been independent monitoring of financial accounts	165 (51%)	51 (16%)	76 (24%)	29 (9%)	216 (67%)	105 (33%)	Agree
Multiple response set	1413 (55%)	503 (20%)	563 (22%)	89 (4%)	1916 (74%)	652 (26%)	Agree

Source: Research data (2025)

Overall, respondents demonstrated a strong level of agreement concerning women's participation in university financial governance. A total of 74% of responses across all items fell into the "Agree" or "Strongly agree" categories, while 26% represented "Disagree" or "Strongly disagree," suggesting widespread confidence in the financial leadership of women in university contexts (Table 1).

Looking at individual items, 74% of respondents agreed that women who have handled leadership positions in the university have been transparent in their financial transactions, whereas 26% disagreed. Regarding the implementation of budget management measures, 78% agreed that women leaders have consistently taken such steps over the years, and 22% disagreed. When asked about financial accountability, 73% of respondents perceived women leaders to have demonstrated high levels of accountability, while 27% held a contrary view. In terms of legal compliance, 76% of the participants believed that women in leadership positions have always complied with national financial laws and policies, while 24% did not agree. An even stronger consensus was recorded on the matter of structured budgeting processes, where 82% recognized women’s adherence to well-structured and realistic budgeting procedures, leaving only 18% in disagreement.

Additionally, 79% of the respondents agreed that women in leadership positions have shown good ethical conduct in their financial transactions, as opposed to 21% who disagreed. When asked about fair treatment of university stakeholders in financial decisions, 67% affirmed that women leaders often ensured equal treatment, while 33% disagreed. Lastly, the same proportion of 67% agreed that women’s presence in leadership has contributed to the independent monitoring of financial accounts, although 33% of respondents were not in agreement. These findings collectively indicate that women's financial governance roles are viewed positively by the majority of university stakeholders.

Table 2. Chi Square test of association between the demographic parameters of the respondents and their perception of women's participation in university financial governance

Variable	Category	Financial governance		X^2	df	P-value
		Agree	Disagree			
Sex	Female	120 (75%)	41 (25%)	0.82	1	0.3657
	Male	111 (69%)	49 (31%)			
Type of University stakeholder	Administrative staff	24 (38%)	39 (62%)	68.68	3	0
	Student	84 (100%)	0 (0%)			
	Support staff	36 (71%)	15 (29%)			
	Teaching staff	87 (71%)	36 (29%)			
University	UB	139 (79%)	37 (21%)	8.75	1	0.0031
	UBa	92 (63%)	53 (37%)			

Source: Research data (2025)

Table 2 presents the Chi Square test of association between stakeholders' demographic characteristics and their perceptions of women's participation in university financial governance. Overall, a higher proportion of stakeholders (74%) agreed with the statements on women's participation in university financial governance compared to those who disagreed (26%). A closer look at gender-based differences reveals that 75% of female stakeholders agreed compared to 69% of male stakeholders. However, the association between gender and perception was not statistically significant, as shown by a Chi Square value of 0.82 and a p-value of 0.3657.

For stakeholder type, the strongest agreement came from students, all of whom (100%) endorsed the role of women in financial governance. Support staff and teaching staff followed with 71% agreement in each group. In contrast, only 38% of administrative staff agreed, while 62% disagreed. This association was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 68.68$, df = 3, p = 0.000), indicating that stakeholder type significantly influenced perceptions.

With respect to university affiliation, respondents from the University of Buea (UB) reported higher agreement (79%) than those from the University of Bamenda (UBa) (63%). The difference in perception between the two universities was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 8.75$, df = 1, p = 0.0031), suggesting that university context also played a role in shaping views on women's participation in financial governance.

Thematically, under the category of 'financial management', respondents, upon answering the question what do you think about the management of finances by women in top positions in the university? A few from UBa and a few from UB theme 'Focus on Equity and Inclusion' said:

"Most female leaders prioritise equity and inclusion in financial decision-making, ensuring that funds are allocated to support underrepresented groups, programs that promote diversity, and initiatives that enhance student success across demographics", "Very balanced in Financial management and try to satisfy all". To add, a majority from UB and a few from UBa expressed their mind *saying "Women in leadership positions are not courageous enough to encounter risk like men", "My experiences suggest that women tend to adopt more cautious and risk-averse approaches in financial decision-making. This can be beneficial in managing university finances, particularly in times of economic uncertainty or when navigating complex funding landscapes, like during this crisis," and "poor management and poor-quality assurance", "their management are too poor, salary are not paid on time, missions are also paid very late for instance, mission of 2024 can be paid in 2026"* themed 'Risk Management'. Also, most of them from UBa under the theme 'Diverse Perspectives' said *"women in leadership roles often bring different perspectives and approaches to financial management. This diversity can lead to more innovative solutions and strategies for resource allocation, budgeting, and investment. "Women in leadership positions", "they are very transparent and accountable, but too strict to disburse money, and not follow up when the allowance of their staff is not paid".* Further, a few from UBa and a few from UB themed 'Collaboration and Communication' saying *"Women are skilled in discussions and excel as managers, making them well-suited for financial management." "Women are better managers and therefore handle finances with care and less corruption." "They are more prudent in managing finances."* Wile, under the theme 'Long-term Planning' said *"Positive, since 2015, the university has not witnessed any shortages despite the woman at the helm of activities", "Women in leadership positions focus on sustainable long-term financial planning rather than short-term gains, as they can manage the finances effectively and efficiently."* A few from UBa and a few from UB theme 'Arrogance and disrespect' said *"They are very arrogant and do not listen to people whose money they are in charge of", "they hardly follow up on financial issues that concern academic staff", "they are very difficult, they put on a very difficult attitude that is hard to ask them for assistance."*

The insights gathered on the management of finances by women in leadership positions at the universities reveal a complex landscape marked by both commendable practices and notable challenges. Many stakeholders highlighted that female leaders prioritise equity and inclusion in their financial decision-making, ensuring that resources are allocated to support underrepresented groups and initiatives that enhance student success. This focus on diverse perspectives often leads to innovative solutions and effective long-term planning, as women in these roles tend to adopt a more cautious and prudent approach to financial management. The ability to foster collaboration and communication is also seen as strength, with many agreeing that women excel in discussions and are less prone to corruption, which can enhance transparency and accountability in financial dealings.

However, the feedback also underscores significant concerns regarding the management practices of some female leaders. Criticism arises around perceptions of risk aversion, suggesting that women may be less courageous in confronting financial challenges compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, issues such as delayed salary payments and poor-quality assurance indicate systemic problems that could undermine the effectiveness of female leadership in financial roles. Furthermore, some stakeholders expressed frustrations about arrogance and a lack of responsiveness among certain female leaders, which can create barriers to effective communication and collaboration. These mixed perspectives highlight the need for on-going support, training, and accountability mechanisms to ensure that women in leadership positions can fully realize their potential while addressing the challenges they face.

Testing Hypothesis one: There no significant difference in the gender perspectives of stakeholders on female leaders' financial governance practices in Anglo Saxon public universities in Cameroon.

Table 3. Gender perspectives of women's participation in university financial governance

Item	Mean score		Test statistic	P value	Remark
	Males	Females			
Women who have handled leadership positions in this university have been very transparent in their financial transactions.	3.11	3	1.203	0.2301	No significant difference; both males and females in agreement
Women in university leadership positions over the years have always put in place measures to prevent fraud in the management of the budget.	2.87	2.94	-1.087	0.2779	No significant difference; both males and females in agreement
Women in any leadership position in this university over the years have been very accountable in their management of finances.	2.8	2.98	-2.164	0.0312	Significant difference; both in agreement, but females more in agreement
Women in university leadership positions over the years are known to have always worked in compliance with the financial laws/policies of the country.	3.01	2.98	0.377	0.7067	No significant difference; both males and females in agreement
Women, who have governed this university in different capacities, are known for their adherence to well-structured realistic budgeting processes.	2.96	2.99	-0.574	0.5666	No significant difference; both males and females in agreement
Women in leadership positions on campus have over	2.92	3.12	-2.747	0.0064	Significant difference; both

Item	Mean score		Test statistic	P value	Remark
	Males	Females			
the years shown proof of good ethical conduct through due diligence in their financial transactions.					in agreement, but females more in agreement
In the management of the university budget/finances, women in leadership positions have often ensured equal treatment to all university stakeholders.	2.8	2.55	2.861	0.0045	Significant difference; both in agreement, but males more in agreement
With women in leadership positions in this university over the years, there have been independent monitoring of financial accounts.	2.66	2.82	-1.699	0.0904	No significant difference; both males and females in agreement

Source: Research data (2025)

Based on Table 3; gender perspectives on women's participation in university financial governance, the analysis shows both male and female respondents generally agree on women's participation in financial governance, though differences exist in the level of agreement on some items.

For most items in the table, there was no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of males and females. For example, both genders agreed that women in leadership positions have been transparent in financial transactions (M = 3.11; F = 3.00; p = 0.2301), have worked in compliance with financial laws (M = 3.01; F = 2.98; p = 0.7067), and have adhered to structured budgeting processes (M = 2.96; F = 2.99; p = 0.5666). Similarly, they agreed on independent monitoring of financial accounts by women in leadership (M = 2.66; F = 2.82; p = 0.0904).

However, three items showed statistically significant gender differences in perception. On whether women have been accountable in managing finances, both genders agreed but females expressed greater agreement (M = 2.80; F = 2.98; p = 0.0312). For the statement on ethical conduct in financial transactions, females again showed more agreement than males (M = 2.92; F = 3.12; p = 0.0064). Conversely, for the item regarding equal treatment of university stakeholders, males showed stronger agreement than females (M = 2.80; F = 2.55; p = 0.0045).

These findings highlight areas of consensus as well as differences in the degree of appraisal, suggesting that while the overall perception of women's role in financial governance is positive, subtle gendered nuances persist in how that role is viewed.

Table 4. Gender-based comparison of respondents' perspectives women's participation in university financial governance

Group	Mean Score	Test statistic (t)	P value
Males	2.89	-0.558	0.5772
Females	2.92		

Source: Research data (2025)

Based on Table 4, the overall gender-based comparison of stakeholders perspectives on women's participation in university financial governance shows a slight difference in mean scores between males (mean = 2.89) and females (mean = 2.92). However, this difference is not statistically significant as the test statistic is -0.558 with a p-value of 0.5772. This suggests that both male and female respondents largely share similar views regarding women's participation in financial governance, indicating a general agreement across gender lines on the matter.

The findings align with the item-by-item gender perspectives analysis presented in Table 3, where most items revealed no significant gender-based differences in perception. While a few items showed statistically significant differences such as accountability, ethical conduct, and equal treatment the overall appraisal remained generally positive across both sexes. Thus, despite minor differences on specific issues, male and female respondents largely concur in their perspectives of women's roles in financial governance within the university setting. The null hypothesis was therefore upheld.

Objective Two: To examine whether gender is a determinant of stakeholders' perspectives in female leaders' social governance practices in Anglo Saxon public unities in Cameroon.

Table 5. Stakeholders' perspectives on women's participation in university social governance

Item	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Collapsed		Decision
					A/SA	D/SD	
Women in leadership positions over the years are known for promoting diversity and inclusion in the workforce.	185 (58%)	97 (30%)	39 (12%)	0 (0%)	282 (88%)	39 (12%)	Agree
Women who have handled leadership position in the university over the years, have always	163 (51%)	108 (34%)	30 (9%)	20 (6%)	271 (85%)	50 (15%)	Agree

Item	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Collapsed A/SA	Collapsed D/SD	Decision
engaged university outreach programs							
Women in leadership positions on campus over the years have been known for their commitment to respect of ethical principles in leadership.	204 (64%)	74 (23%)	30 (9%)	13 (4%)	278 (87%)	43 (13%)	Agree
Women in leadership position in this university over the years have not been bias in decision making.	133 (41%)	62 (19%)	68 (21%)	58 (18%)	195 (60%)	126 (39%)	Agree
The fight against bribery and corruption on campus has been promoted under female leadership at different levels.	145 (45%)	73 (23%)	77 (24%)	26 (8%)	218 (68%)	103 (32%)	Agree
Women who have governed the university at different levels have provided the highest welfare services ever on campus	193 (60%)	31 (10%)	80 (25%)	17 (5%)	224 (70%)	97 (30%)	Agree
It is during the leadership era of women at different levels on campus that social cohesion is achieved amongst stakeholders leading to peaceful campus operations	149 (46%)	78 (24%)	78 (24%)	16 (5%)	227 (70%)	94 (29%)	Agree
More social interaction activities (sports, cultural weeks and open door days) amongst stakeholders	131 (41%)	72 (22%)	100 (31%)	18 (6%)	203 (63%)	118 (37%)	Agree

Item	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Collapsed A/SA	Collapsed D/SD	Decision
during the reign of female administrators.							
Multiple response set	**1303 (51%)**	**595 (23%)**	**502 (19%)**	**168 (6%)**	**1898 (74%)**	**670 (26%)**	**Agree**

Source: Research data (2025)

Table 5 presents stakeholders perspectives on women's participation in university social governance. Overall, 74% of the responses fall within the categories of agreement (collapsed Agree/Strongly Agree), indicating strong general approval of women's contributions to social governance in the universities under consideration. Only 26% of the responses fall under disagreement (Disagree/Strongly Disagree), suggesting that the majority of stakeholders perceive women's roles in social governance positively.

Specifically, 88% of respondents agree that women in leadership positions are known for promoting diversity and inclusion in the workforce. In terms of engagement in university outreach programs, 85% affirm that women who have handled leadership positions have always actively participated in such initiatives. A high proportion, 87%, agrees that women in campus leadership roles have demonstrated a commitment to ethical principles. While 60% agree that women in leadership have not exhibited bias in decision making, this item records the highest level of disagreement (39%) among all, suggesting a slightly more divided opinion on this aspect.

Regarding the fight against bribery and corruption, 68% affirm that female leadership has contributed to promoting ethical conduct, while 32% do not share this view. 70% of stakeholders' believe women who governed the university provided the highest welfare services, and a similar proportion (70%) believe their leadership fostered social cohesion and peaceful campus operations. Lastly, 63% agree that there were more social interaction activities among stakeholders during the reign of female administrators, indicating strong support for the role of women in enhancing social connectedness on campuses. This overall picture from Table 5 underscores a broad consensus on the positive impact of women in various aspects of university social governance.

Table 6. Chi Square test of association between the demographic parameters of the stakeholders and their perception of women's participation in university social governance

Variable	Category	Social governance: Agree	Social governance: Disagree	X^2	df	P-value
Sex	Female	145 (90.1%)	16 (9.9%)	6.973	1	0.0083
	Male	126 (78.8%)	34 (21.2%)			

Variable	Category	Social governance		X^2	df	P-value
		Agree	Disagree			
Stakeholder Type	Administrative staff	44 (69.8%)	19 (30.2%)	24.397	3	0
	Student	77 (91.7%)	7 (8.3%)			
	Support staff	51 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)			
	Teaching staff	99 (80.5%)	24 (19.5%)			
University	UB	139 (79.0%)	37 (21.0%)	7.896	1	0.005
	UBa	132 (91.0%)	13 (9.0%)			

Source: Research data (2025)

The table above provides the Chi Square test of association between demographic characteristics and these perceptions. The results reveal statistically significant associations between sex, stakeholder type, and university affiliation with respondents' views on women's participation in social governance. Specifically, females were significantly more likely to agree with positive perceptions of women's participation compared to males ($X^2 = 6.973$, df = 1, p = 0.0083). Furthermore, stakeholder type showed a highly significant association ($X^2 = 24.397$, df = 3, p = 0.000), with support staff unanimously in agreement (100%), followed by students (91.7%), teaching staff (80.5%), and administrative staff (69.8%). The university variable also revealed a significant difference ($X^2 = 7.896$, df = 1, p = 0.005), with respondents from UBa demonstrating higher agreement (91%) compared to those from UB (79%). These findings underscore the influence of demographic factors on the perception of women's contributions to social governance in university settings.

Based on the mean scores provided by male and female respondents across various items. The responses suggest a generally positive perception of women in leadership, although significant gender differences emerge in a few areas. For the item regarding whether women in leadership have promoted diversity and inclusion in the workforce, both males (mean = 3.13) and females (mean = 3.23) agreed, and no significant difference was observed between the groups (p = 0.1593). Similarly, in assessing whether women leaders have consistently engaged in university outreach programs, both genders were aligned in agreement, with mean scores of 3.18 for males and 3.06 for females, and a non-significant p-value of 0.1694.

Perceptions of women leaders' commitment to ethical leadership principles also reflected a shared viewpoint. Although females rated this aspect slightly higher (mean = 3.12) compared to males (mean = 2.99), the difference was not statistically significant (p = 0.0786), indicating general agreement among both genders. However, a significant gender difference was observed concerning whether women in leadership have avoided bias in decision-making. Female respondents (mean = 2.76) tended to agree more than their male counterparts (mean = 2.48), and the difference was statistically significant (p = 0.0124). This suggests that while females viewed women leaders as fair in decision-making, males were more skeptical.

The appraisal of women's impact on fighting bribery and corruption on campus showed general agreement from both genders (males = 2.73, females = 2.92), with the difference not reaching significance (p = 0.0537). Likewise, the perception that female leaders have provided the highest welfare services did not vary significantly between males (mean = 2.72) and females (mean = 2.76), with a p-value of 0.5647. A statistically significant difference was found regarding the idea that female leadership fosters social cohesion among stakeholders on campus. Females scored this higher (mean = 3.02) than males (mean = 2.78), and the difference was significant (p = 0.0064). This implies that while both groups generally agreed, females were more convinced of the social harmony brought about by female leaders.

Finally, on the item about social interaction activities under female leadership, both groups expressed similar views, with males scoring slightly higher (mean = 2.82) than females (mean = 2.78), and the p-value (0.7039) indicating no significant difference. Overall, the findings in Table 8 reflect widespread agreement among males and females on most aspects of women's contributions to university social governance. Significant gender differences, however, appear in the areas of perceived fairness in decision-making and the fostering of social cohesion, where females tend to rate women leaders more favorably than males. These differences, though limited, point to areas where male perceptions may lag behind those of their female counterparts in recognizing certain leadership qualities among women.

A gender-based comparison of respondents' overall appraisal of women's participation in social governance. The findings show that female respondents (mean = 2.96) had a slightly more positive appraisal compared to male respondents (mean = 2.85). Although the difference in mean scores was not statistically significant (t = -1.729, p = 0.0847), the trend suggests that women are generally more favorable in their perception of women's contributions to social governance in the university setting. This aligns with the item-level insights presented earlier in Table 8, where females consistently expressed stronger agreement with positive appraisals of female leadership in social governance.

Thematically, on answering, what is the relationship of female leaders with students, staff, and other university stakeholders under the category Female leadership and university stakeholders? A few from UB and a few from UBa themed 'Inclusivity and Collaboration' said

"Female leaders often emphasize inclusivity and collaborative approaches in their leadership styles. They foster environments where diverse perspectives are valued, encouraging participation from students, staff, and stakeholders in decision-making processes", "They open doors to all and try to implement policies.", "Female university leaders generally maintain inclusive, respectful and empathetic relationships with students, staff and stakeholders. Their leadership style tends to be participative and people-oriented, fostering a culture of open communication and mutual respect", "The relationship is cordial, they do not discriminate among the students, staff and visitors as they treat them equally", "Female leaders advocate for policies and practices that promote equity and diversity within the university. They work to address systemic barriers faced by marginalized groups, creating a more equitable academic environment

and "Female leaders also focus on building relationships with external stakeholders, such as local communities, alumni, and industry partners. This engagement enhances the university's reputation and creates opportunities for students and staff". To add, under 'Diverse Perspectives' as a theme, *"They practice a cordial relationship to an extent, and at the same time, jealousy and unhealthy competition are the order of the day", "Most of them have cordial relationships but are very harsh and strict to people, especially those of the same gender, which is co-wife ideology innately implanted in women", "they have cordial relationship and motherly though some are too arrogant". Also,* A few from UBa and a few from UB themed cordial said "*Female leaders are cordial, friendly and professional", "The relationship of women in leadership positions with staff is work-oriented, friendly with students and understanding of the support staff". While* A few from UBa and a few from UB themed 'Empathy and Emotional Intelligence' "*The relationship is cordial. Women are mothers in homes where they come from, and that motherly heart is always taken to the office", "Not that very smooth in handling things, female leaders most of the time are emotional in handling things" and "Female leaders tend to exhibit higher levels of emotional intelligence, which enhance their relationships with students and staff. Their ability to empathize with others leads to stronger connections and a more supportive campus culture."*

The relationship of female leaders with students, staff, and other university stakeholders is characterised by a strong emphasis on inclusivity and collaboration. Many respondents noted that female leaders foster environments where diverse perspectives are valued, encouraging active participation in decision-making processes. This participative and people-oriented leadership style not only cultivates a culture of open communication and mutual respect but also promotes equity and diversity within the academic environment. By advocating for policies that address systemic barriers faced by marginalised groups, female leaders work to create a more equitable landscape within the university. Additionally, their efforts to build relationships with external stakeholders, such as local communities and industry partners, enhance the university's reputation and create valuable opportunities for both students and staff.

However, the feedback also reveals complexities in these relationships, highlighting the challenges that female leaders face. While many respondents acknowledge that female leaders maintain cordial relationships, there are instances of unhealthy competition and jealousy, particularly among women in similar positions. Some responses pointed to a tendency for female leaders to be strict or harsh towards their peers, which may stem from societal dynamics often referred to as "co-wife ideology." Despite these challenges, female leaders are generally perceived as empathetic and emotionally intelligent, traits that contribute positively to their interactions with students and staff. This emotional intelligence allows them to connect on a deeper level, fostering a supportive campus culture. Ultimately, the dynamics of these relationships reflect both the strengths and the hurdles that female leaders navigate in their roles within the university setting.

In a nutshell, the findings revealed that female respondents generally hold a more positive appraisal of women's participation in social governance in Anglo-Saxon public universities in Cameroon, with a mean score of 2.96 compared to 2.85 for male respondents, although the difference was not statistically significant. Interviews with university stakeholders highlighted themes of inclusivity and collaboration, as female leaders foster environments that value diverse perspectives and encourage participation in decision-making processes. While many praised the cordial and empathetic relationships female leaders maintain with students and staff, some noted instances of jealousy and competition among women, as well as a tendency for emotional responses in leadership. Overall, female leaders are perceived as advocating for equity, building relationships with external stakeholders, and exhibiting higher emotional intelligence, which enhances campus culture and support.

Testing Hypothesis two: There is no significant difference in the gender perspectives of stakeholders on female leaders' social governance practices in Anglo Saxon public universities in Cameroon.

Table 7. Gender perspectives of women's participation in university social governance

Item	Mean score		Test statistic	P value	Remark
	Males	Females			
Women in leadership positions over the years are known for promoting diversity and inclusion in the workforce.	3.13	3.23	-1.411	0.1593	No significant difference; both males and females in agreement
Women who have handled leadership position in the university over the years, have always engaged university outreach programs	3.18	3.06	1.377	0.1694	No significant difference; both males and females in agreement
Women in leadership positions on campus over the years have been known for their commitment to respect of ethical principles in leadership.	2.99	3.12	-1.765	0.0786	No significant difference; both males and females in agreement
Women in leadership position in this university over the years have not been bias in decision making.	2.48	2.76	-2.515	0.0124	Significant difference; females in agreement, males in disagreement
The fight against bribery and corruption on campus has been promoted under female leadership at different levels.	2.73	2.92	-1.936	0.0537	No significant difference; both males and females in agreement

Item	Mean score		Test statistic	P value	Remark
	Males	Females			
Women who have governed the university at different levels have provided the highest welfare services ever on campus	2.72	2.76	-0.576	0.5647	No significant difference; both males and females in agreement
It is during the leadership era of women at different levels on campus that social cohesion is achieved amongst stakeholders leading to peaceful campus operations	2.78	3.02	-2.746	0.0064	Significant difference; both in agreement, but females more in agreement
More social interaction activities (sports, cultural weeks and open door days) amongst stakeholders during the reign of female administrators.	2.82	2.78	0.38	0.7039	No significant difference; both males and females in agreement

Source: Research data (2025)

Table 7 presents a gender-based appraisal of women's participation in university social governance, based on mean scores provided by male and female respondents across various items. The responses suggest a generally positive perception of women in leadership, although significant gender differences emerge in a few areas.

For the item regarding whether women in leadership have promoted diversity and inclusion in the workforce, both males (mean = 3.13) and females (mean = 3.23) agreed, and no significant difference was observed between the groups (p = 0.1593). Similarly, in assessing whether women leaders have consistently engaged in university outreach programs, both genders were aligned in agreement, with mean scores of 3.18 for males and 3.06 for females, and a non-significant p-value of 0.1694.

Perceptions of women leaders' commitment to ethical leadership principles also reflected a shared viewpoint. Although females rated this aspect slightly higher (mean = 3.12) compared to males (mean = 2.99), the difference was not statistically significant (p = 0.0786), indicating general agreement among both genders. However, a significant gender difference was observed concerning whether women in leadership have avoided bias in decision-making. Female respondents (mean = 2.76) tended to agree more than their male counterparts (mean = 2.48), and the difference was statistically significant (p = 0.0124). This suggests that while females viewed women leaders as fair in decision-making, males were more skeptical.

The appraisal of women's impact on fighting bribery and corruption on campus showed general agreement from both genders (males = 2.73, females = 2.92), with the difference not reaching significance (p = 0.0537). Likewise, the perception that female leaders have provided the highest welfare services did not vary significantly between males (mean = 2.72) and females (mean = 2.76), with a p-value of 0.5647.

A statistically significant difference was found regarding the idea that female leadership fosters social cohesion among stakeholders on campus. Females scored this higher (mean = 3.02) than males (mean = 2.78), and the difference was significant (p = 0.0064). This implies that while both groups generally agreed, females were more convinced of the social harmony brought about by female leaders.

Finally, on the item about social interaction activities under female leadership, both groups expressed similar views, with males scoring slightly higher (mean = 2.82) than females (mean = 2.78), and the p-value (0.7039) indicating no significant difference. Overall, the findings reflected widespread agreement among males and females on most aspects of women's contributions to university social governance. Significant gender differences, however, appear in the areas of perceived fairness in decision-making and the fostering of social cohesion, where females tend to rate women leaders more favorably than males. These differences, though limited, point to areas where male perceptions may lag behind those of their female counterparts in recognizing certain leadership qualities among women.

Table 8. Gender-based comparison of stakeholders' perspective of women's participation in social governance

Group	Mean Score	Test statistic (t)	P value
Males	2.85	-1.729	0.0847
Females	2.96		

Source: Research data (2025)

Table 8; presents a gender-based comparison of stakeholders' overall perspectives of women's participation in social governance. The findings show that female stakeholders (mean = 2.96) had a slightly more positive appraisal compared to male respondents (mean = 2.85). Although the difference in mean scores was not statistically significant (t = -1.729, p = 0.0847), the trend suggests that women are generally more favorable in their perspectives of women's contributions to social governance in the universities under study. The null hypothesis was therefore upheld.

Discussion

Looking at gender appraisal of women's participation in financial governance in Anglo Saxon public universities in Cameroon, data from the study reveals that, overall respondents demonstrated a strong level of agreement concerning women's participation in university financial governance with more responses across all items falling into the "Agree" or "Strongly agree" categories, suggesting widespread confidence in the financial leadership of women in university contexts. This is indicated by the fact that more of respondents agreed that women who have handled leadership positions in the university have been transparent in their financial transactions, and a large number equally agreed that women leaders have consistently taken the implementation of budget management measures steps over the years, and also perceived women leaders to have demonstrated high levels of financial accountability.

In terms of legal compliance, participants believed that women in leadership positions have always complied with national financial laws and policies, An even stronger consensus was recorded on the matter of structured budgeting processes, they recognized women's adherence to well-structured and realistic budgeting procedures, of the respondents agreed that women in leadership positions have shown good ethical conduct in their financial transactions, affirmed that women leaders often ensured equal treatment of university stakeholders in financial decisions. Lastly, the same proportion and agreed that women's presence in leadership has contributed to the independent monitoring of financial accounts; these findings collectively indicate that women's financial governance roles are viewed positively by the majority of university stakeholders. Looking at the above statistics, there is strong evidence that women contribute uniquely and positively to university financial governance. This is not due to an inherent biological trait, but rather to diverse perspectives, leadership styles and approaches to risk and ethics that women often bring to leadership role. Risk Management and Prudent oversight also give a detailed explanation why Women excel in University Financial Governance. Women in senior governance roles tend to adopt a more comprehensive and cautious approach to risk assessment.

This confirms Adams, Ferreira[35] findings that gender-diverse boards are significantly more likely to engage in rigorous monitoring and oversight. Their research showed that women directors had better attendance records and were more likely to serve on monitoring-related committees, such as audit committees, leading to more robust financial governance. Levi, Li, and Zhang [36] also confirm that firms with female directors were associated with fewer and more value-creating acquisitions and lower leverage ratios. This suggests a more deliberate and less overconfident approach to major financial decisions, which directly translates to prudent management of university endowments and capital projects. Strong financial governance is built on a foundation of ethics and accountability. Ethical leadership and a focus on transparency give a good financial governance record and women have often proven higher ethical standards and a lower tolerance for fraud. This is in line with Post and Byron [37] who concluded that the presence of women on corporate boards was associated with: Stronger monitoring; reduced corporate fraud and creates greater stakeholder engagement, a focus on long-term sustainability over short-term gains.

Student leaders have often judge women financial governance from observable outcomes like organization student's activities and or offering scholarship to students. Administrative staff on the other hand may be biased and wished to occupy such positions; with this their perception about women in university financial governance cannot be totally positive. Also, most administrative staff complained of their unpaid allowances which can make them feel like the women in governance is responsible for these unpaid allowances. With respect to university affiliation, the study found that the

University of Buea (UB) reported higher than those from the University of Bamenda (UBa). The difference in perception between the two universities was statistically significant suggesting that university context also played a role in shaping views on women's participation in financial governance. The university of Buea has had several high profile female leaders notably Professor Dorothy Limung Njeuma who was a cofounder and the first vice chancellor of UB. Also, Dr Nalova Lyonga has served as a female vice chancellor of UB. Seeing a woman successfully lead the university at its highest level shatters stereotype and normalizes female leadership for all stakeholders. UB stakeholders have compared female and male leadership at high levels and can take a stand. Uba on the other hand has had just one vice chancellor since creation though a woman in the name of Professor Theresia Nkuo Akenji and no other to compare with.

As concerns gender appraisal of women participation in social governance practices in Anglo Saxon public universities in Cameroon, High number of the responses falls within the categories of agreement indicating strong general approval of women's contributions to social governance in the university. Only few of the responses fall under disagreement (Disagree/Strongly Disagree), suggesting that the majority of stakeholders perceive women's roles in social governance positively. This is demonstrated by the fact that a significant number of respondents agree that women in leadership positions are known for promoting diversity and inclusion in the workforce. In terms of engagement in university outreach programs, affirm that women who have handled leadership positions have always actively participated in such initiatives. A high proportion agree that women in campus leadership roles have demonstrated a commitment to ethical principles, and also agree that women in leadership have not exhibited bias in decision making, this item records the highest level of disagreement

The results reveal statistically significant associations between sex, stakeholder type, and university affiliation with respondents' views on women's participation in social governance. Specifically, females were significantly more likely to agree with positive perceptions of women's participation compared to males Furthermore, stakeholder type showed a highly significant association with support staff unanimously in agreement, followed by students, teaching staff, and administrative staff. These findings underscore the influence of demographic factors on the perception of women's contributions to social governance in university settings. This result may come from the fact women are more likely to recognize and appreciate the challenges and opportunities faced by women. Women in academia often share common experiences of challenges, benefits etc, and when a woman leader actively addresses these issues, the positive impact is directly felt and highly valued by women. This goes in line with Acker[38] argument that women may be more likely to to recognize and appreciate the challenges and opportunities faced by women in leadership positions. Monroe [39] also confirm that women leaders serve as role models and mentors, inspiring and empowering other women, for a women in academia, seeing a successful woman leader can enhance collective self-esteem and provide a positive role model. Eagerly and Karau [40] indicate that men are historically of the dominant group in academic leadership and may not have that psychological investment in the success of women leaders and may evaluate them against the traditional (often masculine) standards of leadership they are costumed to. However Monroe points out there therefore that, women on the hand evaluate women leaders more positive because their success is seen as a success for the group as a whole as a natural psychological tendency to uplift members of their own group.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: The study found that women's participation in financial and social governance in Anglo-Saxon public universities of Cameroon is viewed positively by the majority of university stakeholders. Female leaders were recognized for promoting equity, building relationships with stakeholders, strengthening positive campus culture, and contributing to transparency and accountability in university governance. **Implication:** The findings imply that higher education authorities in Cameroon should provide greater opportunities for women to occupy strategic university leadership positions. Policy and practice should support female leaders through targeted capacity building, mentorship, advanced financial management training, risk management skills, negotiation training, and exclusive leadership forums that allow women to share challenges and strategies. **Limitation:** The limitation of the study is that it focused only on women's participation in university financial and social governance within Anglo-Saxon public universities, particularly the Universities of Buea and Bamenda. Therefore, the findings may not fully represent gender leadership dynamics in other higher education institutions or other governance contexts in Cameroon. **Future Research:** Future studies should investigate a gender appraisal of male leaders in university governance and evaluate the rate of inclusion within the system. Further research may also examine gender-inclusive leadership across other universities and governance areas to provide a broader understanding of leadership effectiveness in Cameroon's higher education sector.

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