

**Assessing the impact of political crisis in Cameroon,
1972-2018**

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DECLARATION

I declare that *AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CAUSES, IMPACT AND PATHWAYS TO PEACE IN THE CAMEROONIAN POLITICAL CRISIS FROM 1972 TO 2018* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in this or any other university, and that all the sources I have used have been duly indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full names..... Date.....

Signed.....

Signature..... Date.....

Supervisor

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God Almighty and in memory of my late father and my hero, Tayem Nicolas Folefac, who laid the foundation upon which I have built. In addition, I am indebted to my husband, Victor Alem, and my children, Faith Ajap Alem, Hope Folefac Alem, and Favour Alem Alem for psychologically and emotionally supporting me throughout this study.

May our good God continue to bless you all.

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ABSTRACT

Given the number of years of incessant escalation of violent conflict in the Anglophone region of Cameroon, this region has remained very backward compared to its Francophone counterpart, despite covering areas with major resources in the country. The Anglophone region has contributed immensely to revenue generation in the country, stemming from its endowment in mineral resources, but very little from what is generated is spent by the government to develop this region, whereas the Francophone region, with few or no resources, has benefitted immensely. This lop-sidedness in wealth distribution has repeatedly provoked citizens in the Anglophone region to demand an equitable distribution of wealth, but the government, which seems to be in favour of the French-speaking region, has always replied with instruments of state coercion, thus escalating violent conflict in the two English-speaking regions of Cameroon. This violent conflict has severe implications for human security and sustainable development, as cases of conflict in this region have attracted global interventions. Despite these interventions from neighbouring African states, France, and peacebuilding organizations and other countries, calls for dialogue to resolve the conflict have persistently broken down, and conflict continues in the region. Although scientific studies have examined the implication of this conflict on development and foreign direct investment in Africa, the problem with several of these studies is that they gloss over the root causes of the conflict. For most of these studies, the cause of the conflict rests with the ruling government and the teeming population of the Francophone region. This has created serious limitations in addressing the cause of the conflict from the perspective of the underdevelopment and growing exclusion of the people from the English region from the decision-making process. It is a fact that not many of the scientific researches see this as the leading cause of the conflict in Cameroon. This study bridges this gap by examining the causes, impact, and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian political conflict. The study therefore contributes to the existing body of knowledge by proffering a nuanced understanding on possible mitigation strategies to this conflict in Cameroon, 1972-2018.

Relying on qualitative research design that was complemented by semi-structured interviews, results of the study show that political conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon is a reflection of political, economic, and social marginalisation of the Anglophone minority, underdevelopment, inequality, economic exploitation, disrespect for identity, and the abrogation of the Fouban Constitution. The enormous economic earning capacity of the natural resources found in the conflicting regions of North and South – the Anglophone regions – to the economy of Cameroon is huge compared to that of the Francophone region. Results also demonstrate that the conflict has severe human and food insecurity implications, as citizens in this region suffer from displacement, sudden death, unlawful arrest, heavy militarisation, and state coercion. In addition, results illustrate that the mitigation pathways by the government to resolve the conflict were not adequate to preclude a recurrence of conflict. The study concludes that the government of Cameroon still has to undertake massive consultations and engaged dialogue with peace-building organisations and other international bodies in order to resolve the political crisis plaguing the two Anglophone regions.

KEY WORDS: Cameroon, Anglophone, political crisis, secession, federation, conflict mitigation, marginalisation, peace, Ambazonian Constitution, separatist.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADF:	Ambazonia Defence Forces
AGOA:	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AIG:	Ambazonian Interim Government
AU:	African Union
BaSSREC:	Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
BIR:	Rapid Intervention Battalion military
CAP:	<i>Certificate d’Aptitude Professionnelle</i>
CAR:	Central Africa Republic
CDC:	Cameroon Development Co-operation
CEMAC:	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa
CFA:	Central African French Franc
CFP:	Cameroon Field Participants
COVID-19:	Coronavirus Disease of 2019
CPDM:	Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement
CPI:	Corruption Perceptions Index
CPNC:	Cameroon People’s National Convention

CRONFP:	Cameroonians Refugee Ogoja Nigeria Field Participant
CRTV:	Cameroon Radio Television
DDR:	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
DREB:	Regional Delegation for Basic Education
ENAM:	National School of Administration and Magistracy [École Nationale D'Administration et De Magistrature]
FDI:	Foreign Direct Investment
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
GCE:	General Certificate of Education
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GoC:	Government of Cameroon
ICT:	Information and Communications Technology
IDPs:	Internally Displaced Persons
IEDs:	Improvised explosive devices
IFs:	International Futures
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
IPSS:	Institute for Peace and Security Studies

IS:	Islamic State
KNDP:	Kamerun National Democratic Party
MND:	Major National Dialogue
MSF:	Doctors without Borders [Médecins Sans Frontières]
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
NWU:	North-West University
OCHA:	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHADA:	Organisation for the Harmonisation of Business Law
PAMOL:	Pamol Plantation
PM:	Prime Minister
RD:	Relative Deprivation
SONARA:	Société Nationale de Raffinage
SCAPO:	Southern Cameroon People's Organisation
SCNC:	Southern Cameroon National Council
SCYL:	Southern Cameroon Youth League
SDF:	Social Democratic Front
SNP:	Scottish National Party

UC:	<i>Union Camerounaise</i>
UK:	United Kingdom
UN:	United Nations
UNC:	<i>Union Nationale Camerounaise</i>
UNGA:	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR:	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPO:	Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation
USA:	United States of America
USSR:	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VOA:	Voice of Africa
WB:	World Bank
WWI:	World War One
WWII:	World War Two

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Competition among groups in the political space for democratic dividends in many sovereign states has continued to grow across the globe. At the same time, the dichotomy between minority and majority ethnic groups in African politics has become a trend in global political debates, thus creating new dimensions of political behaviour and cultures within affected states. This competition over scarce resources within groups in a state has led to violent conflicts and threats to stability, which sometimes lead to secessionist tendencies, especially after the decolonisation of Africa from former colonial masters. Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Nigeria, and Cameroon have witnessed uprisings of groups to demand their independence as a sequel to their claims of marginalisation. Currently, the Cameroonian national polity has been weighed down by the crisis of secession.

Cameroon is a country in sub-Saharan Africa, which is located between Central Africa and West Africa (Asya 2011). From 1884-1914, Cameroon (formerly known as Kamerun), was occupied and administered by Germany (Elango, 1987:9). After the defeat of Germany after World War I, German Kamerun was split between Britain and France, and this explains why Cameroon is a bilingual country, speaking both English and French (Asya, 2011). The French and British administered their mandated territories and acculturated their *lingua-franca*. The geography of the state was unevenly shared by the imperialists, as the French occupied four-fifths (4/5) of the territory, while the British settled for one fifth (1/5) of the land (Ngoh, 1999:16-183). The colonial territories were administered differently by the French and British. Over the years, they established legal, educational, political and monetary arrangements that were significantly different in both territories (Ngoh, 1999).

This structural division and dichotomy in style of colonial administration created the foundation of Francophone domination over the Anglophone minority in the country (Awason, 2000). British Cameroon, which comprised British Northern and Southern Cameroon, were separately administered by Cameroon and Nigeria. For administrative reasons, British Northern Cameroon was governed as part of Northern

Nigeria, and Southern Cameroon as part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria (Dupraz, 2019). Bongfen (1985:88) posits that in 1954, British Southern Cameroon ceased to be administered as an integral part of Eastern Nigeria when it gained quasi-regional status from Nigeria. Considering the relative lower population of British Cameroon, also known as Anglophone Cameroon, this placed them on the path of national minority. Their minority status led to the criticism of the country's Anglophone structure, which was rooted in the colonial administrative history.

The British instituted Common Law and practiced Indirect Rule, while the French practised Centralised Rule and implemented French Civil Law, with the aim of assimilating Cameroonians into French culture (Elango, 1987). French Cameroon gained independence from France on 1st January 1960 (Levine,1971:76). Meanwhile, on 11th February 1961, a plebiscite was conducted in British Southern and Northern Cameroon under the supervision of United Nation's officials. During the plebiscite, British Northern Cameroon overwhelmingly voted to join the Federal Republic of Nigeria, while British Southern Cameroon voted to join *La Republique du Cameroun*, which had already gained its independence on 1st January, 1960 (International Crisis Group [ICG] 2017:3). The reunion of both independent nations today constitutes the Republic of Cameroon, with two federal states, namely; West and East Cameroon, based on equal status. Ahmadou Ahidjo was the first indigenous president of the country (Fanso, 1999: 285). To cement the reunion, a conference was held in Foumban in 1961, known as the Foumban Conference, where both newly integrated nations met to iron out the constitution of both nations that eventually became one (Konings, 1972:207-229).

A "loose" form of federation was proposed by John Ngu Foncha and his delegation from West Cameroon [Anglophone] which they considered as an assurance of preserving their cultural heritage in the federation as well as the identity of each space (Awasom, 2000:1). On the contrary, Ahmadou Ahidjo and his delegation came with a pre-prepared constitution (already worked-on), which was just meant to be adopted by both federal units. John Ngu Foncha and his Anglophone delegation were obliged to accept a highly centralised form of government administration

(Joseph, 1961). The outcome of the Fouban Conference led to the rise of other challenges such as the lopsided nature of Cameroonian federating units, assimilation and marginalisation questions as well as other forms of security threats against the Anglophone people, which set the scene for the current Anglophone crisis in Cameroon (Anthony, 2014).

In the aftermath of the drafting and adoption of the Cameroonian national constitution, Anglophones in Cameroon felt cheated as the terms of the constitution were not being respected (Piet 2003). The Anglophones complained that Ahidjo's administration unconstitutionally, and in breach of the Fouban resolutions, abolished the Federal Government structure and introduced a unitary state in 1972 (Piet, 2003). This unitary system, however, reduced Anglophone Cameroonians to a minority group (Ngwana, 2001). The introduction of a unitary government developed the feeling of marginalisation among Anglophones, who felt the loss of their autonomy, and began to argue that their position was that of second-class citizens in the unitary Cameroonian State.

The post-independence Cameroonian State, under the leadership of Ahidjo and Paul Biya, witnessed the country deteriorating progressively into crisis, especially as the English-speaking regions of Cameroon, which contribute about 70% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country (IFPRM, 2005:4), descended into crisis. Since the independence of the State, the Anglophone regions of Cameroon maintain they have been marginalised and looked upon as second-class citizens by the Francophones. For instance, in 1962, a year after the Fouban Conference, Ahidjo changed the country's currency from the Pound Sterling to the French Franc CFA (Bayart, 1970). Again, for vehicles, the right-hand-drive pattern in Western Cameroon was replaced by left-hand drive that was used in French Cameroon. As if that was not enough, in 1966, introduced a one-party state that was already in existence in French Cameroon at the time of reunification in 1961 (Bayart, 1970). This implied that all political parties that existed in West Cameroon, such as Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP), led by Foncha, and the Cameroon People's National Congress (CPNC) of Endeley, were submerged by President Ahidjo's *Union Camerounaise* (UC), which was later re-baptised as *Union Nationale Camerounaise* (UNC) or Cameroon National Union (Fonchingong, 1998:119). The

disappearance of all Anglophone political parties heralded the assimilation of the Anglophone political voice and enthroned the political domination of the Francophone political elite. The Anglophone political voice was only re-introduced in the 1990s with the introduction of the multiparty system, after some Anglophone elites openly protested the inferior position of the Anglophones in the unitary state and demanded the return of multi-party federalism and regional autonomy (Dickson, 1988).

Anglophone Cameroonians have also pointed out that both the Ahidjo and Biya regimes have neglected and destroyed existing companies, financial and other institutions in West Cameroon in favour of those based in the French regions, such as the Cameroon Bank, the West Cameroon Marketing Board, Santa Coffee Estate, the Yoke Power Station, and the Mamfe, Victoria and Tiko sea and river export ports (Toh, 2001).

In addition, some Anglophones were not in support of the 50th celebration of independence by the government of Cameroon in 2010. The celebration led to protests by the Anglophone people, who described it as “rape on English-speaking Cameroonians” because French and English Cameroons did not both gain independence on the 1st of January 1960. The claim was that it was only French Cameroon which gained independence on 1st January 1960; while Anglophone Cameroon became independent on 1st October 1961, which was the reunification day (The Star, 2010). Therefore, celebrating the country’s 50th anniversary in 2010 was “a conscious distortion of historical facts in order to deny the existence of Anglophones as a people with a history” (*The Star*, 2010: 1). The protests received media attention from all over the globe and generated multiple forms of reactions from the international community. While the pro-French analysts saw the 50th anniversary as a well-deserved celebration, international apologists for Anglophone Cameroon maintained there should have been widespread consultations with the people of Anglophone Cameroon in order to agree on a generally acceptable date for the 50th anniversary celebrations.

The Anglophones also complained of their exclusion from key political and government positions in the country. They further claimed that, since the

Cameroonian reunification in 1961, no Anglophone Cameroonian has held positions of leadership of vital and sensitive ministries such as the Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Territorial Administration and National Education (The Post, 2000). They have usually been appointed as vice-ministers, or assumed inferior positions such as in the Ministry of Transport. It is also uncommon to find an Anglophone as director in the Cameroonian public service, as they are systematically retired before they reach the apex of their civil service career (Chereji & Lohkoko, 2012). A general belief pervasive among Anglophone people is that they are assumed to be only fit to play "deputy" or "assistant" to Francophone bosses, even where the latter may be incompetent or less qualified (AACI, 1993:15).

However, for the Anglophone people, the change of name by Paul Biya in 1984, from the United Republic of Cameroon, which many Anglophones considered the last symbol of the 1961 Union of the Republic, to *La Republic du Cameroon*, was a clear indication of a loss of identity and territory by Anglophones to French Cameroonians (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 2003:72). This precipitated a widespread sense of socio-political and economic marginalisation amongst the Anglophone minority (International Crisis Group, 2017). Despite attempts by several Anglophone political and social movements, such as the Southern Cameroon National Council (SCNC), Southern Cameroon People's Organisation (SCAPO), and Southern Cameroon Youth League (SCYL) to protest and call for symbolic proclamation of independence in 1999 as well as in 2009, the country progressively witnessed the centralisation of power and further weakening of Anglophone's political strength at the national level (Amnesty International, 2017).

Furthermore, it was the nature of the uneven amalgamation of the Francophone and Anglophone Cameroon that laid the foundation for the current political crisis in the country. With regard to the faulty nature of the Cameroonian federal structure, Anglophone Cameroonians complained about the neglect and underdevelopment of their region compared to the French regions, despite the fact that the oil refinery, the *Société Nationale de Raffinage* (SONARA) is based in West Cameroon, to be precise, in Limbe (Konings, 1993). SONARA, as a multinational company, has joined hands with the Francophone government in the centre to ensure that the environmental concerns of Limbe and neighbouring inhabitants, where oil is

explored, are not a priority (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 2003). These Anglophone settlements face increasing environmental degradation as well as pollution due to the activities of the multinational oil companies. Konings (1993) further explains that the oil company SONARA is dominated by staff from the Francophone regions. The Anglophone people lament that their region has not benefitted from social development in the face of resource-drain from their area; instead, the revenue from the oil exploration activities in their land is used to stimulate development in the Francophone-dominated state and to "feed the bellies" of the allies of Francophone Cameroon (Bayart, 1989). This has created significant resentment among Anglophones, who now feel that they are being recolonised, neglected and discriminated against, and are thus considered as second-class citizens in their own country (Bayart, 1993).

Furthermore, the Anglophone people complain that they have been discriminated against and regarded as outsiders. This is based on the premise that, at the peak of the 1992 presidential elections, (between the incumbent Paul Biya and John Fru Ndi), the then-French President, Francois Mitterand, declared on Radio France, specifically on 11th October 1992, that "no English man will ever be president of a French Province" (Toh, 2001: 49). Such political communication from the French leadership, at that time, gave credence to the acclaimed rigging of elections, and vote buying, and reinforced the perceived international collaboration of France against the Anglophone people of Cameroon.

The international and neo-colonial system of education in the country laid the foundation for years of demonstrations and education-based protests in the country. It should be recalled that, during the colonial era, the French and British institutionalised their educational systems in the different parts of the country, in line with the constitutional biculturalism of the country (Nyamnjoh, 2003). The government of Cameroon recognised two educational sub-systems in 1961, that is, the Anglophone and the Francophone sub-systems, with two examination bodies. These educational systems were advanced in 1993 with the creation of the Baccalaureate and General Certificate of Education (GCE) examination boards.

Unfortunately, schools and other institutions in Anglophone Cameroon were later staffed with Francophone teachers, who could not speak English. The crisis of imposing French-speaking teachers on English-speaking students remains. Consequently, lessons were given in French or Pidgin-English to Anglophone students, and examinations were also set in the French language (Crisis Group, 2017). For example, Government Technical Colleges in the Anglophone region operated under the Francophone system of education using *Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle (CAP) Probatire* and the *Baccalauréat* rather than the GCE as the end-of-course examination or for summative evaluation (Crisis Group International, 2017). This, therefore, offended Anglophone Cameroonians, who felt their system of education, was *Frenchified*. In order for their voice to be heard, they went on the streets protesting, which later turned into violent protests, and the central Francophone dominated government released the military and police to use unlimited force against unarmed protesters (Lauvergnier, 2016). Even in the midst of the violent attack on the Anglophone people, using the machinery of the Francophone-dominated state, Anglophone Cameroonians have continued to fight for the restoration of their socio-cultural and linguistic identity, threatened by the assimilation policies of the majority Francophone Cameroon and their French ally (Joseph, 2014:122).

Due to the continuous escalation of violence in the two English-speaking regions of Cameroon, the United States Government has condemned the brutal use of force by the Government of Cameroon to restrict free expression and peaceful assembly of protesters. This position was made known by the United States Ambassador to Cameroon, Peter Barlerin, who acknowledged the fact that there was manipulation of violence by both conflicting parties (government military and the separatist fighters), as the government was guilty of committing summary executions as well as detaining people and not allowing them access to their families, while burning villages in Southern Cameroon, using state apparatus (CRTV, 2018). On the other hand, the United States spokesman maintained the separatist were horribly beheading and kidnapping government officials. Hence, the United States urged the Government of Cameroon to respect human rights and called on both sides of the conflict to exercise restraint from further violence, as well as to engage in dialogue as a roadmap to peaceful resolution of the crisis (Equinoxe TV, 2018).

The government of neighbouring Nigeria got involved in the current crisis in Cameroon when it arrested Sisiku Ayuk Tabe, President of the Ambazonian separatist movement alongside eight other leaders of the Ambazonian Interim Government in a hotel in Abuja, during their visit to Nigeria to advocate for increased hospitality for fleeing Ambazonian refugees in Nigeria (Bareta News, Jan 7, 2018). Following the arrest, the protests increased and the violence on both sides continued, especially in the absence of the erstwhile Ambazonian leadership that promoted dialogue and peaceful negotiations.

Thus, this study investigates causes of the crisis in Cameroon to comprehend why the country is not yet close to any point of dialogue, negotiation and resolution since conflicting parties (that is, the Ambazonian Defence force and la Republic military as well as the Cameroonian Government) are constantly at loggerheads and have failed to work with one another even after the calls for dialogue by a number of international actors.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Following years of incessant escalation of violent conflict in the English regions of Cameroon, despite calls for dialogue by President Paul Biya in 2019 (CrtV 2019), coupled with other international actors like the United State of America, Britain, France, Africa Union (AU), and the United Nations (UN), violent conflict continues to prevail in the two English regions of Cameroon. It is due to the incessant escalation of violent conflict in the Cameroonians regions that this study assesses why, despite the call for dialogue to resolve the conflict, the discord and acrimony prevails in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon.

The imposition of governors and local administrators by President Ahidjo to govern the people of Southern Cameroon, whose means of livelihood (oil) was suddenly centralised and managed by the government in Yaoundé (Equinoxe TV, 2016). The illegal annexation of the state of Southern Cameroon, overbearing governance and control over resources, the repression of any form of uprising against the illegal control and annexation of the state of Southern Cameroon, as well as the wilful degrading of developmental projects such as the educational, banking, and other

developed systems in the former British territory (Southern Cameroon) by the Republic of Cameroon have been a recurring phenomenon that has provoked a series of political crises in Cameroon.

While this phenomenon has attracted studies aimed at correcting these ugly circumstances of continual political clashes in Cameroon, considering the impact of peaceful co-existence of both territories on the country's national development intent, little is known empirically about the implications of political crisis for Cameroon's developmental intent. The research problem of this study therefore emanated from the lack of empirical understanding in the emerging area of peaceful co-existence of both federated units.

The forceful integration of people with different orientations, cultures and world views laid the foundation for multi-nation states in Africa. Unfortunately, the inability of the political elite to promote inter-group integration and national unity after independence created ethnic politics and cries of marginalisation across different groups in Africa. Over the years, Anglophone Cameroonians have complained of their marginalisation by Francophones, who constitute the majority and are in charge of government, politics and education in Cameroon. Since the reunification of French and British Cameroon on 11 February 1961, the English-speaking regions of Cameroon (North and South West regions) feel cheated and assimilated by French Cameroon (Eden, 2009).

Their grievances range from regional underdevelopment, unequal representation in public affairs, and the exploration of crude oil without sustainable benefits for Anglophone communities. Due to the marginalisation of the Anglophone people, in 2016, lawyers went on strike protesting against the new code of law, known as the Organisation for the Harmonisation of Business Law (OHADA) Uniform Act, signed by the Minister of Justice, making French the legal code of law applicable across the nation. This was in total disregard of the common law practised in the former British Cameroon. In addition, teachers' unions, coupled with students, also joined the strike, protesting against the emerging domination of Francophone teachers in Anglophone schools. Consequently, many students could not perform well in their

final end-of-year examinations. It is this plethora of problems that underpin the choice of this study.

Anglophones also complained that in both universities in Buea and Bamenda, Francophones disproportionately out-numbered the Anglophones. Later, ordinary citizens joined the protest, decrying their difficulties in accessing basic necessities, thus transforming the situation into a violent conflict that has affected the economic and political life of the regions in the country as well as leading to the death and displacement of several people in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. Some of the leaders of the trade unions were arrested and jailed on charges of treason and attempting to change the current status quo.

Consequently, the crisis has developed into the nature of secession by the Anglophones. Many Anglophone Cameroonians have been migrating into the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) refugee camp in Nigeria. The threats to life as well as human rights abuses have led to claims and counter-claims from Amnesty International and the Cameroonian Government. The multiplier effect of the months of internet blackout in Anglophone Cameroon created multi-dimensional problems. Given the numbers of security and defence forces that have been killed in the armed conflict (The Guidance, 2020), this study finds legitimate justification. The role of the French government in institutionalising Francophone dominance remains problematic. It is these domestic problems which have developed into a multi-dimensional crisis that the researcher strives to unravel and proffer solutions.

1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY

This study's aim is to assess the causes, impact and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian political crisis from 1972-2018.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are to:

- Establish and assess the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon from 1972-2018.

- Determine the impact of the political crisis in Cameroon from 1972-2018.
- Identify factors responsible for the breakdown of the peaceful resolution of the Cameroonian political crisis from 1972-2018.
- Examine mitigation pathways to resolve the Cameroonian crisis and achieve sustainable peace in the country.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guide the study:

- What are the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon?
- What are the impacts of the political crisis in Cameroon?
- Why did the previous pathways to peace fail in resolving the Cameroonian political crisis?
- What are the alternative pathways to resolve the Cameroonian crisis and achieve peace in the country?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is considered relevant for the following reasons: firstly, the possibility of advancing new knowledge on how the recurring political crisis in Cameroon has led to human displacement and irregular migration among the youth, whose energies could have been harnessed for the developmental drive of the country. Secondly, this study is important as one of the initial studies to provide empirical evidence regarding the causes, impacts, and pathways to the Cameroonian political crisis. Thirdly, this study identifies factors that have contributed to the political crisis and suggests alternative ways in resolving the crisis and bringing about lasting peace. Ultimately, this study proffers areas for further research on the degree of state integration in Cameroon.

This study is significant because peace in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon will reduce tension in the region and if the crisis is prolonged, as in the cases of South Sudan and Eritrea, the rate of casualties and human rights abuses will continue to rise, thereby creating human security problems. The findings of this study, especially on migration pathways to peace, could reduce instability in the country and the

region in general. Finding answers to the objectives and research questions listed in the section above is a direct attempt to fill the void in the literature pertaining to the conflict when aligned to a political crisis.

Furthermore, the study is beneficial to policymakers, and governments in West and Central Africa, coupled with peace ambassadors who feel the immediate effect of the crisis in Cameroon. This study helps policymakers to understand the constraints of the impacts of the conflict and therefore contributes towards a peaceful solution to the problem faced by the country. This is because ignoring such a problem may lead to failure and meltdown of the country's economy.

In addition to the above, this study is beneficial to the academic world, regional organisations like the Africa Union (AU), the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), and countries in Africa that share the experiences of the political crisis in Cameroon.

Moreover, for peace ambassadors, the research provides information they could use in forecasting and implementing measures aimed at resolving future conflict, and promoting peace and stability. Also, the mediation and peace-building strategies recommended would be a useful document for Peace Studies and analysis. The study will also assist scholars, policymakers, and the international community to evaluate the dynamics of the national crisis in Cameroon. This study documents information and makes recommendations that could be useful to the citizenry and the government of Cameroon.

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on the causes, impact and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian Political Crisis from 1972 to 2018. This period was chosen because 1972 was the year when the former President Ahidjo changed the country's name from the Federal Republic of Cameroon to a unitary state, altering the Founban Conference agreement, which set the scene for the marginalisation of the Anglophone minority and fuelling the contemporary uprising. Furthermore, it is within this time frame that the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon reached its peak, generating different forms of impact.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design implies the work plan on how the study is conducted, or steps used by a researcher to collect data for a study. An exploratory research approach, using purposive or judgmental sampling, focus group discussions, and in-depth analysis of content, was adopted in this study. Thus, this qualitative approach to inquiry is essentially exploratory and involves methods of data collection that are non-quantitative in nature (Miles & Huberman, 1994). A purposive sampling technique was considered because it allows the researcher to exclude prospective participants who cannot provide important data for the study, while focusing upon participants judged by the researcher as particularly suitable for the purposes of the research. Furthermore, Hennink et al. (2011:10) posit that qualitative research stimulates people's individual experiences that avoid pre-judgment. On that note, different methods of data collection such as interviews and focus group discussion by the researcher are used in order to assess the causes, impacts and pathways to peace of the crisis in Cameroon.

1.8.1 Population of the study

The study population is referred to as the totality of elements or individuals or groups to which the findings are to be applied to answer the research problem (Creswell 2013: 167). In this study, the targeted population consists of both male and female Anglophone and Francophone Cameroonians, of ages 20-60, from Cameroon and the refugee camp in Nigeria. The educational level of participants cuts across all levels of education in Cameroon. The researcher identified those knowledgeable of the crisis and who have been affected by the crisis in the Anglophone regions. However, the research excluded any participants who were not from the Anglophone regions, or were biased, and have not lived in the Anglophone region, and those who are not aware of the political crisis in Cameroon. The study population consisted of the following groups;

- Select Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) operating in the crisis areas in Cameroon and Nigeria. For the purpose of this study, two NGOs were

selected, that is the Adagom Cameroonians Refugee Camp, and Change Care Foundation, with a total of 25 members of staff;

- Selected officials and members of the ruling party and main opposition parties in the South West Region [Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) and Social Democratic Front (SDF)], a total of 55 members;
- The Association of Lawyers in Cameroon in Buea South West Region with 50 members;
- Selected officials and members of the Ambazonia Defence Force (ADF) or the Amba boys. Out of the six separatist groups operating in the South-West region, two were purposively selected, with 110 members.
- Refugees at Ogoja, Cross River State camps in Nigeria with approximately, 30,000 Anglophones refugees (Al Jazeera News, 2018), 20 persons were purposively chosen by the researcher to participate in the study. From the above statistics, the population of the study is N=260. Based on the study population, the research used the purposive sampling technique.

The target population is relevant to the study because they have the knowledge of the on-going political crisis in the two Anglophones regions of Cameroon.

1.8.2 Sampling strategy

A non-probability or purposive sampling strategy was adopted to select 53 participants from a population of approximately 260 people in Cameroon and refugees in Nigeria, both males and females, with ages ranging from 20-60. The target population was both Anglophones and Francophones in Cameroon and Nigeria. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 53 participants for this study since it was difficult to include the entire population. Therefore, using purposive sampling was at the discretion of the researcher. This is also due to the large size of the population, and the different regions and states in both countries; for example, Cameroon is made up of ten regions. The researcher used technological platforms to

send the interview questions to participants prior to field work, as well as to record feedback from those interviewed face-to-face. With an interview, there was the possibility of rephrasing the questions to make sure that participants understood them clearly. It is a good tool for obtaining detailed information (Yin, 2003), especially as the researcher intended to investigate and document details of the political crisis.

The overall number of participants interviewed in Cameroon was selected from towns and villages such as Buea, Muea, Muyuka, Ikata, Bafia and Owe, and they were made up of political activists, members of civil society and academia; in Nigeria, they included refugees and staff at the Adagom Camp. Within each group, a certain number, for example, 5, were interviewed in FGDs from the different towns and villages mentioned above (a detailed explanation of the methodology is provided in Chapter Three of this study).

1.8.3 Sampling size

Sample is the specific group from which the researcher collects data for generalisation. As noted above, the sample of this study included Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), operating in the crisis areas in Cameroon and Nigeria, The Association of Lawyers, the main political parties in Cameroon [People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) and Social Democratic Front (SDF)], the Ambazonia Defence Force (ADF), and academia. From the above population of 260, only 38 participants were purposively selected to take part in five (5) focus group discussions. Furthermore, 15 participants, comprising both males and females, were selected for individual interviews (a detailed explanation is provided in Chapter Three of this study).

1.8.4 Data collection

Having identified the sampling framework, the researcher used primary and secondary sources to collect data. According to Busetto, Wick and Gumbinger (2020:2), data collection involves the tools use in collecting data to answer the research question and secondary data.

1.8.4.1 Primary Data Collection

Primary data sources included in-depth interview and Focus Group Discussions (research objective and questions.) The following methods were used to collect data: in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions (FGD). Interviews were conducted in towns such as Buea and Muyuka, and villages such as Ikata, Bafia, Mile 16 and Owe, as well in the refugee camp in Nigeria. In case a participant did not show up at a meeting, the researcher opted for a phone interview. This method of data collection was adopted because it provides greater details and in-depth information about the subject under study. It also gives room for individuals to narrate their experiences based on their understanding of the phenomenon under study. The researcher utilised structured interviews since it enables rephrasing a question to make sure that participants understand it clearly.

Five focus group discussions of 5-7 persons were conducted in Muyuka, Mile 16 and Buea, Cameroon, as well as with Anglophone refugee in the Ogoja Camp, Nigeria. A total of 53 interviews were conducted. As highlighted above, N=38 participants were chosen to take part in FGDs, while the remaining 15 participants participated in in-depth interviews.

The reason N=53 interviews will be conducted allows for the generation of sufficient data to develop the study. The research population was the 260 persons and 60,000 refugees in Nigeria, according to UNHCR (2020). The gatekeeper's permission letter to conduct research is from the following entity: the Major Muyuka council, South West Region, the Director of the Forzi Sugar Company Limited (Ltd) and the Refugee Camp from Ogoja Nigeria, since the research was conducted with permission within its jurisdiction. The researcher obtained the contact information of participants through gatekeepers.

With regards to FGDs, the researcher ensured that all participants observed COVID-19 guidelines and regulations.

1.8.4.2 Secondary sources

Secondary sources of data were book chapters, books, journal articles, published e-books, newspapers, magazines, internet sources, and official documents from the anglophone press, as well as documents from other relevant players in the Cameroonian crisis. The researcher embarked upon in-depth analysis to get penetrating accounts of the effects of the political crisis in Cameroon by researchers and scholars in this special interest area.

1.8.5 Data analysis

Content analysis was used to evaluate data obtained from both secondary and primary documents. The data collected for this study through interview was scrutinised using thematic data analysis techniques. According to Van Maanen (1979:539), thematic data analysis involves identifying common trends as submitted by the research participants. Thematic data analysis was considered appropriate for this study because data is organised into meaningful codes categories and themes (Peel, 2020:7).

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Every study exhibits some form of limitation. This study has its own limitations and weaknesses, especially due to the type of research method adopted. The major limitation of using a qualitative research method is that the subject under investigation is a sensitive issue, which needs to be approached with great caution in order to reduce bias and prejudice in data collection. This study is also limited to the conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon; hence this cannot represent the nature, extent and challenges of other conflicts; for example, the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northern part of Cameroon and other inter-ethnic conflicts. Another limitation of this study is based on language issue (French), especially in the process of data collection. But the language issue is not a big challenge since the researcher has knowledge of basic French and engaged the services of an interpreter. The researcher also used the locally acceptable 'Broken English style of communication' that is largely used in Cameroon to conduct interviews. Based on the fact that

Cameroon is located far from the North-West University and South Africa, this challenge creates its own terrain-driven hurdle and financial constraints for the researcher. Also, the cost of travelling to the research area by air is a very big challenge. However, the researcher combined both travelling to the research sites for field interviews with e-interviews with Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-competent persons.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations in research protect participants against any harm that could be caused by the research. Therefore, with the objective of assessing the causes, effects and pathways to peace of the Cameroonian political crisis from 1972-2018 in Cameroon, the researcher elicited the views of specialists and informed minds on the phenomenon of the Cameroonian crisis. Hence, information gathered in this regard was used only for academic purposes. Again, access to information was by the free-will of participants. Thus, the researcher did not compel anybody to grant information. The researcher ensured that participants were protected from any psychological or physical harm which the research could cause. In this regard, the consent form from the university was used to protect the autonomy of participants. The researcher was ethically conscious, regarding data collections, data analysis and dissemination of findings. Human rights issues were observed and the researcher ensured that participants consented and responded willingly. The researcher ensured that the names of participants as well as identity information were presented in codified form in order to protect them from intimidation and threat. The most vital ethical issues that the researcher should adhere to include respect for anonymity, confidentiality, and respect for privacy.

1.10.1 Anonymity

In no way will the results of this study be linked to a participant's identity, which is the first priority. Each participant will have a code, and no personal information will be added in the reporting of the findings of the study.

1.10.2 Confidentiality

Information from participants will be protected by the researcher. The researcher will make sure that reporting of findings is anonymous. The researcher will make sure that data is kept safe and secure by locking hard copies in locked cupboards in the researcher's office; electronic data will be password protected.

1.11 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

CHAPTER ONE: The initial chapter gives an introduction of the research work. It states the background, the aims and objectives of the research, justification for the study, research questions, scope and significance of the study, research methodology and sources of the data, scope of the study and finally the outline and structure of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: Chapter two defines concepts such as decolonisation, self-determination and secession. The chapter further reviews relevant literature and the development of useful theoretical frameworks for understanding the causes, effects and the pathways to peace of the Cameroonian crisis. The theories include Relative Deprivation, Integration, Anomie, and Self-determination theory.

CHAPTER THREE: This chapter discusses the methodological approach. This includes qualitative methods employed to investigate the causes, effects and pathways to peace of the Cameroonian political crisis. The chapter further deals with sampling procedures, sample size, study population, data collection techniques, and data analyses of the study. The chapter presents trustworthiness, ethical considerations, and limitations.

CHAPTER FOUR: This chapter provides the description of the geographical location of Cameroon where the study is conducted. The chapter also discusses the causes of the political conflicts and its impacts.

CHAPTER FIVE: This chapter deals with the different strategies that the government has implemented to restore peace and stability in the country.

CHAPTER SIX: This ultimate chapter summarises the research findings, presents the conclusion and makes recommendations in relation to the causes, effects and pathways to peace of the Cameroonian political conflict.

1.12 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

Chapter one presented the introduction of this study. The introduction gives brief information about Cameroon and how the territory of Cameroon gained its independence. The background to the study further provided broad information regarding the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon. The chapter further presented the problem statement, which gave more details about the problem which the study intends to address, the research purpose, the research objectives, and the research questions. The chapter also presented the significance of the study. The chapter presented a concise research methodology in order to keep the reader informed. Specifically, a qualitative methodology was adopted. The chapter also presented limitations of the study. Ethical considerations were also presented, as was the chapter layout.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the background to the study and outlined the statement of the research problem. This chapter begins by presenting the review of relevant literature and definition of concepts on the assessment of the causes, impact, and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian political crisis. The latter helps develop the current arguments on the Cameroonian crises. The literature review is conducted to keep abreast of the past and present debates in a field of study. The review of related literature helps to reshape and open up the research questions to new possibilities. In addition, it helps to contextualise the study. Hence, in this chapter, a review of previous works related to this study is undertaken. The review covers the studies carried out by authors, and researchers, as well as the views of relevant stakeholders in the field of politics and international relations. Furthermore, this chapter presents the theoretical framework of this study. This is done by describing the theory and functions of the framework. There is hardly any research work without theories, because in political science one needs relevant facts relative to the current state of development.

However, the focus of this study is not to dwell on the concepts as such but to use them in the general sense to help situate the current conflict in Cameroon. This research is guided by four theories, namely, the theory of Relative Deprivation, Integration theory, theory of Anomie, and self-determination. There is a vast literature that exists on the causes, nature of conflict and history of Cameroon. But the fact is that different authors handle the theme in different contexts and to achieve different objectives. In light of this, the present chapter reviews the literature on this topic for the following reasons, which are designed to:

- Establish what has been written about this topic so that the study does not fall into the trap of repeating what has been covered already by different scholars;
- Examine the existing sources to establish their strengths and weaknesses;

- Identify the gap that still needs to be filled to enhance an understanding of the crisis in Cameroon.

2.2 Formation of the Cameroonian State and foundation of the conflict

Concerning the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon, a number of authors have provided accounts on the origin, nature and development of the conflict. In the context of this study, it is important to briefly outline the arguments of some authors. Ngoh (2000) provides a brief history of Cameroon. He states that Cameroon derived its name during the scramble for Africa, whereby the territory was partly colonised by Germany, and eventually became German Kamerun. He further explains that during WWI, the Germans were defeated and evicted from their colonial territories, including Cameroon (Kamerun). The territory was partitioned between France and Britain, as mandated territories under the League of Nations and as Trusteeship territory under the United Nations.

Ngoh's (2004) position is supported by Bongfen (1976), who documents how both territories gained independence as well as how they eventually became one Federal Republic of Cameroon. The authors posit that in 1972, the country's name was changed from the federal republic to a unitary state through a nationwide referendum which laid the foundation for the minority position of Anglophone Cameroon, and the rise of the national crisis in the country. Both authors state that in 1984, President Paul Biya unilaterally took the decision to change the country's name from a unitary state to *La Republique du Cameroun* (the Republic of Cameroon) (Ngoh & Bongfen 2004), which was the name French Cameroon had at independence in 1960. This later awakened the consciousness within the Anglophones about the French agenda to dominate and marginalise them in the country.

2.3 CAUSES OF THE CAMEROONIAN POLITICAL CRISIS

This section assesses the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon. For this study, the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon are divided into remote and immediate causes of the political crisis in Cameroon.

2.3.1 Remote causes of the political crisis in Cameroon

The phenomenon of conflict is dynamic and evolving around the globe, with a paradigmatic shift from inter-state to intra-state conflicts, particularly in the post-cold-war period. These factors which influence instability differ from country to country. Countries around the world have been faced with internal instability resulting in the death and displacement of thousands of people. This section discusses factors that have contributed to instability faced by most countries around the world, Africa and Cameroon in particular.

Over the years, especially in the post-cold-war era, most countries around the globe have witnessed political, social, economic or religious instability in one form or another. Focusing on the causes of conflicts makes meaningful comparisons across different areas difficult, because groups are tied to their specific territories. Arguably, causes of conflict vary from one geographical region to another, or from country to country. There is an increasing recognition that the root causes of conflict and violent strife in some countries are linked to several complex factors. Admittedly, what constitutes the causes of conflict are rooted within a state, and external factors, which include bad governance and corruption, decolonisation, political exclusion, inequality, human rights violations, poverty, unemployment, religious differences, marginalisation, nationalism, and small arms and light weapons proliferation (among others), which continue to serve as triggers and drivers of violent conflicts in the world at large and Cameroon in particular.

2.3.1.1 *Decolonisation*

There are diverse meanings related to the concept of decolonisation; but for this study, 'decolonisation' is the process where a nation obtained independence from a colonial master (Ade-ibijola, 2014:43). Fanon (1963) defines decolonisation as the attempt to change the order of the world, an agenda for disorder, a historical process; and the need to challenge the colonial situation.

Furthermore, decolonisation was one of the turning points in the history of the post-war-world. Decolonisation was the mirror image of colonisation that slowly brought

European domination to Africa in the nineteenth century. Grossman and Iygun (1997) argue that rapid population growth created the incentive for decolonisation in Africa and South East Asia after World War II. Building from the above, decolonisation can be referred to as the withdrawal of a colonial power from territory which it had forcefully occupied, conquered, or subjugated, or the undoing of colonialism, where a nation establishes and maintains an independent territory (Pierre-Damien, 2017).

The issue that dominated global politics, which eventually culminated in decolonisation, among others, was the Cold War, or ideological battle for world dominance and supremacy between the Soviet Union and the United States of America and their allies, which formed the core of world politics at the time. It was during these thick clouds that the Soviet Union leader, Nikita Khrushchev, submitted a request during the fifteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), in 1960, demanding that an additional item entitled, “a declaration on the granting of independence to the colonial countries and peoples” (United Nations Document, 1960) be added to the agenda of the UNGA. The Soviet request received a lot of support from UNGA members; a phenomenon which politicised the decolonisation process, as a large contingent of the newly-independent African countries, among others Ghana and Nigeria, as well as Asian and some Latin American countries, gave tremendous support to the Soviet Union’s anti-colonial declaration. Thus Nikita Khrushchev’s agenda item reshaped the politics of decolonisation around the globe (Kay, 1970).

According to Sofia (2020), decolonisation is the removal of military, political, and government rule of a colonised land. The Oxford *English Dictionary* defines decolonisation as “the withdrawal of former colonial power from its colonies; the acquisition of political or economic independence by such colonies.” It further concurs that the withdrawal may have been voluntary, or forced by social, political and environmental pressures. For example, the decolonisation of many African states was forceful, based on the fact that countries such as Ghana, Cameroon, Nigeria, Congo, Kenya, and many others had to fight to gain their independence (Sofia, 2020). As highlighted above, decolonisation is an element of conflict in this study because it was through decolonisation that many countries around the world,

including Africa, gained independence. Also, it was how colonial governments relinquished power, which has gradually culminated in conflict crises in Africa like the conflicts in Chad, Congo, Mali, and the ongoing crisis in the Anglophone regions. In line with the above orientation, decolonisation did not offer Southern Cameroonians a meaningful opportunity to determine their destiny through independence in 1961.

David (1995) takes a different dimension on the idea of decolonisation. The author focuses on the impact of decolonisation on independent territories. David (1995) maintains African culture has been affected by European Christianity as well as by political institutions. The foregoing sentiment is advanced by Tejeta *et al.* (2010), who argue that decolonisation contributed to social justice and self-determination across the world.

Furthermore, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2019) defines decolonisation as a process where colonised people had to wage resistance against their respective colonial masters, which eventually resulted in the independence of some countries. According to John (2014), the decolonisation of Africa, which took place between the 1950s and 1970s, can be referred to the transition from the colonial government to an independent state of the nations involved. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2019) further states that the “decolonisation process was often quite disorganised, and blemished with violence, political turmoil, widespread unrest, and organised revolts in both northern and sub-Saharan countries” which include the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya, Congo Crisis in Belgian Congo, the Biafra secessionist crisis in Nigeria, and the current Anglophone political crisis in which the people of former British Southern Cameroon are demanding secession from French Cameroon. The above definition of decolonisation speaks to the transfer of power from the powers that upheld colonial structures to those that were previously colonised (Ocean, 2020:1). This study argues that though Africa has been decolonised it is more in theory than in practice. This is due to the re-colonisation of Anglophone Cameroon by the French that has triggered political upheaval in the country.

Thus decolonisation is used in this study as a remote factor that fuels instability in some countries in Africa, and Cameroon in particular. Decolonisation has also instigated instability and bad governance in some countries in Africa like Mali, Chad,

Kenya, the Congo, the Central African Republic, Lesotho, and Cameroon. The logic is that decolonisation in these states was a hasty and unprepared granting of independence to most of the states in Africa. Therefore, decolonisation played a pivotal role in causing, and sustaining conflict in Africa by either creating artificial colonial boundaries, thus dividing ethnic and cultural communities, or by bringing different cultures and communities together, as in the case of Cameroon (Francis, 2013).

In addition to the above, decolonisation is used in this study to advance the claim that since independence, most countries in Africa have faltered economically, politically, and socially, leading to a situation where small groups amass the wealth of the country at the expense of the majority. In this study, the decolonisation period is considered a point of departure when trying to ascertain the meaning and applicability of the concept of 'self-determination' (Epps, 1997), since the concept became legal during the era of decolonisation (Gold, 2009).

2.3.1.2 *Bad governance and corruption*

This section discusses the role of bad government and corruption in fuelling conflict. In contemporary society, bad government and corruption are considered factors inciting violence and political instability in the world at large, and Cameroon in particular. For example, the conflicts in Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Cameroon and other countries in Africa have been partly blamed on bad government and corruption. Following independence, most countries have been pushed into violence and political instability, with many studies suggesting that corruption and bad government contribute to conflict. Countries such as Catalonian Spain, Scotland, Kosovo, Belgium, Mali, Sudan, Nigeria, Northern Italy, and others are notably blamed on bad government and corruption (my emphasis). For example, in Europe, some countries like Spain (Catalonian) have faced political upheaval as parties consistently struggle to form governments in an increasingly divided political landscape as result of bad government and corruption (Minder, 2019).

Boyle and Englebert (2006) observe that the inability of a government to provide for its peoples, especially the minority groups in a country, generates an incentive for

separatist movements; these can be blamed on the flaws of government, its impossibility to provide an economic policy, and its orientation on nationalism as a tool for uniting the country. This is evident in the rise of the separatism movements around the world. In a similar vein, in this study, unemployment as a result of bad government is considered as a factor fuelling political instability. For example, the secession agitation in Spain was driven by the high rate of unemployment, which was made worse by the economic crisis due to bad government (La Vanguardia, 2013). According to La Vanguardia, in 2013 Catalonia had reached a record 23.9% unemployment and Spain had reached 26.2%. The latter, however, triggered the rise of secessionism in Catalonia. Catalonia also claims that they have been ripped off economically by the Spanish government. They point out that, over the years, the Spanish government has invested millions of Euros in trains, airports, and other large public works outside of Catalonia. But the Catalanian activists for secession claim that, despite the effort made by the Spanish government on providing trains, airports and others, these investments have given little or no benefit at the state level, while Catalonia continues to benefit the Kingdom of Spain (The National, 2018). Reasoning on the same line, however, the Catalonians bid for secession because they have been stripped of all their rights, and even their language and culture have been made illegal. Hence the above reason, coupled with others, accounted for the revival of secessionist struggles in Europe.

In addition to the above, poor administrative management as a result of bad government as shown by research conducted by Vinck et al. (2011) indicate that poor administrative management provoked minority groups into demanding separation or decentralisation. The above assertion is supported by the fact that in the United Kingdom (UK), the Scottish National Party (SNP) was demanding separation from the UK, because they claim the UK government administration was not working appropriately for Scotland, and that Scotland's voice was not being heard in Westminster (Guardians Vote, 2015). Consequently, the Scottish people are demanding secession, believing that an independent Scotland can do better on its own.

Africa is not immune to related conflict as result of bad government. Following independence, several countries in sub-Saharan Africa have witnessed freedom

heroes turn into dictators and authoritarian rulers, for example, in Cameroon, Chad, Mali, and Gabon. These dictators have been engaged in the reckless plundering of natural resources, politics of exclusion and deprivation to tilt the balance of power and to dominate the public sphere (Annan, 2012:8). Unfortunately, mismanaged state resources and weakened governance institutions have resulted in economic stalemate, political apprehensions and breakdown of social peace and stability (Annan, 2014:9). Consequently, a multitude of countries in Africa have been experiencing violent armed conflict; some have even become civil wars fought by ordinary Africans who have over the years expressed their discontent with regimes imposed upon them (Ong'ayo, 2008:2), such as Nigeria, Chad, Mali, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Cameroon. It can be argued here that bad government in sub-Saharan Africa is the driver of violence and conflict.

Scholars such as Ylono (2013) and Ndulo (2013) suggest that poor governance creates the dynamics of marginalisation, which poses a challenge to the state and marginalised groups. Ndulo (2013) points out that failure of governments to place dividends on democracy leads minority groups to believe that they are not included in running the affairs of the state. In a similar vein, frustration, suffering, and poverty informed by poor governance and exclusion from state affairs ignite ethnic or minority-based identity groups to mobilise themselves and start agitating, with the belief that group rights would be adequately protected in a self-governed territory (Katz, 1995:183). Reasoning along the same line, Bamfo (2012:23) states that the cause of marginalisation and discrimination within a state among groups or regions is poor governance, and that naturally leads to ideological and political differences spanning from the central government, which might lead to the rise of separatist sentiments, or might develop into secessionism. Bad governance accounts for the above and is fundamental in explaining the legitimisation of the secessionist struggle among all ethnic groups and classes in Ambazonia and accounts of the Cameroonian experience.

Elbadawi and Sambanis (2000) observe that political institutions that are weak influence the high incidence of conflict in Africa. The authors further pointed out that the dearth of democratic institutions in Africa spur political conflict (Elbadawi & Sambanis, 2009). Hence, political instability and other related problems in Africa are,

in essence, a consequence of bad government which might be blamed on the manner in which independence was granted.

Moreover, the winner-takes-all phenomenon in Africa which is often displayed by the party in power influences a political crisis in some states (Ekeke & Lubisi, 2020:6). Consequently, when the national cake is shared by only one particular ethnic group to the detriment of other groups in the same state, conflict becomes inevitable, since the non-dominant group is excluded from state benefits (Ekeke & Lubisi, 2020). This is evident in the many secession agitations in Africa, from Nigeria, Mali, Chad, Congo, and Cameroon. In a similar vein, Richard and Annie (2010) contend that political instability in Africa is a consequence of explicit material greed and policy failure in terms of physical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, schools, hospitals and other social needs. In confirmation of the above statement, Fithen (1999) observes that the conflict in Sierra Leone was partly blamed on bad government, poverty, and corruption. In that same line, corruption as a result of bad government in some countries like Nigeria has been highlighted as one of the accentuating factors in the Niger Delta conflict and the Boko Haram insurgency (Ejibunu 2007; Brock, 2012). Corruption and bad government have, over the years, been shown to be the biggest factors influencing political instability in many countries all over the world.

In some countries in sub-Saharan Africa like Sudan, Mali, and the Congo, bad government and corruption contribute to political instability through the illegal accumulation of wealth and embezzlement (Hammed, 2018:3-4). For example, the corruption malaise in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has plunged the nation into instability. According to Transparency International (2019), the DRC faces several corruption challenges. Apparently, political integrity in government officials is extremely low; this is evidenced by the fact that about 76% of DRC citizens believe that all or most parliamentarians are involved in corruption (Transparency International, 2019). This has heightened the vulnerable population especially the youth, who find no hope in DRC and rather vent their anger through violence. Another example is in Sudan where the country has been plagued with unrest due to bad government (de Vries & Schomerus, 2017). Admittedly, de Vries & Schomerus (2017) point out that political conflict in Sudan was ignited by the cancellation of the

autonomy arrangements in 1983 between South and North Sudan by President Gaafar Nimeiri and the implementation of partial sharia law in the predominantly Christian South. This unscrupulous decision by President Gaafar Nimeiri strained the relations between North and South Sudan (de Vries & Schomerus, 2017).

In underscoring the observation above, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2004:34) posits that corruption and bad government spur tensions in some countries. Based on the UNICEF view, a majority of the people, especially the minority groups who had no voice in the government and no opportunities in life, are seriously provoked by the government and therefore are easily persuaded to engage in violence. This is because they see that the government is not treating them fairly. This is evidenced by the episodes of violent conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) following the practice of bad governance and lack of democracy in the country. Similarly, Ivory Coast has experienced violent conflict due to bad government and corruption. Malunga (2019:1) posits that the Zimbabwe crisis is blamed on the local political elites and their excessively corrupt behaviour.

Since 2015 Cameroon has been grappling with violent conflicts which have destabilised many of her economic activities (ICG, 2018). Political instabilities continue to be seen as an almost legitimate political alternative in Cameroon even though it is hard to ignore the growing violence that has taken a toll in the two Anglophone regions (Kuwonu, 2019). The causes of conflict in Cameroon are complex and diverse, as in the rest of the African continent.

In Cameroon, corruption practices are the norm. In fact, corruption has become invasive and has affected all sectors of the government, civil society and even the private sector. In short, corruption in Cameroon is pervasive such that Reuters (2010) refers to corruption as "Cameroon's worst-kept secret." According to Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) (2019), Transparency International ranked Cameroon 153 out of the 180 most corrupt countries. Building on the above, the study argues that corruption is one of the underlying factors of conflict in the two Anglophone regions. Moreover, in Cameroon, corruption and bad government are rooted in the political, economic, social, and judicial systems, where the local population feel the impact of corruption through violence (Reuters, 2010). The on-

going conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon is a clear case in point. In affirming the linkage between corruption and violence in the two English-speaking regions of Cameroon, Reuters (2019) indicates that 'seeing money coming from the South West region, especially from earnings on crude oil, bananas, and others resources sales, with essentially none of it reaching the ordinary people, has created conditions for insurrection' (Reuters, 2019).

In corroboration of the above, the failure of governance to address the malaise of corruption is a sure catalyst for political violence, and a vital explanation for the emergence of the separatist movements, such as the Amba boys, in the country. However, if the abovementioned persist in Cameroon, this could increase the likelihood for more violent conflicts and civil strife, rather than ending them and building sustainable peace in the country.

Jegarajah (2012) takes a different dimension in his analysis of the Cameroonian situation. He argues that the exploitation of minerals and its consequences, especially in the African continent, has led states to the battle field and the resource curse. This is because when inhabitants of the region do not see sustainable development coming their way, they begin to question government's competence and, at certain levels, seek secession, bearing in mind that the resources used to run the state are dominant in their space. Many countries in Africa have descended into instability, as in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Katanga region in the 1970s, as well as in Nigeria and the Biafra War of 1967 to 1970. He maintains it is in Anglophone Cameroon that the rich mineral resources of the country are found. Thus, Southern Cameroons, through the Southern Cameroon National Council (SCNC), seek better developmental conditions. The Anglophone regions of Cameroon build their claims for separation from French Cameroon on the grounds that they are economically marginalised and their regions are less developed, despite the fact that they have rich natural resources, such as oil, from which they have not benefited. Worse still, revenue obtained from these resources is spent on developmental projects in Douala, where their head office is based (Freedom House, 2005). This shows that the Anglophone regions are discriminated against. Hence, in order to overcome this dilemma, Anglophones should be given the opportunity to

make decisions about their regions since they best know what is good for them (Konings, 1996).

2.3.1.3 Colonial legacy

In addition to the remote causes of conflict, this study argues that colonial legacies also influence the reoccurrences of political conflict in some African states. This was facilitated by the ways in which colonial powers undermined democratic principles within African countries (Cheeseman & Fisher 2019). For example, the ongoing conflict in the two Anglophone regions of Cameroon is partly influenced by the colonial legacy (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 2003). In essence, the violent conflict in Cameroon is rooted in the creation of the post-colonial state, making it easily linked to the politics associated with the end of colonial rule.

Furthermore, Konings and Nyamnjoh (1997) as well as Kconkoh (2012) assert that the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon is rooted in the colonial era and the partition of Cameroon. They further state that the territory of Cameroon was formerly owned by Germany. After the defeat of Germany during WW1, Cameroon was partitioned between Britain and France. Therefore, the marginalisation of Anglophones started in 1961 when both territories merged. The authors give a clear example using the Fouban Conference, where the discontent between the Anglophone and the Francophone regions started manifesting five years after the unification. Firstly, the former President, Ahmadou Ahidjo, abolished all political parties in West Cameroon in order to enforce a one-party system. Secondly, there was no freedom of speech or free expression, hence Southern Cameroonians harboured resentment against French Cameroon. It was only in the 1990s that Anglophone grievances became evident after the introduction of multiparty politics in Cameroon.

Moreover, Konde (2009) argues that the Anglophone problem in Cameroon can be blamed on the impact of colonial rule. He points out that the outcome of European colonial rule in Cameroon gave rise to inherited colonial institutions and alienation of indigenous cultural norms. Therefore, the inability to reconsider the out-dated colonial inheritance and reflect on the political, social, economic, and cultural realities of contemporary Cameroon pose a great challenge to the government of *La*

Republique du Cameroun. Konde (2009) provides an example of authoritarian rule inherited from France by *la Republic du Cameroun* as a political strategy that the French-dominated government has continued to use to enforce authoritarianism against Anglophone Cameroonians. He states that many decades after independence, colonial influence is still pervasive in Cameroon, to the point that the Francophone leadership of the country still look to France, while Anglophones look to Britain for assistance. He also argues that it is not an exaggeration to infer that Cameroon's outstanding national problems originated from her dual colonial legacy which, in effect, is acting as a hindrance to national integration. The above scholar does not explain that the British have continued to neglect Anglophone Cameroonians after they were integrated into French-dominated Cameroon. Furthermore, Konde (2009) focuses more on the colonial causes of the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon. His work does not cover the role of political governance of the late 20th century in the development of the Cameroonian crisis. In addition, Atanga, in his book entitled *The Anglophone Cameroon Predicament*, discusses the impact of WW1 to the development of post-independence Cameroon (Le Vine, 1964). The study also accounts for the political and constitutional evolution of Cameroon. It highlights the Fouban Conference of 1961, which gave birth to a federal state that later changed to a unitary state (Eyongetah & Brian 1994:17; Johnson, 1970a:69).

2.3.1.4 Poverty

Poverty is another trap singled out in this research as a contributing factor to the conflict globally, in Africa and Cameroon in particular. Although the rate of poverty has decreased worldwide to 8.6 percent in 2018 (World Bank, 2018), the rate of poverty has not fallen on the African continent (Africa Development Bank, 2018). For this study, poverty is considered as a contributing factor to violent conflict in Africa. Poverty in Africa is on the increase because of war and civil unrest. A study conducted by International Futures (IFs) (2021:1) established that about 60% of people living in abject poverty are in sub-Saharan Africa. Similarly, the African Development Bank (2021) observed that the poverty rate in Africa is on the increase due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which might have tremendous consequences in the future. Comparatively, the poverty that many in the continent endured is one of the contributing reasons for the re-occurrence of violence in Africa, since people tend to

vent their anger through civil unrest and protest to get their grievances heard (African Development Bank, 2021). For instance, the World Bank's (2015) study in Ethiopia established that the re-occurrences of violence in the country is a result of poverty, as a significant number of the Ethiopian population (29.6%) live in absolute poverty despite efforts over the past two decades to stimulate rapid economic growth (IMF, 2015). At the same time in Central Africa, World Factbook (2015) observed that the conflicts in the Central Africa Republic, Mali, Chad, and others, are blamed on poverty. For example, with a population of 4 905 513 (Worldometer 2021:1), the CAR is considered one of the poorest countries in Africa, despite its numerous natural resources such as gold, diamonds, uranium, and oil (World Factbook, 2015). As highlighted above, the high rate of poverty, coupled with other factors such as unemployment and marginalisation, fuels political instability and heightened insecurity, as seen in the occurrences of coups in the country. Further in the Southern Africa Development Community, poverty influences violent conflict, as seen in Lesotho, Mozambique, and Eswatini (eNCA News, 2021).

Furthermore, the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) (2018:2) advances that the high rate of unemployment amongst younger citizens in Mali stirs conflict, since most of the unemployed youths are left with no option but to be recruited into militia groups that ironically provide some schizoid source of job opportunities to them. Similar assertions have also been made with regard to conflict in Liberia. Vinck et al. (2011) affirm that poverty was one of the root causes of the Liberian civil war.

Like the rest of Africa, Cameroon is not immune from the poverty plague, or ignorant of its effect on its peace and stability. With a population of 27 million, above 40% of Cameroonian people live below the poverty line (Reliefweb, 2012:1). In addition, grievances and civil unrest are both recipes for conflicts. Unfortunately, these grievances might take different violent forms and are seen as platforms for punishing governments for their inability to rein in poverty in the country (ECOWAS report, 2006).

In Cameroon, poverty manifests through dire lack of access to basic services, low income, and an inability to accrue any assets, information, social networks, or social capital. The Anglophones claim that basic services such as schools, roads,

hospitals, and many others are very scarce in their regions, despite the region being a key contributor to the Cameroonian economy through the oil wells under government control in their region (Agwanda, Nyadera & Asal, 2020:5).

For the purpose for this study, poverty was identified as a driving factor for conflict, because the inability to acquire basic necessities in life by the Anglophone Cameroonians generates disgruntlement that is characteristically of a violent nature. Beside poverty as component of conflict, Collier (2008) observes that low income heightens the risk of civil war and conflict in Africa.

Furthermore, mass unemployment in the two Anglophone regions in Cameroon is considered as a factor that spurs conflict in the region. Cameroon, like many African countries, has a youthful population, which implies lots of “manpower to do work.” But unfortunately in Cameroon the scenario is different, as many youths are unemployed. The above view is supported by Nwati (2021:7), who states that about 80% of the youths go without jobs in Cameroon after graduation from the University or any higher institute of learning. This point to the fact that Cameroon is suffering from unemployment and underemployment. To make matters worse, the Anglophones highlight that they have also been discriminated against and marginalised in terms of employment (Reuters, 2019). This is evidenced the fact that the SONARA oil refinery, a state-owned company in Limbe, is an example in which the Anglophones claim they are marginalised in employment (Reuters, 2019). Pro-independent activists state that top-ranking positions in SONARA are occupied by Francophones, while Anglophones work as security guards and drivers (Chereji & Lohkoko, 2012). Also, most of the university graduates in Cameroon end up in the most drab jobs such as hair stylists, road side call box, and “Okada” – the moto-taxi riders – after spending years in the university. This view is supported by Chereji & Lohkoko (2012), who advanced that in another major company, the Cameroon Development Co-operation (CDC) Banana Plantation in Tiko, top ranking management positions are occupied by Francophones while the Anglophone Cameroonians are relegated to work as manual labourers with low remuneration and very poor working conditions. Unfortunately, when a majority of the people are impoverished and cannot find jobs to do, then they vent their anger on the government, and that leads to instability in Cameroon. In affirming the above,

Humphreys and Weinstein (2008) highlight that high rates of unemployment and inequality, combined with low levels of education and development, are thought to soften the ground for recruitment and provide motives for conflict. In sum, behind the current political crisis in Cameroon, poverty, unemployment and inequality are perceived as the blatant factors thereof.

2.3.1.5 *Marginalisation*

There is an increasing recognition that marginalised communities play an important role in influencing political instability in the world, especially in developing countries. For instance, in Asia, the Rohingya conflict in Myanmar contributed to political instability in the region. The Rohingya are a minority group in Myanmar. In 2017 the Rohingya conflict resurfaced and came to the international spotlight when the Rohingya people were attacked by the Myanmar state authority. According to Wolf (2015), the Rohingya have been discriminated against, side-lined politically, economically exploited, and been recognised by the Arakan as a threat to their national identity and an additional competitor for the natural resources, despite being in their homeland. Consequently, the Rohingya crisis created tension in the region, with the mass exodus of the Rohingya into Bangladesh and the death of about 1.3million (BBC News, 2018).

Similarly, in Europe, the marginalisation of some regions in countries such as Belgium, Spain, Britain (Scotland), and Kosovo make violent conflict inevitable. In Spain, for instance, the political instability is partly blamed on the marginalisation of the Catalans, who feel their language and culture have been undermined by Spain (Guibernau, 2013:373). The author further states that, over the years, Catalonia has experienced times of oppression due to its distinct language and culture. In consideration of the above, Catalans feel they have been politically and economically exploited by Spain. Hence marginalisation, exclusion and oppression provide a fertile ground for political crisis (Guibernau, 2013).

Furthermore, marginalisation has been an influencing factor in promoting conflict in most post-colonial countries in Africa (Annan & Danso, 2013). In Ethiopia, the growing disparity in equality experienced by the Tigray region, coupled with other

factors like unemployment and underdevelopment, account for the ongoing conflict which started in 2020 in the Tigray region of Ethiopia (BBC News, 2020). As a result of the conflict in Ethiopia, many Tigrayans are in dire need of humanitarian aid (food as well as medical supplies and health care services) (BBC News, 2020). The conflict has resulted in a humanitarian crisis with the call for UN volunteers in the Tigray region (BBC News, 2021). Similarly, the marginalisation of the Southern Sudanese by the North equally contributed to violent conflict, which eventually culminated in the independence of South Sudan (Christopher, 2011). At the same time, in West Africa, the marginalisation of people in countries like Mali, Nigeria, Niger, and others, has over the years accounted for political upheavals.

The IPSS (2018:4) further observed that in the Central Africa Republic (CAR), the conflict there is partly influenced by economic inequality that exists between the North and the South. The South is predominantly dominated by Christians and is considered to be economically viable compared to the North. The northern part of CAR, which is the minority, is considered marginalised and lacks basic services such as schools, water, tarred roads or electrified towns, good medical facilities, proper sanitation, and hospitals in communities (IPSS, 2018). Hence a study conducted by Folefac (2016) observed that the recurrent conflict in the CAR is premised on the outright negligence of the regions such as the northeast (with a majority of Muslims), leaving some youths frustrated and with no choice other than to be recruited into armed militias seeking justice, which has turned the country into conflict zone. For Clark (2008), that marginalisation has led to an increase in secessionist violence. It is worth understanding that the Anglophone political crisis is in part a classic problem of the marginalisation of a minority, which has swung between a desire for integration and a desire for autonomy, and is in part a more structural governance problem (Crisis Group, 2017).

2.3.1.6 *Economic frustration amongst the Anglophone Cameroonians*

The persistence of the Anglophones' agitation for secession from French Cameroon is focused on the effects of economic frustration as a result of the bitterness over their material condition. This is a condition which they face because of discrimination from participating in the Cameroon political economy. They justifiably perceive this

as an act of ethnic exclusion (Cameroon Post, 2018). The main argument of this perspective is that Anglophone separatism is a political expression of the economic frustration of young people (ICG, 2018). These frustrations are, however, considered by these agitators as ways of venting their frustration due to marginalisation of the South West region emanating from being economically viable but ironically exploited and under-developed. Again, the lack of economic opportunities in the English regions, which is seen through the very high level of unemployment even among highly educated young people, compels the unemployed youth to be recruited as separatists (Nwati, 2021). This attests to the perception that other parts of the country are unduly privileged by the central government, since youth are employed in public services in Douala and Bafoussam. Arguably, 'less-privileged groups are more likely to rebel when they feel disadvantaged vis-à-vis other groups in the society, thus creating a vicious cycle of insecurity and insurrection in the fragile states" (my emphasis).

Moreover, the high level of prejudice that exists between the Anglophones and the Francophones also leads to instability. More often than not, Anglophones are referred to as "la Biafra," meaning people from Nigeria, by the Francophones. The unreasonable hatred of the Anglophones by the Francophones that has been ongoing over the years has degenerated into the worst form of instability in the country (Crisis Group, 2018).

2.3.2 Immediate causes of the Cameroonian political crisis

2.3.2.1 Political exclusion

Political instability and protest have been major concerns globally, irrespective of the regime in power (Ahasan & Iqbal, 2015). Political instability in some part of the world and in Africa may owe much of its cause to internal factors. The pressures to preserve political and economic sovereignty, as well as cultural identity and integrity, have remained and have grown even stronger as evidenced in tensions around the world, for instance, in Spain, Ireland, Belgium, Myanmar, and most dramatically in the former Yugoslavia. This has cascaded into Africa and many others countries. Indeed, it seems that the pressure for integration may in fact create an equal if not

stronger pressure for divergence or fragmentation in some countries (Fayerweather & Webber, quoted in Schneider Et Barsoux 1997). In Southern Africa, in countries like the Congo for example, the economic and political exclusion of opposition parties creates the grounds for armed insurrection (Kadima, 1999:67). Reasoning on the same line, the IPSS (2018:2) observed that the conflict in the CAR is deeply rooted in ethnic and religious factors.

In Cameroon, it is indisputable that the country has had some form of politically difficult moments during the last fifty years. The ongoing political crisis in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon is influenced by the economic, political, and social inequality experienced by the Anglophone people of former British Southern Cameroon since the reunification in 1961. Unfortunately, the marriage that both East (former British Cameroon) and West (French Cameroon) went into in 1961 was that of inconvenience. For the Anglophones, the union between both federated states is considered a “curse rather than a blessing.” Therefore, for some of the Anglophones, resistance is a means of bringing equality into society. To this end, the lack of trust in politicians and institutional politics, accompanied by bad central economic management, marginalisation, corruption scandals, and open hostility to Anglophone Cameroonians demands, have alienated a rising number of citizens who are demanding secession (International Crisis Group 2018). In a similar vein, the Anglophones claim that they have been politically marginalised by the French majority. This is evidenced by the fact that Anglophones are under-represented in top government positions as well as others (IPSS, 2017). Unfortunately, the exclusion of Anglophone minorities in governance institutions underlies the conflicts that have besieged Cameroon since 2016 (Institute for Global Change, 2017).

2.3.2.2 *Cultural identity*

Furthermore, besides political exclusion as a factor that fuels conflict, the issue of cultural identity has become a point of contention within the nation, leading to violent conflict and secession. This sentiment is supported by Reader (2009: 31), who contends that conflict is inevitable in a society where identities, values and competition are contested constructs. For example, we already observe how some countries try to leave the state, unions and organisations, such as Catalonia trying to

separate from Spain, Kosovo, and Britain leaving the European Union (Brexit). Therefore, a great number of countries are faced with the problem of separatism due to non-recognition of ethnic minorities. In this way, it is worth noting that separatist movements are fed by the identity factor that in its turn is based on nationalism (Ryabinin, 2017:6). Likewise, in Cameroon, the change of the country's name and the change of national flag from a two-star design (symbolic of the coming together of Francophone and Anglophone parts) to a single star (IPSS, 2017:4), unfortunately served as a laboratory that chemically developed the Anglophone consciousness. Nfor (2000) and Anyangwe (2014) further show that Anglophone residents of Cameroon have protested against the attempt by the central government to marginalise their language and culture. Therefore, these changes are some of the reasons why the Anglophones feel that their cultural and historical uniqueness has been disrespected.

2.3.2.3 *From peaceful strike to violent crisis*

The immediate factor that triggered the ongoing conflict in the two English regions of Cameroon that has cascaded into demands for secession was a peaceful protest, which was organised by lawyers, teachers and students in 2016. In 2016 lawyers, coupled with teachers and students in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon went to the streets of Kumba, Buea, and Bamenda, protesting. Among others, their demands were for (i) a return to the federal model that existed from 1961 to 1972 and not the civil law used by the French-speaking magistrates; (ii) the return of the Common Law in the two Anglophone regions; (iii) the translation into English of the Code of the Organisation for the Harmonisation of Business Law in Africa (OHADA) and other legal texts, (Crisis Group, 2017). On the other hand, the teachers also protested against the appointment of Francophone teachers in the English regions who did not have a good command of English, and the failure to respect the "Anglo-Saxon" character of schools and universities in the Anglophone zone (Crisis Group, 2017). Further, it is worth understanding that the aforementioned protest was in no way interference in the educational or legal system in the Francophone regions but simply a respect for the Common Law and respect of the Anglo-Saxon system of education. These are the immediate causes of the political crisis in Cameroon that has degenerated into secession as the last resort. The political instability has

morphed into violence due to the manner in which the government reacted in responding to the demands of the lawyers and teachers.

Based on the aforementioned element, this study argues that it is clear that the Ambazonian demand for secession is a result of an attempt by the central government of Cameroon to oppress and dominate the people of English Cameroon. For them, the central government in Cameroon literally did not represent the interests of English Cameroonians in that regard, thereby prompting the English regions to assert their right to self-determination through secession.

2.4 NATURE AND OUTCOMES OF THE POLITICAL CRISIS

2.4.1 The context and complexity of the crisis

This section captures scenarios that the conflict originated from and the outcomes as a result of the conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. The conflict in the two English regions of Cameroon has recently become more volatile, and that has attracted international attention. The conflict is built upon the 1970s abolition of the federation and the 1990s introduction of political liberalism in Cameroon. None the less, what Cameroon is experiencing at the time of writing is the re-emergence of unresolved grievances. Before the escalation of the on-going crisis in the Anglophone regions that has the country into instability, there was a series of events that unfolded. For the purpose of this study some of the events that sparked up conflict in the regions are outlined.

Since 2016, Cameroon has been battling with internal instability linked to secession. This is attributed to the way in which the Cameroonian government responded when teachers and lawyers went onto the streets of Bamenda, Buea and Kumba to protest. Indeed, a peaceful protest which started in 2016 has escalated quickly into armed conflict. In a similar vein, the Voice of Africa posits that, in 2016, thousands of teachers and lawyers in the Anglophone regions took to the streets to protest what they termed as a systematic marginalisation by the Cameroon government (Voice of Africa, 2018). The government responded by deploying the Cameroon Rapid Intervention Battalion military (BIR); sooner or later the police and gendarmes were

deployed to quell the protesters. This event culminated in violent conflict in the Anglophone regions.

Kindzeka (2018), further states that “the Coffin Revolution, which was co-ordinated by Mancho Bibixy in 2016, incited political instability in Cameroon”. In 2016 Mancho Bibixy went and stood inside a coffin in Bamenda, the capital city of the North West region, to criticise the Cameroon government. Mancho challenged the government for the low structural and economic development in the city and Anglophone regions at large. He further declared his willingness to die protesting against the systematic cultural and economic marginalisation of the Anglophone Cameroonians by the Francophone hegemonic government (The Post, 2016). The significance of these events is how the conflict has generated into armed conflict, where Anglophone separatist fighters have taken up arms against the government military.

Furthermore, the response by the government to crack down on protesters was criticised by the Anglophones as excessive and provocative. Thus the manner in which the government reacted towards unarmed civilians resulted in the Anglophones declaring the independence of Ambazonia on 1st October 2017 (Al Jazeera News, 2017). The International Crisis Group (2017) further observes that, following the declaration of the independent state of Ambazonia on October 1st 2017, the government responded excessively to those who were celebrating on the street. This accession was reported by BBC News Africa (2018), stating that about 122 people were killed by the Cameroonian military. Similarly, The Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa (2018) states that “Anglophone Cameroonians were labelled ‘dogs’ and that the military resorted to arbitrary arrests including people who were conducting church services.” The heavy brutality and killing of the Anglophones by the government security forces attracted criticism from international media, with videos emerging on different social media accounts such as WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook etc., documenting how government security forces allegedly beat up people, killing them, and burning villages (Tembon, 2018: 8-9). This study argues that if the conflict in the English regions of Cameroon is not resolved soon, the country’s economy might deteriorate further, given that the English regions alone contribute about 60% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to the

economy. In a nutshell, the conflict has already claimed thousands of lives and the displacement of about 60 000 Anglophones.

2.5 Challenges faced in resolving the political conflict in Cameroon

This section presents challenges faced by the GoC in maintaining peace and stability in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. It is worth noting that government and organisations face obstacles and challenges when resolving disputes. Despite the fact that some of these challenges also affect the government, in most cases the minorities are much more vulnerable to the problems. In this study, the Anglophones are considered the most vulnerable. Some of these challenges faced by government in maintaining internal stability span from disunity, self-determination, lack of cooperation, failure of government institutions, and abuse of resources. Since the escalation of conflict in the Anglophone regions, the following has been done in order to maintain peace.

2.5.1 Self-determination

Generally, the implementation of self-determination in post-colonial Africa has been a subject of contention, where many have experienced waves of instability arising from self-determination. The concept of self-determination dates back to the French revolution (Thürer & Burri, 2008). The concept was later activated by the former America president, Woodrow Wilson (Ferdous, 2007). For the purpose of this study self-determination means the struggle for political status as well as free searching for economic, social, and cultural development (Buchanan, 2004:333). Hornby (2006) also states that the concept is also known as “the right of a country and its people to choose their own government and its political system” (Hornby, 2006). The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1 (1966) defines self-determination as the process where all people have the right to decide their internal and external political, economic, and cultural status. The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) (2017:1) further define the concept as the right of a people to determine its own destiny.

Historically, there are several events that can be termed as self-determination, for example, the American War of Independence, anti-colonial struggles, and the struggles for statehood in the wake of the breakup of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). However, self-determination is not a concept confined solely to history. Contemporary examples abound; for example, in the Middle East, the fight against the Islamic State (IS) has highlighted the role of not only steadfast Kurdish resistance through its Peshmerga forces, but also calls for the creation of an independent Kurdish homeland.

Moreover, in 2014, the Scottish Independence Referendum culminated in a failed attempt by the “Yes Scotland” campaigners to espouse the benefits an independent Scotland would bring. On the other hand, the Scottish referendum revived secessionist struggles in Europe. These secessionist struggles include but are by no means limited to Basque and Catalan separatists in Spain, and a strong secessionist sentiment in Belgium and Northern Italy. Again, secessionist sentiments can be observed in Quebec, Tibet, Somaliland and Taiwan (Lehning, 2005:1).

It is worth understanding that since the outbreak of the political crisis in Cameroon, the government has encountered serious challenges in resolving the crisis. This is due to the fact that the Anglophones claims it is their right to fight for their political status, and their right to choose their own government to enable them to make their own decisions that will promote self-esteem, something that was denied during the 1961 plebiscite. In light of the above, the concept of self-determination is further used in this study to justify secession of a people from an existing state under certain conditions.

2.5.2 Lack of co-operation between both parties

It is worth noting that collaboration, cooperation, and active participation from the government, the people and the non-state armed separatist groups is the best way to promote peace and stability and end conflict in the Cameroon Anglophone regions. But this has not been the case, since conflicting parties are still at the level of disagreement. At the outset of the crisis, had the Cameroon government responded adequately to the demands suggested by the lawyers, teachers and

students, Cameroon would not now have been on the brink of armed conflict. The non-recognition of the Anglophone problem at the onset of the Biya government has come at a great cost for the nation as a whole.

However, in response to the claims by the Anglophones, the Cameroon government branded pro-independent activists as terrorists (State of the Nation Address, 2018), using the normal fashionable style of deploying security forces with live bullets to subdue or silence them. The government later called for dialogue after pressure from the international community including the United Nations, Commonwealth of Nations and the Africa Union (AU). However, realising the resilient nature of the Anglophones, and their limits, the Cameroon government would not achieve recognition through repression. Subsequent to the international pressure, the government then began talks with the striking unions. First and foremost, the Prime Minister formed an ad hoc inter-ministerial committee, which was made-up of four Francophone ministers under the direct supervision of the cabinet director, who was in charge of negotiations with the Anglophone delegates (Crisis Group 2017, 2016). According to Cameroon Info (2017), during several meetings in Bamenda from 2016-2017, the ad hoc inter-ministerial committee acceded to 21 out of 25 demands by the Anglophone unions. But negotiations collapsed because of alleged police brutality and rumours that the separatists were attempting to disrupt the negotiations, hence the dialogue was unfruitful. In a similar vein, in 2017, during one of the president's speeches, the president passed a decree in meeting the demands of the Anglophones, by redeploying Francophone teachers, recruiting 1 000 bilingual teachers, and creating a commission for bilingualism and multiculturalism, (Presidential Decree, 2017).

According to the Cameroon Tribune (2017), the government went further to create "new benches for Common Law at the Supreme Court and new departments at the National School of Administration and Magistracy (École Nationale d'Administration et de Magistrature, ENAM), an increase in the number of English language teachers at ENAM, the recruitment of Anglophone magistrates, the creation of a Common Law department at Francophone universities, and provisional authorisation for Anglophone lawyers to act as notaries in the Northwest and the Southwest regions."

In addition to the above, a national dialogue called by the president Biya took place after three years of violent conflict in the two Anglophone regions. In August 2019, President Biya acknowledged the Anglophone crisis for the very first time, and called for a Major National Dialogue from 30 September to 4 October 2019 aimed at resolving the Cameroonian government's conflict with Anglophone separatists (Cameroon Radio Television (CRTV), 2019). Apparently the so-called National Dialogue failed before it even commenced, since the government refused to comply with the demands of the separatist fighters.

At the onset of the Anglophone conflict, civil society organisations such as religious bodies called for an inclusive dialogue between the parties in conflict. But the government gave a deaf ear to this dialogue. In addition to the above, during Biya's official inaugural speech as re-elected president in Yaoundé, he said "Efforts will be made to accelerate the decentralisation process. Measures will be taken as soon as possible to broaden the powers of local authorities in order to provide them with the means for greater autonomy" (Xinhua, 2018). On the side of the separatist fighters and the Ambazonian interim government, disunity among them made it difficult for the government to meet all conflicting parties.

Nonetheless, despite efforts and strategies carried out by the government of Cameroon and civil society organisations to restore peace and stability, those commissions have achieved no goals in terms of peace in the regions. This is because the agitation for self-determination still remains potent and even rife, as evident from the spate of violence that still occurs in those regions (ad hoc Committee, 2017). Could the Anglophone regions of Cameroon and others groups in Africa fighting for self-determination benefit from South Sudan's experience, and would it result in the fragmentation of the African continent? This is carefully scrutinised in the subsequent chapters' research context and the challenges that feature prominently in this study.

2.6 GAP IN THE LITERATURE

The inability of the government to respond to the plight of Anglophones and to initiate dialogue has pushed Anglophones to advocate secession as a last resort. The

maintaining of peace in Cameroon is crucial for stability in the region. It is argued in this study that, although several scholars such as Minder (2019), La Vanguardia (2013), Reuters (2010), African Development Bank (2021), and many others have examined the role of bad government and corruption poverty in fuelling conflict from general to particular, their works did not focus on the effects of the crisis in Cameroon. Therefore, this current study, an assessment of the causes, impact and pathways to peace of the Cameroonian political crisis, will fill this gap.

This study also argues that although several scholars such as Ngoh (2000) and Bongfen (1976) discuss the brief history of Cameroon and the strategy used by the Anglophones to channel their marginalisation problems to the Cameroonian government, these authors focus on the general history of Cameroon, that is, from the colonial period to independence. They do not study the contemporary dynamics of the political crisis in Cameroon, which is a major weakness in their studies. This study zooms in on the political crisis in Cameroon as a way to fill this gap.

The literature reviewed suggests that decolonisation, colonial legacies marginalisation, and exclusion are factors that influence conflict globally, and in Africa and Cameroon in particular. The literature provides insight into the dynamics of the conflict and the grievances that the population of the two Anglophone regions has had for decades, but they do not adequately address the causes, impact and pathways to peace of the Cameroonian political conflict from 1972 to 2018 that this specific study strives to fill.

Furthermore, the reluctance of the government to respond to the plight of Anglophones and to initiate dialogue pushed Anglophones to espouse secession as a final solution. It is argued in this study that, although several scholars have examined the causes, origin and how Anglophones have tried to make their problems known to the government of Cameroon, the framework impact of the Anglophone crisis has not been examined by any known scholar. Hence, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining the role of contemporary actors, political dynamics, and the impact of the political crisis in Cameroon, and the socio-economic implications thereof. Studies reviewed above have not fully accounted for other

national developments that triggered the contemporary political crisis, neither did they account for the impact of the crisis.

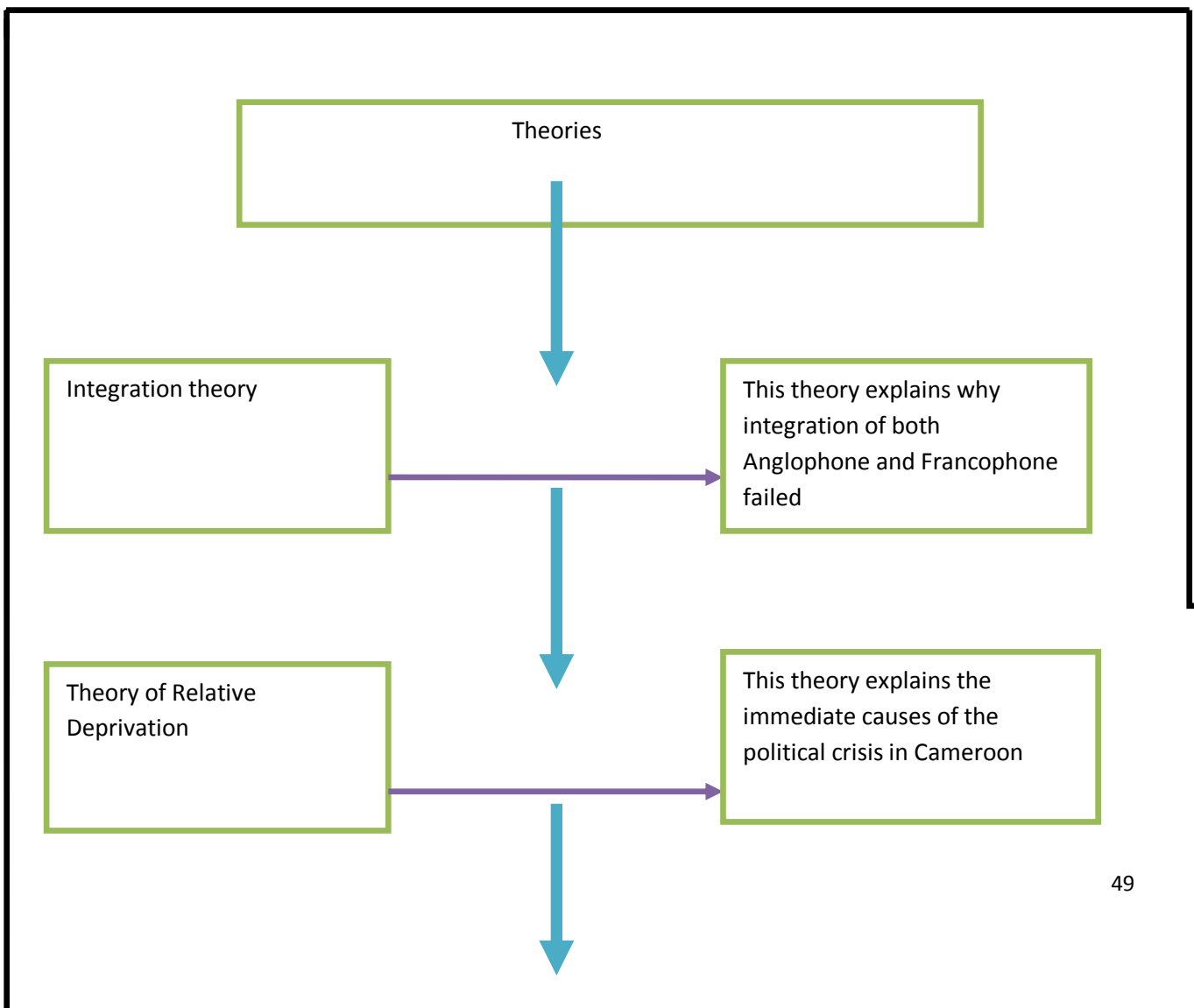
In a nutshell, the above arguments, as noted in the literature above, did not fully explain the effects and measures for restoring peace in Cameroon, which is a major weakness in the studies. This current study, an assessment of the causes, impact and pathways to peace in the political crisis in Cameroon, fills this gap. Despite evidence in literature showing that attempts have been made to develop conceptual frameworks of the Anglophone conflict in Cameroon, few efforts have been made to develop a framework that clarifies the causes, effects and pathways to peace of the Cameroonian political crisis.

2.7 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

The chapter explained key concepts in the preceding segments, such as decolonisation, and self-determination. It reviewed literature in relation to the study to contextualise the study. The chapter established that the right of self-determination and secession is a contested concept in the contemporary Africa society, and can be viewed through the lens of other disciplines such as law. It argued that most of the studies done on self-determination focus on the causes, origin and development of the phenomenon, and its legal status in African secessionist discourse, ignoring the impact, causes and pathways to peace of the political crisis in Cameroon. Also many of the studies on the effects of political conflict emanate from countries like Sudan, Mali, Chad, Lesotho, Nigeria, and Catalonia in Spain, and from other parts of Cameroon such as the Boko Haram insurgences in northern Cameroon, and the tribal conflict in Cameroon. This study proposes a framework of assessing the political crisis of Cameroon to portray how the conflict has affected the nation as a whole and the livelihoods, especially of the Anglophone people of Cameroon. Next is the theoretical framework of analysis, which examines the potential in the Integration, Relative Deprivation, Anomie, and Self-determination theories to provide an anchor for the study.

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section covers the theoretical framework that informs this study. This is done by describing the theory and functions of the framework. A theoretical framework is the foundation of a research and the basis of the hypotheses that one develops. Sekaran and Bougie (2010:39) further state that “a theoretical framework represents one’s beliefs on how certain phenomena (or concepts) are related to each other (a model) and an explanation of why one believes that these variables are associated with each other (a theory).” This study employs the theories of Relative Deprivation, Integration, Anomie, and Self-determination to inform and guide the study. These theories are fundamental in understanding the characteristic features of Relative Deprivation, Integration, Anomie and Self-determination theories to demonstrate how the Cameroon crisis fits into the defining features of the theory, thereby justifying the relevance of the theoretical framework to this study. The various theories adopted by the researcher and how they are related to this study are shown in Figure 2.1.



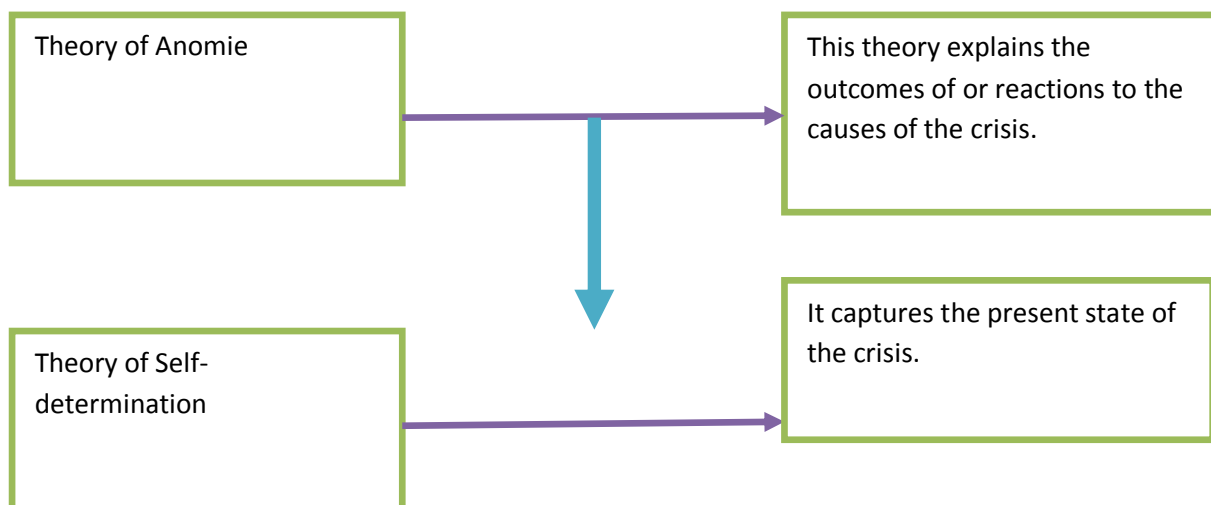


Figure 2.1: Explanatory sequence of the theories adopted for this study

Source: Researcher

From this point of departure, this section considers the above theories to understand and interpret the political crisis in Cameroon.

2.8.1 Integration Theory

The theory of integration explains conditions and mechanisms under which French and English Cameroon came together in 1961. According to Alastair and Strang (2008), integration can be referred to as a “chaotic concept.” This implies that the word ‘integration’ is used by many people but understood differently. In other words, the concept remains highly controversial. But in the context of this study, integration implies the amalgamation of East Cameroon (French) and West Cameroon (Anglophone) in 1961, which gave birth to one Cameroon (formerly the Federal Republic of Cameroon). Unfortunately, a few years after the marriage of both federated units, the Anglophones started complaining of their marginalisation by the government of Cameroon (GoC) (Bayart, 1973: 132). This theory relates well to this study because it is the disintegration of French and English Cameroon that fuelled the conflict in the two English regions against the French government.

Furthermore, this theory speaks to the context in which some countries find themselves through integration. It stipulates that integration is the process of social connection and mutual accommodation, thus justifying its deployment in this study. The sentiment above is endorsed by Sauer (2007), who emphasises the outcome of integration. According to the author, the reciprocity of integration processes might result in conflict since the process involved changes between the integrated units. Hence, this theory relates well to this study, because the political conflict in the two Anglophone regions of Cameroon is a result of changes made by the government after the integration of both federated units. For example, there were changes in the country's name from the Federal Republic of Cameroon in 1972, to the United Republic of Cameroon, and presently to la Republique du Cameroon, and the change of the currency that was previously used in the former British Cameroon (Anglophone), to name just a few.

In Esser's own variant, integration is the cohesion of individual parts into a whole, where each part affects the entire system and other parts of the system (2001). According to the author, the independence enjoyed by actors is the fundamental foundation of integration. Esser further distinguishes between the concepts of system integration and social integration (2001). For him, system integration is a type of relationship that exists between the parts and sub-systems of a social system, while social integration focuses on the way in which people are integrated into the existing system (Esser, 2001:1).

In the context of this study, both concepts are relevant, because the Anglophones in the union could not participate in decision-making in the federation, which has influenced the manner in which they integrate into the country. Hence, conflict becomes inevitable since one unit could not take part in the decision-making that affects the entire system.

This study uses integration theory to analyse why the integration of both federated units (former East and West Cameroon) failed, demonstrating how it exerts an influence on the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon. The theory of integration originated from the social contract theories (Nikola & Ilievski, 2015:3). The integration theory seeks to understand how different political entities, regions or

organisations come together and how social norms are internalised by the government or organisation (Nikola & Ilievski, 2015). When there is national integration, differences in ethnicity, religion, and language are minimized; the citizens feel a sense of oneness (Khurana, 2013).

Integration theory further stipulates that integration is the process of mutual accommodation, and thus there is the need to consider means of social connection. In the context of this study integration means the unifying of both former Southern Cameroon and La Republic du Cameroon [English and French] Cameroon in the 1961. The concept of integration is used in this study as a model to understand the integration of both French and English Cameroon respectively. However, this ambitious integration, whose goal was to promote national unity through a federal system, failed to address the linguistic, educational, legal, and cultural diversity of the country as well as the profound differences in livelihood strategies between the French and English people (Konings, 2005). This laid the foundation of the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon. This theory is relevant to this study because the Anglophones believe integration did not protect and preserve the Anglophone culture, as initially agreed during the Fouban Conference. This theory relates well to this study because the abrogation of the federation has pushed the country more towards disintegration than integration, since the terms of the integration were partially disrespected by French Cameroon.

Another shortcoming leading to the failure of the integration between French and English Cameroon is the fact that the French saw the unification as a transition to completely integrate the Anglophone Cameroonians into the Francophone system (Njeuma, 1995:25-31). This is evidenced by the fact that in 1972, Ahidjo, the former president of Cameroon, transformed the state from a federal state to a unitary system, which vested more power in the president (Nkwain, 2013). This was against clause 1 of article 47 of the Fouban constitutional document, which read: “any proposal for the revision of the present constitution, which impairs the unity and integrity of the Federation, shall be inadmissible” (Mukong, 1990:18). This action on its own made the goals of national integration less attainable through peaceful means. Unfortunately, the slow implementation of the Fouban Constitution resulted in nothing but political instability and conflict between the Anglophones and the

Government, which posed serious challenges to the nation as a whole (Abdi & Seid, 2013). Furthermore, the abrogation of the integration policy that was cemented at the Fouban Conference in 1961 shapes the attitudes and behaviours of the Anglophone against the Government of Cameroon that affects their relation to date (CG, 2018), as seen in the ongoing political conflict in Anglophone regions.

Weiner (1966:645) further concurs that “integration entails a vast range of human relationship and attitudes, the integration of diverse and discreet cultural loyalties and the development of a sense of nationality, the integration of political units into a common territorial framework with a government which can implement authority, the integration of the rulers and the ruled, the integration of the citizens into a universal political process and finally, the integration of individuals into organizations for purposive activities.” Based on this assertion, this study argues that the occurrence of the political crisis in Cameroon lies in the poor implementation of constitutions that exist through integration in Cameroon. To many Anglophone Cameroonians, violent conflict is a gateway to venting their dissatisfaction with the Cameroonian Government that betrayed the spirit of the union that was agreed to. In light of the above, the absence of a peaceful co-existence between French and English, which has to be achieved through the process of integration, is inevitable.

This theory is also relevant to this current study because the control over the gains of economic exploitation of available natural resources found in the Anglophone regions, as well as over the state apparatus itself, tends to reinforce continuity in power for the elite group. Hence, the inability of the GoC to diversify its sources of income and merely spend benefits from the oil revenue in the construction of roads and government offices in the Francophone regions vexed the Anglophone consciousness (Konings, 2005). Apart from the above, in any situation where one party tries to outsmart another, conflict becomes inevitable. This theory is applicable to this study because in the union between the French and English in Cameroon, the French tried to outsmart the Anglophones and this cynical act generated mistrust. The lack of trust generated agitation for secession in Cameroon (Amnesty International, 2019).

Price (2015:3) observes that group integration is not by any means easy. The author further points out that for integration to be successful or function well, there is a need for policies and inclusive strategies that will guide the integrated group. Based on the above sentiment, this study argues that the occurrence of political crisis in the two Anglophone regions of Cameroon lies in the flaws of integration. This study further argues that if the integration of both Cameroons had been set on a correct path, accompanied by a genuine desire to develop efficiencies, and reduce exploitation, marginalisation, and competition to improve policy credibility, the motives for the current tense political crisis in Cameroon at the time of writing would not have transpired.

In a similar vein, the integration of both French and Anglophone Cameroon was considered flawed by the Anglophones, because it did not protect and preserve the Anglophone cultures as agreed during the Fouban Constitution in 1961. Hence the marginalisation of the Anglophone culture by the French is acknowledged as one of the reasons for the failure of the integration of French and English Cameroon. Consequently, the cultural assimilation implies that unrest becomes inevitable, since the French government did not provide a favourable platform for the Anglophone people to live their cultures. Moreover, the gradual shift of political power to the Francophones is considered a channel of violence and conflict in the country. The relevance of integration theory in understanding the causes of the conflict in Cameroon is due to the dominance in political power by the Francophone-dominated regions which remained a point of reference for the Anglophones, who perceived this as a sign of disrespecting their interests in the union. In addition to the above, the disproportionate suffering by the Anglophone minority in wielding less political power, especially when the rightful means of attaining the same political power is not attainable, results in grievances that have eroded trust, and generated unrest, as we have seen in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. Unfortunately, the lack of successful integration between French and English Cameroon led to political conflict between the Anglophones and the Government of Cameroon. Logically, this theory relates well to this study because the GoC has failed in the integration policy. In a nutshell, the political crisis in Cameroon is rooted in the poor integration of both French and English Cameroon.

2.8.2 Relative Deprivation (RD) Theory

A different theory is adopted where the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon may be understood through Relative Deprivation theory. Relative Deprivation theory is used in this study to explain the immediate causes of the political conflict in Cameroon. The concept of RD was first introduced by Stouffer et al. (1949). The authors define RD as an unexpected relationship. Smith and Pettigrew (2016:2) are also credited as the proponents of this theory, and they define Relative Deprivation as “a judgment that one’s in-group is disadvantaged compared to a relevant referent, and that this judgment invokes feelings of anger, resentment and entitlement.” Following from this, it can be argued that political instability can occur when people feel disadvantaged when compared with others, and conclude that their disadvantaged position is undeserved, leading to anger and bitterness (Fiske, 2011; Leach, Snider & Iyer, 2002; Smith & Kim, 2007). This theory is relevant to this study because the Anglophone Cameroonians feel more disadvantaged in education, development, and job opportunities than the Francophones. Hence, they have reacted by redressing their deprivation through joining strikes, and armed conflict against the government.

In Crosby’s view, RD is wanting what one does not have, and feeling that one deserves whatever it is one wants but does not have (1982). This theory is relevant to this study because, over the years, Anglophones have been complaining of undeserved treatment and being deprived of what they believe is their right. For example, instances of deprivation and cheating include marginalization, poverty, and frustration among the Anglophones. They anchor their arguments on the fact that the region contributes over sixty (60%) percent of the nation’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Reuter, 2018). They argue also that the proceeds from resources [oil] are shared among the 10 non-oil-producing regions in the country, receiving more from the revenue than the Anglophone region, which suffers the burden of this exploitation (Reuter 2018). Hence, Anglophone people watch daily as their oil is being exploited and sold for billions of CFA, leaving the communities with bad roads, poor infrastructures, underdevelopment, and a degraded environment. For example, there are bad roads from Kumba to Mamfe coupled with poor infrastructure development in cities such as Kumba, Buea etc. As a result of the neglect, the Anglophones

became aggressive and resorted to the use of arms, both in approach and in operation.

Relative Deprivation (RD) explains the social behaviours of people in a society. Walker, Heather and Smith (2001) posit that RD explains the discontent of people when they are deprived of something to which they believe they are rightfully entitled. In the context of this study, RD explains the behaviours of frustrated Anglophone Cameroonians who have adopted violence as a means to express their frustration of being unable to access what is rightfully for them. Hence, RD is relevant to this study because the political crisis in Cameroon can be blamed for the inability to access basic services such as hospitals, roads, jobs, and others. Moreover, RD is relevant to this current study because it explains the social inequality (deprivation) that Anglophones have been going through over the years, leading to their adoption of violence as a means to vent their anger against the government of Cameroon.

Again, central to this theory is the fact that a gap between expected and achieved welfare creates collective discontent leading to political violence (Richardson, 2011:1). Hence RD theory is relevant to this study because the Anglophones find their welfare to be inferior when compared to the French people. Said differently, Saleh (2013:2) observes that relative deprivation can occur when there is a “perceived discrepancy between people’s expectations and their capabilities to fulfil those expectations and this creates a gap between the deprived group and the state.” This alludes to relative deprivation, as the English speaking people, especially youths, have been watching in disbelief and utter helplessness as the nation’s political elite engage in a mindless spending spree while the youth at their own level are confronted by an enormous unemployment crises (Tchoyi, 2017). Furthermore, this theory is relevant to this study because it postulates a subjective state that shapes emotions, cognitions, and behaviour of the Anglophones. Relative Deprivation is also used in this study to explain how dissatisfaction among groups did not always arise directly from the objective hardships they suffered but varied according to how they framed their assessments of their own situation as compared to others (Richardson, 2011).

Relative Deprivation can also be referred to as the feeling of denial that is economic, social, and political and that it is relative rather than absolute (Bayertz, 1999). Therefore, the deprivation experienced by the English Cameroonians is economic, social, and political, fomenting the political instability in Cameroon. In other words, deviant behaviour becomes inevitable in a society when the means to achieve legal goals are closed. This theory is considered appropriate to this study because the Anglophone people of Cameroon perceive themselves as deprived of economic, social, and political opportunities as compared to the French people. Thus when individual or groups of people perceive themselves as deprived of basic services which is their legal right to achieve, such as jobs opportunities, good health facilities, good roads etc. as compared to other groups, those people are left with no choice but to join social movements dedicated to obtaining the things they feel they are deprived of (Longley, 2018). This theory relates well to this study, because in 2015 the Anglophone lawyers, together with teachers' associations, went protesting on the streets of Buea, Kumba and Bamenda against inequality in service delivery and the political exclusion which they have been experiencing over the years (CRTV News, 2016).

In addition to the above, the relative deprivation nexus of the political crisis in Cameroon is indeed premised on government issues. The matter at hand that triggered the current political unrest in the country is linked to the appointments of Francophone teachers and judges, who barely understand or speak English, to work in the Anglophone courts, and both secondary and high schools. To the Anglophones the government of Biya overlooked them, thus giving rise to their discontent towards the government. In a nutshell, the Anglophones are fundamentally complaining about the absence of basic facilities in their regions. Their agitations thus principally border on the aforementioned components of deprivations.

From the above, while RD theory helps in pointing out the immediate reasons of the political crisis in Cameroon, the theory is inconsistent in not providing explanations for the reaction to the causes of the political crisis on humanity. Again RD theory also fails to include some people who feel discontent but are not included in the social movements to express their frustrations. This study argues that, to fight relative deprivation, agitators with bullets and AK 47s seem completely unearthly and

insensitive. However, for this study, and to guide the final conceptual framework, a triangulation of anomie and self-determination theories is adopted in framing this study.

2.8.3 Theory of Anomie

This study uses anomie theory to analyse the reactions to the cause of the political crisis in Cameroon. It further explains the causes of violence in the two Anglophone regions in Cameroon. Originally, anomie theory is traceable to the work of French sociologist, Emile Durkheim. It is a concept used to explain a pathological form of the modern division of labour causing problems for the solidarity of society (Durkheim, 1987). Some other interpretation of the concept has been made by Parson and Merton. Importantly, reviewing other formulations of anomie from the criminological perspective, especially by Merton and some of his followers can provide helpful insights into the topic because the nature of their discussions is sociological (Parson & Merton, 1938). It is therefore of great importance to take their work into consideration when applying the theoretical framework to this study.

Durkheim (1987) referred to anomie as the breakdown of social regulation and integration. It describes a lack of norms and social regulation in a society. This definition of anomie is adopted as it does justice to the breakdown of social fabric in the Anglophone regions. This theory further supports the fact that if norms and social regulation are encouraged, this could be very beneficial in promoting order in society.

Furthermore, this theory also supports the fact that anomie occurs in a society when there is erosion of social regulation, breakdown of moral values, and disorder (Durkheim). As advanced by Durkheim, such regulation is influenced by fast social changes such as political and economic crisis or growth, a transition from a traditional to a modern society, and factors that undermine the effect of societal regulation and moral norms on individuals' behaviour. It is understood that anomie can arise in a society such that the social system begins to crumble in the form of a breakdown of leadership. Therefore, the definition of the above construct attests to the fact that anomie involves collective responses and perceptions. This concept is

related to this current study because the excessive breakdown of the social fabric and leadership of the Anglophone regions in Cameroon clarifies the ongoing crisis in the regions.

Durkheim states that anomie occurs when there is no unity but a widespread discrepancy between common social goals and the legitimate means to achieve such goals. Therefore, an individual suffering from anomie strives to attain the legitimate means to achieve such goals, yet would not be successful because of structural limitations in society. As a consequence of this failure, the individual exhibits deviant behaviour. In this situation, people feel completely lost and worried, thereby generating a state of normlessness, and the people begin to do what they like. Furthermore, Durkheim (1987) posits that anomie occurs in a society characterised by social chaos and disorder, prohibitive regulations, and immoral values. He argues that anomie is a result of rapid political, economic, and social change, and social transition, conditions that undermine the outcomes of societal regulation, social integration, and moral norms on individuals' behaviour.

Relating to Durkheim's conceptualisation of anomie, it can be argued that anomie as a psychological construct is the objective perception of an individual concerning the breakdown of the social fabric and leadership. This definition clarifies the current situation in Cameroon, since conflict emerged as a result of the breakdown in the social fabric of the society. This shows that Cameroon is pervaded with lawlessness and normlessness. Furthermore, Durkheim states that anomie occurs "when regulation of society and moral standards break down." In this period of anomie, the society is often characterised by instability, chaos, and conflict. This is because of the breakdown of social forces which provide norms and stability binding people and society together (Haralambos & Holborn, 2011). Therefore, this theory maintains that if social fabric, law, norms, and collective perception are encouraged in a state like Cameroon, peace and stability are achievable.

Furthermore, Durkheim's (1897 and 1987) definition of anomie, which focuses on the breakdown of social regulation and social integration, confirms that it is relevant to this study, as it explains the collective dimensions of group anomie in Anglophone Cameroon. Cameroon is a society in which Anglophones believe they have not been

integrated in the nation-building process. They perceive the national value of the state and constitution to be crumbling and used to marginalise them, thus they respond accordingly. Arguably, they feel that the government and institutions of the Cameroonian State have failed them. Regulatory agencies, law-makers and the military apparatus of the State are failing this segment of society. The poverty and suffering of Anglophones have eroded moral standards, and general trust in the form of national patriotic sentiment is at an all-time low. The only option they have is to withdraw their national support from the majority French government and State, thereby focusing on protecting their group interests and narrowly defined citizenship. The theory fits well in the current study because the Cameroon government has failed in its integration policy and federating unit politics by abrogating the Fouban Constitutional Conference, promoting unemployment, and denying scholarships to Anglophone students as well as the inability to provide basic social services to English-speaking Cameroonians. In combination, all these have worsened tribalism and nepotism in the Cameroonian State. These, among others, have fuelled tensions and the crisis in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon

Furthermore, Ritzer (2011) observes that Durkheim, in his book "*The Division of Labour in Society*" written in 1893, talks about "anomic division of labour." In his book he expresses how groups cannot collaborate with others in a society because of a disordered division of labour. This concept is perfectly related to this study because the Anglophones believe that they no longer fit in into the marriage they went into in 1961. Henceforth this divide between the French and the English regions creates insurrection as the Anglophones feel that they do not fit in with the Francophones.

Influenced by Durkheim theory of anomie, Robert Manson (1938, 1968) adapted the theory to focus on the difference between culturally important social values and the legitimate means an individual has at their disposal for achieving those social values and aspirations (Manson, 1968). This theory further argues that anomie will arise if there is discrepancy between cultural aspirations and societal values (often defined in terms of goals, purpose, and interest) that are held out as legitimate for all in the society, and the legal means to achieve them (1938). Hence, if there is a discrepancy in achieving the social goals, this can generate deviance in people variously located in the system (Haralambos, Heald & Holborn, 2008). Arguably,

Merton further posits that the inequality that exists in some societies in terms of achieving rightful goals and values create deviance which might result in anomie. Using Cameroon, which is the focus of this study, socially approved goals include but are not limited to wealth, good jobs, political power, and investments. The legitimate means of achieving the above goals is education, learning a skill, involvement in social network, employment, good investment, and so on. Unfortunately, in Cameroon, opportunities are not equal for all. The rich benefit more, as opposed to the lower class, such that the option for the lower class remains committing what society has termed 'crime' to get to the top, leading them to revolt against the system. In Cameroon, "the lawlessness has affected almost every fabric of the society and institutions, such that the means of achieving legitimate goals is constrained in time and context" (my emphases). Built upon this underlying premise, the degree of normlessness in the social institutions in Cameroon further fuels the problem of deviance among the citizens in all capacities, such that individuals live to put their personal interests first against the societal rules where such contradict their ambition. Using the Cameroon society and the social institutions from my own perspective, the established and legal means of achieving legal goals become extremely curtailed; consequently, while means and goals are emphasised at disproportionate levels, anomie is inevitable.

Building from Durkheim's theory of anomie, we observe that, though Cameroon maintains the posture of great nation and a country with government, institutionally, the nation has failed, as there is normlessness in virtually all social institutions, leaving the nation at war against the French. This unmanageable situation in Cameroon has developed leaders who are essentially helpless.

Bjarnason (2009) states that "anomie refers to the state of society in which collective-level disorder results from social, political, or economic crises." This theory is relevant to this study because Anglophones claim that politically, they are poorly represented, socially discriminated against, and neglected in terms of development. Hence, Anglophone Cameroonians have collectively gone to the streets protesting for the restoration of their land.

In addition to the above, the theory is related to the situation in Cameroon, because it portrays the state of normlessness and lawlessness in the society. In this regard, anomie explicitly describes the level of instability and disorderliness in Cameroon. It is from the above view that Amnesty International (2020) reported that Cameroon has lost approximately 600 000 people (UNHCR, 2020) in the form of a mass exodus to neighbouring countries like Nigeria, who have escaped the socio-political upheaval to save their lives. In a nutshell, anomie theory explains the social disintegration, high rates of egocentric behaviour, norm violation, and consequent de-legitimizing and distrust of authority in Cameroon. This theory is also important because it helps in shaping politics, society, religion and polarising politics for more than three decades under the Paul Biya regime.

2.8.3.1 Critique of theory of Anomie

Despite the wide use of the anomie theory, it has been criticised by some scholars like Mestrovic and Brown (1985) on the grounds of its naive and crude assumption that the state normlessness is narrowed to an individual level rather than to the society in general. In addition, anomie theory pays very little attention to other causal factors of deviance, such as illegitimate opportunities and other social interactions, as an element of inconsistency in a society (Cohen, 1965: 5-14; Cloward, 1959). Moreover, Merton's perception of anomie has also been criticised for its crude assumption, which focuses on the role of social class in crime and its effects. The theory accounts inadequately for crime committed by the upper class, which to some extent is the basis of deviance in society. However, when looking at the theory from a broader spectrum, it fits well into the situation of the lower classes who, due to the lack of resources, strike to reconcile their goals and aspirations, while it fails to adequately account for criminality among the elites in the upper class (Siegel, 2012).

However, despite the above criticism, the theory recommends that the government should provide for its citizens in terms of social services, basic infrastructure, and development, since this is the responsibility of the government. To this end, the above theory does not seek immediate solutions to the ongoing crisis in Cameroon, but rather captures the contribution of both the citizens and the state in weakening national unity, as seen in the breakdown of social fabric and leadership in the

country. This is where the theory of self-determination is going to fill the gap, since the Anglophone people are demanding separation.

2.8.4 Self-determination

The adoption of the theory of self-termination in this study is to analyse the present state of the crisis, especially, the secessionist agitation by Anglophone Cameroonians. The concept of self-determination was included in the United Nations Charter (UN Charter) after the Second World War (WWII). According to the UN, Article 1.2 refers to self-determination as an organising doctrine for developing friendly relations within and among states. This concept was further incorporated by the adoption of two decolonisation resolutions by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in 1960: Resolutions 1514 (XIV) and 1541 (XV). The resolutions state that “all peoples have the right to self-determination and by virtue of that right; they can freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development” (Shaw, 1997). From the colonial era, till contemporary times, there is a growing tendency to support the right of people to self-determination. During colonialism, self-determination politics was at the centre stage of domestic politics, national and international relations among states, as well as regional organisations, especially in Africa. The politics of self-determination during the colonial era, therefore, gave birth to a radical transformation of post-colonial states in Africa. According to George (1991), self-determination can be referred to as the ability of people to separate from a national relationship and form their own government. Hence, the conceptualisation of self-determination inspires minority groups in Africa that feel suppressed by the majority to fight for their autonomy and cultural identity from central government such as the Biafran agitators in Nigeria, the then-South Sudan group that is now an independent state, as well as the people of Cabinda of Angola and the Anglophone people of Cameroon. In addition, the International Covenant on Human Right upholds that all people have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right, they can freely determine their political statutes and freely pursue their social, economic, cultural, and political goals (Article 1.1). Building from the above formulation, it is clear that self-determination can be referred to as people’s liberty to organise themselves freely in a community of their own

making and nature, and agitate for independence in that geo-political area where they can develop culturally, economically, and socially (Article 1.1).

The theory is relevant to this study because the Anglophone people (former British Cameroon) are contesting the UN decision that denied them the option of independence of their own during the UN plebiscite in 1961. Instead, British Cameroon was pushed to join another sovereign state, *la Republique du Cameroon*, which had gained its independence on 1st of October 1961. This UN decision, they claim, deprived them of their right to self-determination and should, therefore, be rectified so that they can enjoy both right of internal (the right to freely participate in the democratic governance of a state) and external self-determination (the right to gain independence from the Francophone occupying power) within the country (Africa Commission on People and Human Rights, 2005). Again, this theory is appropriate for the Anglophones' struggle for self-determination, because the state is responsible for protecting and providing services to all its citizens. Failure to do so, as is the case in Southern Cameroon, where the government is using its military machinery to persecute, wipe out communities, and to suppress Anglophone Cameroonians engaged in peaceful marches and protesting for their rights, only pushes them onto the path of self-determination.

According to Hannum (1996) the theory explains the right of a people to determine their own destiny. Hence the theory of self-determination was considered appropriate for this study because it serves as a lens through which southern Cameroonians press for the demand of secession from French Cameroon.

Hannum (1996) posits that the principle of self-determination allows people to freely determine their own form of social, economic, and political stature. As highlighted above, this theory speaks to the study, since the Anglophones of former British Southern Cameroon are agitating for their right to freely choose their own government. This theory was further elaborated upon by Nanda (1981), who contends that "self-determination is not limited to those under colonial rule or foreign occupation, but rather is given to all peoples, including minorities and indigenous people who live within the boundaries of an existing nation state." Nanda (1981) maintains that the Anglophone minorities in Cameroon have to be given the privilege

to exercise their right within the nation of Cameroon. The aforementioned is supported by United Nations (1997) and United Nations (1976), stating that in order to foster self-determination, several international institutions and countries, including Cameroon, have to recognise this principle of self-determination as a right of all people. For instance, Cameroon is a signatory of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, signed in 1976, to promote and respect human rights, but uncertainty persists in the nation.

But, despite the provisions cited above in acknowledgment of the concept of the various legal institutions, there is no transparency in case of the sovereignty questions as permitted by the UN in the case of former British Southern Cameroon, which is the focus of this study. The Anglophones of former British Cameroon claim that they were denied their right of external self-determination in 1961 by the UN (UNGA). Their claims are based on the grounds that during the said UN-organised plebiscite, the terms of the plebiscite were dictated to them (Anyangwe, 2008:128). The plebiscite read: '(I) do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria, or (II) do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroun?' (UN, 1961). They argue that a third option, that of gaining independence as a separate independent state, was not included (Bamenda Provincial Episcopal Conference (BAPEC), 2016). Without a third choice, Southern Cameroons had to share the independence of either Nigeria or Cameroon. Thus, Southern Cameroons voted on 11 February 1961 to join La Republique du Cameroun. This was contrary to the principles of the UN, as enshrined in Article 76b of its charter, which was to grant independence to all peoples and not to subjugate or hand over peoples to other countries as colonies (UN, 1961). Hence, the secession demand by Anglophone Cameroonians attests to the fact that the plebiscite was not genuinely and deeply concerned about the Anglophones.

Building from the above assertion, the Anglophone people of former British Cameroon are now contesting the UN decision that refused to grant their independence as a state on its own during the plebiscite held in 1961; but were granted independence by joining La Republic Du Cameroun, which had secured its

own independence on the 1st of January 1961 (United Nations Resolution 1608, 1961). On this ground, the people of former British Cameroon (Anglophone Cameroon) argue that they did not achieve their right to self-determination from Britain. This is because they were not given an opportunity to express their will freely because they were limited to the two options posed by the UN officials during the plebiscite in 1961. Their demands for self-determination could enable them to determine their internal political, social, and cultural stature.

Thus, from the theory of self-determination, it could be argued that Southern Cameroon has the grounds needed to justify its attempts to secede from the dominant French Cameroon. This is based on the premise that, during the UN-organised plebiscite on 11 February 1961, held in British Cameroon, Northern Cameroon voted for integration with the Federation of Nigeria and was thus integrated, while Southern Cameroon voted for unification with French Cameroon and thus reunified. Hence, Southern Cameroon and *la Republique du Cameroun* became sub-nations of the federation, with each maintaining its inherited territory, legal, educational, economic, political administration and cultural systems (Atangcho, 2008).

The reunification of both federating units was to be finalised during the Fouban Constitutional Conference of 1961, where both states were destined to iron-out the constitution which would eventually govern them. Unfortunately, the Fouban Conference was held without a UN official to supervise it as earlier agreed, which allowed the dominant Francophone area to enforce their constitution on the South, thereby creating a constitutional suppression of the Anglophone group's interest that would later promote the agitation for self-determination.

Secondly, there was no accord signed by both parties discussed in the Fouban Conference to later dissolve the federation in exchange for a unitary state, as practised today, which is largely dominated by French-speaking Cameroun. From 1962-1972, Ahmadou Ahidjo, who eventually became the president of the Federal Republic of Cameroon, took steps to annex Southern Cameroon into *la Republique du Cameroun*. In May 1972, Ahidjo dismantled the federal political system and imposed a unitary system. This was indeed a violation of one of the clauses of the

Foumban Conference. Hence, Southern Cameroon lost its semi-autonomous status as a federating unit, which it hitherto enjoyed under the federal system of Cameroon. Today, Anglophone Cameroonians, through the Southern Cameroon National Council, coupled with separatist and militant groups, are fighting for statehood and sovereign independence of Southern Cameroon (Atangcho, 2008).

Self-determination is not a mere slogan; however, national aspirations must be respected, as they allow people to be governed only by their own consent. It is a principle of action which statesmen can only ignore at their peril in Cameroon (Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 1977). Despite the recognition of the right of self-determination by international organisations and international law, there is still a controversy on its principle among some states, specifically the dynamics of the right to self-determination, as well as who exactly is entitled to such a right. The controversy between the two rights can be identified as the sole cause of tensions and instability in most countries in Africa (Mnyongani, 2008:464). According to Sam (1995:275), self-determination is limited to individuals who are still under colonial rule or foreign occupation – that is, external self-determination – which gives those under the latter the right to conduct their own affairs without any foreign interference (Hannum, 1990:49). However, self-determination is also the equal right given to all people living in a given state irrespective of the groups. This, therefore, gives minority and indigenous people the right to determine their own destiny (Hannum, 1990:49).

The people of Southern Cameroon are not only a minority but have been marginalised in the nation-building process of the country. They are currently agitating for self-determination as the last hope of the common man in Cameroon.

In addition to the above, the Anglophone call for secession is based on the claims that the reunification of both East and West Cameroon was codified with uncertainty felt by the Anglophones, because their environment is degraded and their wealth exploited to support the eight Francophone regions (ICG, 2016). Hence in 2015, lawyers and teachers' unions, together with students, went on the streets protesting for the government to listen to the plight of the Anglophones. A peaceful protest in 2015 has turned the country into an armed conflict, where the Anglophones are now advocating to exercise their right to self-determination as an end to exploitation and

marginalisation of their regions, an act which resulted in a war between the central government and the separatist movement known as the Ambazonian Defence Force (ADF) (Crisis Group, 2017).

To this end, the Anglophone leaders and the separatist movement suggested that the government of Cameroon, which had proved unwilling to come to the negotiation table with the English people of Cameroon, had forfeited their loyalty. Therefore, since the government has given a deaf ear to the plight of the Anglophone people, they have decided reluctantly but bravely pressing for separation, in order to create the state of Ambazonia, to exercise their inalienable right of self-determination. It can be argued that the denial by the government of Cameroon to the Anglophone Cameroonians to exercise their right of self-determination informs collective self-determination throughout the two English regions of Cameroon. These injustices, coupled with the claims that the sovereign state has invaded and annexed their territory against their collective wish, could qualify the group's claim for separation, according to this theory.

2.9 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

This chapter reviewed literature on the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon to ascertain its importance and to contextualise the study. This chapter also presented policies implemented by GoC to resolve the Cameroonian conflict. However, these policies implemented by the government and others civil society organisations to resolve the problem and maintain peace and stability have proven unsuccessful. Finally, this chapter further discussed the Relative Deprivation theory, Integration theory, Anomie, and Self-determination theories, but adopts a triangulation of anomie and self-determination to scaffold the study. Having discussed a literature review and theoretical framework relevant to the study, the next chapter presents and justifies the research methodology and research design adopted in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research methodology and the methods employed in this study, together with the rationale of selecting that research approach. The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to examine the research process that was employed. As a way of introduction, this study adopts an exploratory paradigm through the utilisation of qualitative research method. The next aspect addressed is the research approach.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

A research methodology, according to Sileyew (2019:1), is the way through which researchers conduct their research. As stated earlier, this study employs a qualitative research approach. Bhandari (2020:1) advances that qualitative research involves the collection and analysis of non-numerical data, for example text, audio, and other data, as compared to quantitative methods, in order to understand concepts and experiences. This study utilises the qualitative approach with the purpose of gaining detailed information from a sample, and in this case, it allows participants to share their views and experiences about the political crisis rocking the nation of Cameroon. The qualitative method was deemed suitable for this study because, according to Strauss and Corbin (2008), qualitative research generates data on perceptions, attitudes and real-life events. Thus this method gives opportunity for the researcher to preclude own biases and ideological preferences from influencing the research outcomes.

Furthermore, Martens (2000) maintains that information gathered from qualitative method is richer and more detailed than that gained from quantitative research, and has the additional benefit of allowing the researcher to place participants' perceptions and attitudes within their context. The strength of using qualitative approach is that it facilitates understanding and interpretation of meanings, as well as intentions underlying human interactions. Du Plooy (2009:33) and Rossouw,

(2003:119) also state that qualitative research enables the researcher to gain in-depth information regarding the phenomenon under investigation; for instance, participants elaborate on what they mean. In essence, this approach enables constructive insight into a phenomenon through a careful assessment of narrative data collected on the nature and causes of the political crisis in Cameroon.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

For this study, a qualitative exploratory design was considered appropriate to solve the research problem. An exploratory research design illuminates a research problem that has not been operationalise, with the intention of adding new insight into the research problem (Fairhurst, 2014:432; Lemon & Hayes, 2020:604). In other words, exploratory design is a process of investigating a problem that has not been thoroughly investigated in the past (Formplus, 2019). Labaree (2013: 6) further states that exploratory research methods include interviews, group discussions, and surveys.

An exploratory design was adopted to appreciate the full background information on the causes and effects of the political crisis in Cameroon. It was also considered relevant for this study because the nature of the field of study fits into the experiential and historical facets of conflict resolution.

Due to the insufficient information on the framework of the causes, impact, and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian political crisis, exploratory design was deemed necessary to provide answers to the conundrum of civic instability and the politics of marginalisation (Nathan & Rajamanoharane, 2016:2).

Baxter and Jack (2008: 548) state that exploratory research analysis is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon in the real-life context in which it occurs. This approach was used because, according to Salkind and Rasmussen (2007: 251), it provides information on the causes, and impact of the Cameroonian political conflict, and it describes "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. The author states that exploratory research answers the "what, how and when" questions. Hence an exploratory research approach using purposive or judgement sampling, focus group discussions, and in-depth analysis of content was

adopted. Qualitative analysis provides a better platform for the exploration of information and characteristics about what is being studied.

3.4 STUDY AREA

The Republic of Cameroon is situated between Central and West African (Asya, 2011). According to Cameroon Ethnologue (2019), the country has a total population of approximately 25 million people. It is home to over 250 ethnic groups. Davide (2018) advances that, for government purposes, the country has been stratified into 10 regions, with French and English being the official languages. It is estimated that about 4-5 million people live in the two English regions, while the remaining majority reside in the eight French regions. This study focuses on the Anglophone regions of the country, formerly known as British Southern Cameroon. This is because the ongoing political crisis is rooted in both regions. However, the reason for choosing the Anglophone region is because the researcher collected vital information from residents where separatist constellations operate. The researcher further collected data from the Ogoja Refugee Camp, since some victims of the conflict have fled for safety in Nigeria (UNHCR, 2020).



Figure 3.1: Map showing the Anglophone regions of Cameroon

Source: Global Security 2015

3.5 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of this study is the total group in which the researcher is interested to get more information about the phenomenon under study. This may either be groups, persons or organisations (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:112). The population of this study comprises males and females, aged 20-60. The study population entails (i) Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) operating in the crisis areas in Cameroon and Nigeria with 25 staff, (ii) officials and members of the ruling party and main opposition parties in the South West Region (Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) and Social Democratic Front (SDF) with 55 members; (iii) The Association of Lawyers in Cameroon in Buea South West Region with 50 members; (iv) selected officials and members of the Ambazonian Defence Force (ADF) or the Amba Boys. Two separatist groups with 110 members are purposively selected for the study; (v) Refugees at Ogoja, Cross River State camps in Nigeria with approximately, 60,000 Anglophone refugees (Al Jazeera news, 2021) from where 20 persons will be purposively chosen to participate in the study. Structured interviews will be used to collect qualitative data from the participants (See Appendix). From the above statistics, the population of the study is N=260.

3.6 SAMPLING SIZE

As noted above, the sample of this study is drawn from the total population. Therefore, the population of this study stood at N= 260 people in Cameroon and approximately 60,000 refugees in Nigeria. From the above population of 260 and 60 000 refugees, 38 participants were purposively selected to take part in five (5) focus group discussions. Furthermore, 15 participants, comprising both males and females, were selected for individual person-on-person interviews purposively selected from these groups. The purpose of sampling is to select units of the population that provide information in order to facilitate generalization to a larger population.

3.7 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

This study utilized purposive sampling strategy to collect data from selected individuals in both Cameroon and Nigeria. Purposive sampling was adopted since it is difficult to include the entire population in a study. Also, given the fact that Cameroon is divided into different regions, this makes it practically difficult to include all the population in the study. For example, Cameroon has ten regions with a total population of about 24 678 234 (United Nations, 2018); and Nigeria has 36 states, with Anglophone Cameroonian refugees displaced and currently located in different states. Interviews were used to elicit perceptions from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), both in Nigeria and Cameroon. Forty participants (35) were divided into five groups (5) meaning 5-7 persons in each focus group discussion. The focus groups were composed of those that have been affected by the crisis in the Anglophone regions. One FGD was conducted in Nigeria at the Ogoja Cameroonian refugee camp, and four were conducted in the South West region of Cameroon. Furthermore, fifteen (15) participants, comprising both males and females from the study population were selected for an in-depth interview. A breakdown summary of the different groups selected for the study is presented in the table below. Data from the key participants and focus group provide holistic information and allow for a better understanding of the causes and effects of the political crisis in Cameroon.

Furthermore, a purposive sampling procedure was used in this study to select participants. The strength of purposive techniques lies in the fact that participants were fairly representative of the variables in the study and specifically elicited responses on perceptions of the violence and the personal experiences of the crisis in Cameroon (Bless et al., 2006). In addition, structured interviews were used in order to generate information on how the conflict has impacted the nation of Cameroon, and the Anglophone regions in particular. Table 3.4.1 below shows a breakdown of the number of groups developed for the study.

Table 3.1: Breakdown of different groups for interview

Stratum	Participants
NGOs both in Nigeria and Cameroon	17
Ambazonian Defence Force (ADF)	6
Association of Lawyers in Cameroon	5
Main political party in Cameroon (Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) and Social Democratic Front (SDF))	10
In-depth interviews	15
Total	53

3.8 INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Having identified the sampling framework, the researcher used primary and secondary sources to collect data. For this study, primary data were derived from South West region, precisely Buea, Muyuka and its environs of Cameroon, and at the Adagom Ogoja Camp refugee camp in Nigeria. Data for this study were generated by using different methods and techniques such as interviews, Focus Group Discussion, historical and documents analysis. These data collection methods were chosen in line with the research problem and also to ensure sufficient data to respond to the research questions.

3.8.1 Primary Data

As far as data collection is concerned, this study uses primary and secondary data sources. Primary data sources include in-depth interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and telephone interviews.

3.8.1.1 Interview

Flick (2014) maintains that interviews are used in collecting data related to personal experiences, the needs of hard-to-reach groups, professional experiences and knowledge, and evaluation of services. In this study, structured interviews were conducted to answer research questions number two, three and four articulated in

Chapter 1 of this study: “What are the impacts of the political crisis in Cameroon? “Why did previous pathways to peace fail in resolving the Cameroonian political crisis?” and “What are the alternative pathways to resolve the Cameroonian crisis and achieve peace in the country?”

In order to obtain the opinions of the people regarding the political crisis in Cameroon, the researcher had face-to-face interviews with refugees in Nigeria, and Anglophones and Francophones in Cameroon. Firmin (2008) affirms that a structured interview involves the use of a set of predetermined questions which are short and clearly stated; often these questions are closed, and therefore require precise answers in the form of a set of options read out or presented on paper. Another reason for using structured questions is because the interview is easy to conduct, and can be easily standardised, as the same questions are administered to all participants in order to gain consistency and comparable data (Patton, 2002). In light of the above, the standardisation of questions may bring about detailed information which made analyses less complex. Another advantage of using structured interview is that it provides opportunities for all participants (Firmin, 2008). When using a structured interview, the interviewer collects data through greater flexibility. Structured interviews are typically used in survey studies like the subject under investigation. A structured interview generates detailed information in a systematic manner from participants to address the research objectives (e.g. teachers and community leaders.)

Before commencement of the one-on-one interview processes, the researcher ensured that participants observed COVID-19 Pandemic guidelines, which include the following: wearing of a face mask, sanitising all surfaces in the area where the interview took place, and maintaining a social distance of about 2 metres. The researcher ensured that there was regular sanitising of hands with 80% alcohol, and covering of mouth and nose when sneezing. Therefore, the risk of COVID-19 infection was mitigated. After making sure that all COVID-19 protocols were observed, the researcher started the interview by introducing herself and the purpose of the interview, then signing of consent forms that acknowledged that the interview was voluntary.

To proceed with the interview, a few guiding questions that the researcher had discussed with the supervisor, which covered specific topics on the research problem, were used to initiate the conversations. During the interview section, the researcher picked something said by the interviewee then probed the responses by asking some essential questions that were not on the list. This process made the interview very interesting and flexible. However, the researcher ensured that key questions relating to the problem under investigation were always covered to generate enough data for analysis. Most of the interview was conducted face-to-face in offices, relaxed areas, homes, or outside spaces; therefore all those venues and the interview time were decided by the interviewees. Some of the interviews were voice-recorded; but written notes were taken by the researcher. However, it was the choice of the interviewee whether the researcher should make a voice recording, a video tape, or simple notes. All interviewees signed a consent form in order to ensure that they fully understood the purposes of the research and that their participation was voluntary, which they could terminate at any time.

Furthermore, a telephonic interview was also used to collect data. It is a technique of gathering information involving communicating with respondents on the phone (King, Marston & Bower, 2014). Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and for health and safety reasons, some participants preferred doing telephone interviews, which was very fruitful. Also there were areas where the researcher could not go due to attacks and sporadic gunshots, and in such instances the telephone interviews were a ready option, especially with some of the ADF forces (Amba Boys). Also with regard to the Amba Boys, the researcher had a difficult time with them taking calls. This was however mitigated due to the fact that the researcher exercised patience, since their contribution was vital in the development of the study.

The advantage of using telephonic interview is that it is faster as compared to other methods such as mailing techniques. It is also inexpensive as an individual interviewing technique, where the person called only responds to the call dialled by the interviewer.

3.8.1.2 Focus Group Discussion

Another approach used in this study to collect qualitative data was Focus Groups. There was assistance in the form of a facilitator in the conduct of FGDs. In this case, the researcher and one assistant played this role. To begin the focus group discussions, the researcher and the research assistant who had been trained by the researcher ensured that participants observed the COVID-19 rules.

In light of the above, thirty-eight participants (38) selected from the 260 persons and 60 000 refugees in Nigeria took part in the focus group discussions. They were selected using a purposive sampling. The focus groups consisted of five groups made up of 5-7 persons. The FGDs section was guided by the researcher, and participants were encouraged to express themselves freely and spontaneously on the subject under investigation. The FGDs section involved both males and females of different ages and levels of education.

There were also a few guiding question arranged in a logical sequence, which the researcher had discussed with her supervisor, covering topics of interest on the problem under study. During FGDs, only the researcher used the structured interview guide and the interviews took place in homes and business places. The rationale for using focus groups was to enable the researcher to explore certain elements that could not have been revealed in one-on-one interviews. Also, people especially victims of the conflict, were given the opportunity to express themselves about the conflict and how it affected their livelihoods. Another benefit of using focus groups is that it enables the researcher to uncover information that initially may not have been stated through person-to-person interview (Boughton, 2019). Again, using FGDs enabled the researcher to generate more information in a short space of time.

One focus group took place at the Ogoja refugee camp at Nigeria and the remaining four took place in the South West regions of Cameroon. Since the researcher is from the South West region of Cameroon, with the assistance of gate keepers, she was able to organise some church Sunday school rooms for the interview. While some interviews took place in homes, the FGDs took place between 10:00 and 13:00. During FGD sessions, the researcher was privileged so much that only one of the

sessions was somehow delayed for a period because of gunshots. However, the gunshots were just a threat from the Amba Boys, who believed the researcher was working with La Republic. But after she explained herself to them and showed all identification documents as a 'daughter of the soil,' the researcher was allowed to continue with the interview. The researcher was even more privileged in that, as separatist fighters, they offered detailed information on why they were fighting and what they wanted to achieve. To be honest, seeing those Amba boys standing in front of the researcher with their AK47s and their way of dressing was not a good feeling. At the end of the day, the focus group session yielded a wealth of information, and an in-depth understanding of the causes of conflict in the Anglophone regions and the pathway to peace.

3.8.1.3 *Management of audio recoding*

Before interviews were conducted, the researcher requested authorisation to record the proceedings and this was granted. To begin the recording, the researcher explained that the use of the voice recorder would enable her to concentrate fully on asking the necessary questions and capture responses as accurately as possible (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). However, and as a way of reducing the effect of noise and other interferences, the researcher made sure that the interview periods were set exclusively at the interviewees' convenience, and also that this would be at a particular time when it was less likely to have interferences. The researcher recorded all the interviews and, in some cases, made some handwritten notes. This was done to ensure that all the information that was provided by the research participants was accurately captured. The advantage of recoding is that it enables the researcher to fully grasp the way in which the research participants communicate, and also allows the researcher to make some observations about the body language of participants (Creswell, 2012b; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Silverman, 2013). The extended use of a notebook served the purpose of jotting down some non-verbal cues, and all this information assisted the researcher in doing the analysis.

3.8.1.4 Secondary sources

The secondary data sources include book chapters, books, journal articles, published e-books, newspapers, magazines, internet sources and official documents from the Anglophone press, as well as documents from other relevant players in the Cameroonian crisis. A careful study of documents from these various sources helped the researcher to understand the views of various groups in the conflict. Relevant documents concerning the political crisis in Cameroon were obtained. For example, the North-West University, Mafikeng Campus library has been a valuable source for documents for this research. During field work in Cameroon, other sources of documents were obtained from the Government University of Buea, and the Catholic University of Buea, where the researcher also accessed some dissertations and relevant text books. In addition, the researcher also purchased some books relevant to the study if these were not available from the libraries in question. She also consulted other national publication reports from journals. The use of documents as a method of data generation in this study was meant to supplement evidence collected from the other methods.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

The objectives of this study were designed to assess the causes, impact and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian political crisis. To achieve the objectives, the researcher conducted interviews. To commence the data collection procedures, the researcher identified participants for the study. In Cameroon, the researcher had to identify key participants and then obtain participants' contact details in order to schedule appointments. In the case of Nigeria, contact details of the refugee camps in Nigeria were obtained through the internet, but for those Anglophones refugees at the Camp, whose details were not available on the internet, the researcher negotiated for those contact details through gatekeepers. In this regard, the researcher employed the services of local Cameroonians based in Nigeria at Cross River State to collect information such as the contact details of the final participants in the study.

In both countries, after the researcher had accessed these contact details, telephone calls were made for appointments with the targeted participants. Meanwhile, when the researcher could not reach a participant via phone calls, an email was sent in their place. Although very few responded to the email, some did notify that they would get back to me. On that note, a follow-up email was sent as a reminder; however, only a few persons did respond positively.

In Cameroon it was easier to make appointments, since the researcher is familiar with the nation and she is from Cameroon. In the case of Nigeria, many telephone calls were kept on hold until the researchers almost gave up. But due to the importance of their contribution to the study, it was difficult to give up. After gathering vital information from Cameroon and Nigeria, the researcher embarked on fieldwork as detailed in the subsequent chapters.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS

After data generation, analysis was done using the appropriate methods that respond to the research problem. For this study, thematic content analysis was adopted for sifting through primary data. Thematic content analysis enables the research to identify themes, and ultimately, the meaning of the causes of the political conflict and the effects of the political crisis in Cameroon. This method of analysis is commonly used by researchers in the social sciences to analyse recorded transcripts of interviews with participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis was considered suitable, since the researcher strove to find insights into the problem under study; hence, the views, opinions, experiences and knowledge were paramount. Braun and Clarke (2006) maintain that content analysis enables the researcher to test theoretical issues to enhance understanding of the data and to effectively outline the causes and impact of the Cameroonian conflict, also the road map to peace and the obstacles faced by the government in establishing peace and stability. The researcher followed the six steps in the theoretical model of Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyse primary data.

3.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Pilot and Beck (2014), trustworthiness is the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study. Therefore, to ensure trustworthiness of this study, the researcher provided a detailed description of the research methods that were used to generate data. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the following criteria, that is, credibility, dependability, conformability, and transferability, enhance the quality and trustworthiness of research findings:

3.11.1 Credibility

Lemon and Hayes (2020:605) state that credibility is the extent to which the researcher develops and articulates a certain level of confidence in the findings based on the problem under investigation. In other words, credibility represents research that is believable and trustworthy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Hence, credibility is comparable to internal validity, that is, how research findings match reality. Therefore, the credibility of this study was enhanced by reporting the true value obtained from respondents on the causes and effects of the political crisis in Cameroon.

3.11.2 Dependability

Dependability is concerned with whether the findings for the study are distinctive to a specific time and place, and the consistency of explanations present across the data (Lemon & Hayes, 2020:605). In order to address the dependability, the research findings were reported in detail such that a future researcher can repeat the work.

3.11.3 Confirmability

It is the extent to which the findings of the study can be confirmed by other researchers without bias (Lemon & Hayes, 2020:605). In other words, confirmability is the presentation of data without bias from the researcher. In a bid to enhance confirmability of this study, the researcher presents the exact words verbatim from participants.

3.11.4 Transferability

Transferability relates to the extent to which the findings from the study could apply to other contexts and settings (Lemon & Hayes, 2020:605). To enhance the transferability of the findings for this study, the researcher discusses the context so that it conveys to reader the meaning and scope of the study.

3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Fouka and Mantzorou (2011:3) state that “research ethics involve requirements on daily work, the protection of dignity of participants and the publication of the information in the research.” In planning for this study, the researcher took all possible steps to adhere to the Ethics Scientific Committee of the North-West University research in different ways. In the process of gathering information from the selected sources, the researcher indicated that the information required would be used for academic purposes only and would not be disclosed to other parties. The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC) at NWU. The following ethical considerations were taken into account:

3.12.1 Permission to conduct the study

The researcher requested permission to conduct the study at Cameroonian refugee camps at Adagom Cross River State in Nigeria, and in Buea and its environs in the South West region of Cameroon. Letters of acceptance were issued by the authority of the said institutions. To begin the interview processes, the researcher clarified to the interviewees what the study entails. This is in line with a study conducted by De Vos *et al.* (2009), indicating that it is important that the researcher highlight the objective of the study, its potential risks and its benefits to participants. In the current study, this was observed to obtain the participants’ understanding and cooperation before the researcher began conducting interviews.

3.12.2 Informed consent and voluntary participation

To begin, a written consent form was issued to participants to complete before they could take part in the study. According to Miley, Meila and Du Bois (2001:402), informed consent emphasises that participants should give their consent to participate only after researchers fully disclose the purpose of the research, what it entails, and its potential effects or consequences, in order for participants not to be manipulated by the researcher. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested, and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research. The participants were informed that they were free to withdraw from study at any time they felt. The informed consent form was issued for participants to sign indicating the aim and objectives of the study. The informed consent of all those involved in this study was sought in accordance with the guidelines of the Human and Social Sciences Research Ethics Code of the North-West University. A copy of the informed consent form is attached.

The researcher personally contacted and explained to the research participants how the information would be used. However, due to the diversity of cultures and their ethics, each culture has its own cultural norms that had to be respected by the researcher working in the area.

3.12.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity was assured in this study that in no way would the results be linked to any participant's identity. Each participant had a code, and no personal information was added in the reporting of the findings of the study. According to Strydom (2005:68), anonymity means that no one, including the researcher, should be able to identify any subject afterwards. Based on the above premise, the researcher made sure that the respondents' identities were not disclosed or accessed by other people, and that their identity was treated with respect and protected.

3.12.4 Confidentiality

Confidentiality in research is referred to as “*all* information that is kept hidden from everyone except the primary research team” (Saunders et al., 2015:617). Said differently, De Vos (2002:67) states that “confidentiality is agreements between persons that limit others’ access to private information.” Participants were guaranteed confidentiality about their personal identity. The researcher further assured respondents that the study was conducted purely for academic purposes. In this regard, the study adheres to this ethical aspect by ensuring that information provided by respondents is safely stored. Confidentiality was further observed by ensuring that participants were never traceable.

3.12.5 No harm to participants

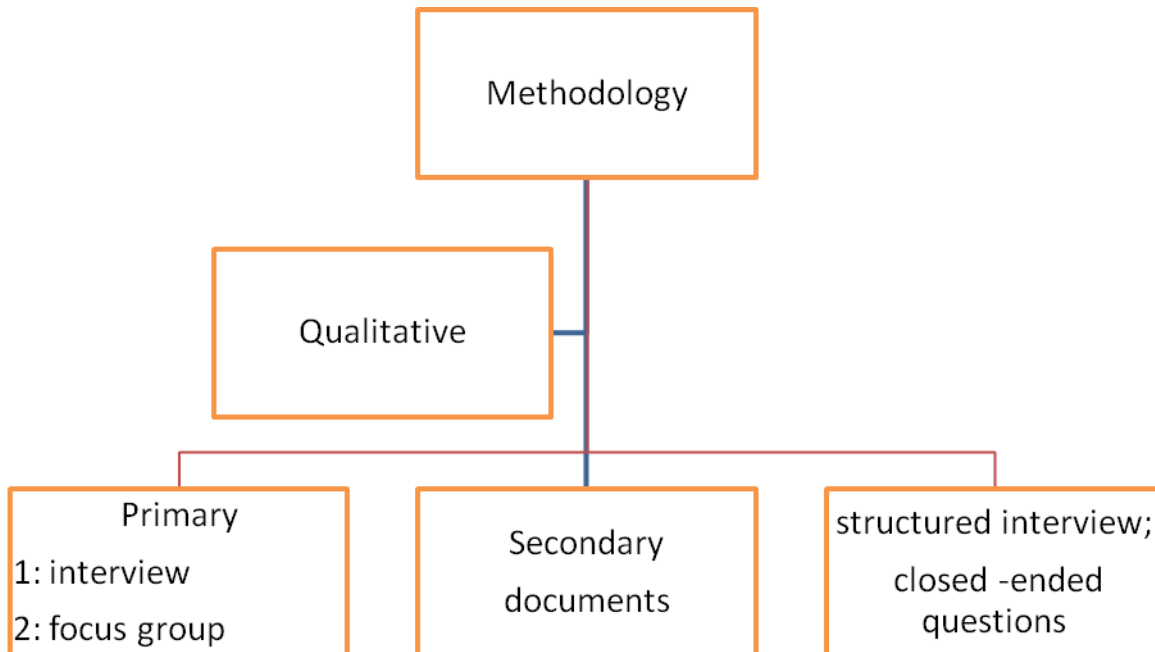
The researcher guarded against any physical or psychological harm to participants or respondents. This was guaranteed during each interview by the researcher making participants aware of their right to withdraw from the interview or refuse to answer a particular question, without harm to their person, or without fear of any form of harassment or victimisation (Babbie, 2013: 63).

3.13 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study focuses specifically on the causes effects and pathways to resolving the Cameroonian political conflict. The conflict in the two English regions cannot therefore represent any other conflict in Cameroon, such as with Boko Haram in the Northern part of the country and other inter-ethnic conflicts. This is a major limitation because the findings of this study may not represent the rest of the conflict regions in Cameroon.

3.14 A summary of methodology and methods use in collecting data is presented on the diagram that follows

Figure 3.2 Summary of methodology



This chapter outlined the research design and methodology used in collecting data on the causes, effects, and pathways to peace of the conflict in Cameroon. The study used qualitative methods and it allowed the researcher to rely on a variety of methods such as interviews, focus group discussions, and review of documents. Furthermore, the study adopted an exploratory research design to analyse the causes, effects, and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian political crisis. The population of the study was defined, and a purposive sampling technique justified in selecting the participants for the study. A non-probability sampling was employed to recruit participants for one-to-one interviews and focus group discussions. Primary data was collected through structured interviews and analysed using thematic content techniques. In addition, this chapter presented data collection tools used to obtain quality information for the study.

Furthermore, issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations were captured. Having established the research methodology and design of the study and

instruments used to collect and analyse the data, the next chapter deals with the causes and impacts of the political crisis in Cameroon.

CHAPTER FOUR

CAUSES AND IMPACTS OF THE POLITICAL CRISIS IN CAMEROON

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter three presented the methodology and the ethical issues considered in collecting the data for this study. This chapter presents an analysis of the causes and impact of the Cameroonian political crisis. This was achieved by addressing Objectives 1 and 2, and ends with the presentation of the chapter summary. The causes and impacts of the political crisis in Cameroon are addressed through interview and literature review as noted in Chapter 3.

For Objective 1, which is designed to examine the causes of political crisis in Cameroon from 1972-2018, the question addressed to respondents was “What are the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon?” This question was intended to identify the qualitative factors that contributed to the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon.

Objective 2 was set to determine the impact of the political crisis in Cameroon from 1972-2018. To address this objective, the following question was presented to respondents: “What are the impacts of the political crisis in Cameroon?” The responses to objectives 1 and 2 form the basis upon which the research questions are addressed in this chapter.

Table 4.1: Research methods versus research objectives

Objective	How the objective was achieved
Objective one: To examine the causes of political crisis in Cameroon from 1972-2018	Addressed through literature review, document analysis, and interview.

<p>Objective two: To determine the impact of the political crisis in Cameroon from 1972-2018</p>	<p>Addressed through literature review and empirical review</p>
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Source: Researcher

4.2 OBJECTIVE 1

As noted above, this section covers factors that influenced the political crisis in Cameroon. Before looking at the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon, a brief history is fundamental in this study because the plight of the Anglophones in Cameroon today dates as far back as Independence Day. Hence, providing a brief history would serve as a veritable laboratory in which the causes of the current crisis are appreciated.

The Republic of Cameroon gained independence on 1 October 1961 (Fanso, 1999:285). Initially, before independence, French Cameroon was administered by France while present day Anglophone Cameroon was administered by Britain. Nkwi and Sopca (1997) argue that after WW1, Cameroon (Kamerun), which was a German territory, was given to Britain and France after the defeat of Germany in 1914. In this act, Cameroon was handed over as a mandated territory to Britain and France, under the auspices of the League of Nations. In this light, Tongkeh (2009) affirms that Britain and France would have to administer the former German colonies as mandates on behalf of the League of Nations for administrative purposes. Cameroon was later split into two parts with France gaining a larger portion, while Britain received a strip bordering Nigeria from the sea to Lake Chad (Fanso, 1999). This division laid the base for the creation of two different identities, with each population considering itself as a distinct community. Each portion of the country attached itself to its former colonial empire. In this premise, Horowitz (1985) alluded that most of the conflict in Africa today feeds on the territorial boundaries drawn by former colonial masters which suited their interests, despite its effects on African ethnic groupings.

Regarding the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon and for proper understanding of the causes, the political crisis is presented under three main themes, namely; political, economic, and social factors. These themes were generated for the nature of the conflicts in Cameroon. The themes cover the various dimensions in which the conflict has been enacted and experienced, as evidenced in the interviews conducted. The reasons for the interviews were to explore deeper in order to extract detailed information of the causes of the political crisis.

To analyse data for this study, the researcher used codes that represented the identity of participants from the refugee camp and those from Cameroon. The codes represent the names of participants and the number after the code represents the serial number of the participant. For those at the refugee camp, the site code is CRONFP. Henceforth, for easy identification of each of the participants, a serial number follows the code as follows: CRONFP1, CRONFP2, CRONFP3, and CRONFP4. The participants at Cameroon follow a similar coding but the general code reads: CFP. For further clarification, the researcher formulated codes for each site where data was collected. As highlighted above, CRONFP means Cameroonians Refugee Ogoja Nigeria field participant, while CFP means Cameroon field participant.

4.2.1 Political factors that fuel the political crisis in Cameroon

4.2.1.1 The Fouban Conference

The Fouban Conference which took place in 1961 is assumed to be one of the root causes that fuelled the Anglophone discontent. In February 1961, British Southern (Anglophone) Cameroon and French Cameroon went into a union known as the reunification of both territories. Awasom (2000:1) expresses the view that the unification was an extraordinary event, as people of different colonial backgrounds decided to form a single state. In order to cement this marriage, Konings (2003) indicates that leaders of both separate units – Ahmadou Ahidjo from French Cameroon and John Ngo Foncha from Western Cameroon – and their counterparts, planned a date to meet at a conference in Fouban on the 17th of July 1961, to draw up the constitution of the country that would govern them as one. In a similar

vein, Ndi (2013) points out that former British Southern Cameroon reuniting with the former French Cameroon hoped to enter a loose form of federation that would protect their territory's minority status and cultural heritage; little did they know what awaited them (Ndi, 2013).

On arrival at Foumban, a town bordering Anglophone and French Cameroon, on the 17th of July 1961, Ahmadou Ahidjo with his French counterparts came with a ready-made constitution while his counterparts the Anglophones attending with Foncha which ended up being adopted. During the negotiations at Foumban, the bargaining strength of the Francophone delegation outweighed the Anglophones, compelling them to adapt the constitution. The Anglophones, who were in a weak position, accepted Ahidjo's constitution, which gave broad powers to the president to the detriment of the Anglophone unit (Konings & Njamnjoh, 2003). Therefore, the Anglophones had to obtain a blocking minority by way of concession (Article 47, 1961).

Although the Foumban Constitution was approved by the leaders of both West and East Cameroon, the flawed Constitution, through marginalisation of West Cameroon, triggered the discontent that has led to the Anglophones demanding secession. Consequently, the Foumban conference accelerated the marginalisation of Anglophone Cameroon (Ngoh, 1996).

4.2.1.2 Political competition

A majority (60%) of the respondents were of the view that the political crisis in Cameroon is a result of the marginalisation of the Anglophones by the Francophones. The associated categories of marginalisation are further explained to ascertain the causes of the conflict.

The down-grading of the English Language: The disrespect of the English language in Cameroon is critical in sparking the on-going conflict in Cameroon. Historically, after Germany was defeated in Cameroon during WW1, the territory of Cameroon was divided between Britain and France. English was the official

language in British Southern Cameroon while French was the language of communication in French Cameroon (CFP 5, 2021).

At the Fouban Constitutional Conference, French and English were adopted as the two official languages as the mediums of communication with equal status (Konings & Nyamnjoh 2004). Reasoning on the same line, Anchimbe (2018) maintains that English and French became strong identities that shaped the feelings of belonging amongst Cameroonians. One's affiliation to the former colonial history and master conferred a complex if complicated identity among Cameroonians.

But soon the English language was gradually pushed to the periphery by French, even in the English-speaking regions. Hence, this lopsided adoption of French and English as the media of communication accounts for the ongoing rivalry in Cameroon. The above sentiment was supported by a participant who said:

"I was so shock when I went to the Ministry of Education ...all documents and public notices were in French with no English translation and they expect English-speaking Cameroonians to read and understand them?" (CFP 5, 2021).

Another one added:

"You know the current situation we find ourselves today is because of the French teachers that were sent to teach at the secondary and high schools in the English region. To be honest those teachers cannot even speak English or understand it. How do you think our children will understand what they are teaching them in class? Some even tried to speak what we called "Banga English" but to no avail. That is how bad the situation was...." (CFP7, 2021).

Furthermore, a majority of the FGDs were of the view that marginalisation of the Anglophones by the French government spurred political instability in the two English regions in Cameroon. This is deduced from the focus group participants who stated:

"Since independent Anglophone has been marginalised in three domains, that is political, economic and social" (CRONFP 11, 2021)

Another participant added that:

“Since 1961, Anglophones have constantly been in the battle of trying to negotiate their identity in the country. For instance, in Circular N° 001/CAB/PM of August 16, 1991, the Prime Minister reckons the need to provide bilingual services to all persons using government or parastatals means of communication. To make matter worse, in 2015, the President passed a decision of the North West Court of Appeal compelling lawyers to make their court submissions in the French language. This was seen as a violation of the Common Law system and procedure, practiced in the English region. When we went to the street to protest against the decision, Biya authorise his military, not even police, to shoot us with live bullet. As we speak, some of our colleagues die during the protest and some wounded.” (CFP 10, 2021).

Another participant claimed that:

“Our educational system has been dominated by French, even in the English zone; they still want us to speak but French, while they can speak English. That is how bad English language has been undermined in our own Anglophone regions.” (Interview with CRONFP 11, 2021).

The nexus between both languages is considered as a contributing factor to the Anglophone crisis today.

Furthermore, factors such as unequal representation of the Anglophones in key positions in the country, exclusions of Anglophones from top positions in the country, cultural identity, and the ascription of second class citizen status accelerated institutional grievances in the on-going conflict in the Anglophone regions. This is because during the reunification of both federated units (French and English Cameroon), both agreed to enjoy equal power in the federation, Anglophones were later undermined in the union. This is evidenced by the fact that, since the Cameroonian reunification in 1961, no Anglophone Cameroonian has held the leadership of important and sensitive ministries such as the Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Territorial Administration, and National Education (CFP 5, 2021). Anglophones have usually been appointed as vice-ministers, or assumed inferior

positions such as the Ministry of Transport (AACI, 1993:15). As highlighted above, this study argues that it was the nature of the amalgamation of the Francophone and Anglophone Cameroon that laid the foundation for the current political crisis in the country.

In relation to the above, the Francophone hegemonic tendencies are also singled out as a factor that fuelled the political crisis in Cameroon. A few years after the Fouban Constitutional Conference, La Republic government adopted policies aimed at assimilating the Anglophones. Among others was the change of the country's name, which gave a lot of power to the president. In the same vein, Abiem and Tchyi (2017) added that the transfer of the decision-making power to Yaoundé, which is far from the English regions, remains a concern, since Anglophones cannot take any decision that will benefit them without consulting Yaoundé. This remains a concern to the Anglophone people, who perceive that they have been undermined in the union. This systematic model adopted by La Republic government to assimilate the Anglophone accounts for the political crisis in Cameroon.

Further, the *raison d'être* that intensified the ongoing political conflict in Cameroon is blamed on the harsh response and manner in which President Biya responded to the Ambazonian fighters. On January 1st 2018, Mr. Biya, president of Cameroon, stood at the Nsimalen airport in Yaoundé during his State of the Nation address and labelled the separatist fighters as terrorists, as "extremist groups" threatening to divide the status quo and national security of the country. This has been singled out as one of the perspectives proliferating violence in Cameroon, since the separatists claim they have been called terrorists (Zanolleti, 2018; Maclean, 2018). This aggravates the situation leading to secession.

4.2.2 Economic Marginalisation

4.2.2.1 Exploitation of natural resources

Over the years, natural resources such as oil, timber, and others have been exploited in the Anglophone regions without these regions benefiting compared to other regions. The Anglophone people grieve that their region has not been benefiting from social development in the face of resource-drain from their area.

Instead, the revenue from the oil exploration activities in their land is used to stimulate development in the Francophone regions and to "feed the bellies" of the allies of Francophone Cameroon (Bayart, 1989). In this atmosphere, they feel aggrieved and that they have been discriminated against, alienated, and cheated by the French government of Cameroon. This current study argues that the drain of natural resources without seeing benefits fuels the ongoing political conflict in Cameroon. Hence the call for secession as a way to end exploitation and alienation has resulted in a war between the government and the separatist movement (Roger, 2018).

To support the above, as deduced from the interview, the majority of participants alluded to the fact that economic marginalisation is among many reasons behind the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon. Their view buttressed claims of exploitation of resources and abandonment of many infrastructures that used to boost economic activities in the regions, underdevelopment of the Anglophone regions, inequality, and very bad roads on the whole.

One participant said,

“The Anglophones are fighting because, most if not all of the many infrastructures that used to boost economy activities as well as offer employment in the Anglophone regions have been dismantled or abandoned by La Republique government. Assets such as the Marketing Board (Cocoa Board), Cameroon Bank, Power Cam, Tiko Wharf, Manfe Airport, Bota Wharf, Manfe Inland River and many others, closed and dismantled. All these infrastructures have been abandoned in favoured of French-own companies. Hence Southern Cameroonians (Anglophones), have to rely on air/sea ports of Douala of La Republique.” (Interview with CFP 7, 2021).

In a similar vein, the injustice rooted in inequality between the Francophone and the Anglophone people fuel the political crisis in Cameroon. The unequal representations in key positions in the government, and the second class citizen status led to the conflict in the Anglophone regions. In terms of unequal representation, the Anglophones decried that although since reunification of both Cameroons in 1961, the post of Prime Minister (PM) has been held by Anglophones,

they still claim that they are just acting as stooges under La Republic government, as they have no say. This element of being second class citizens and having unequal positions in government has left the Anglophones unrepresented. Hence the perception of inequality influences the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon.

In the FGDs, a majority of participants affirmed that the exploitation of natural resources in the Anglophone region without any development in the region is a sore point of contention and vexation. A participant stated:

“...the high rate of unemployment and poverty are some of the reasons that spur [up] conflict in the two Anglophone regions since our regions is without companies that could create jobs.”

The participant further pointed out that, even SONARA, for example, which is in the English regions is full of French Cameroonians.

“...if you go to SONARA (Société Nationale de Raffinage) is like you are in Douala” (CFP 13, 2021).

This on its own provoked the Anglophones, who feel that they have been denied or deprived of their right to work in a company located in their region. This conforms to what Ndobegang (2012:4) indicates, that the resources such as oil, timber, etc. found in the English regions are being exploited without adequate development in the Anglophone regions. A participant also reported that a litre of petrol extracted in Limbe in the South-West Region of Cameroon is sold cheaper in Douala, but it is more expensive in the two Anglophone regions. The above assertion from respondents provides an understanding of deprivation faced by the Anglophones for more than three decades in the union with French Cameroon.

In relation to the above, the political crisis in Cameroon is rooted in the lopsided manner in which the Anglophone people have been assimilated by the majority French. Consequently, the dignity and statehood of Anglophones has been silently destroyed by the French-dominated government.

4.2.3 Social factors that cause political crisis in Cameroon

The political and economic discrimination against the Anglophone people of Cameroon also accounts for the political crisis in Cameroon. For over 56 years the Anglophones have been complaining of discrimination in health, education, and political appointments. For example, the Anglophones decried that entrance into schools that develop the human resources of Cameroonians has been dented by the examinations that are mostly set by the French subsystem of education (Anglophone Archbishops, 2016). This disadvantages the Anglophones, who cannot compete with the French; the secessionists also claim that out of the five Ministries linked to education none of them are Anglophone (Anglophone Archbishops, 2016). Consequently, the injustices suffered by the Anglophones stimulated their convictions and persuaded them to fight against their plight.

To support the aforementioned, from the empirical study, participants also alluded to the fact that the current political crisis in Cameroon is influenced by social factors such as discrimination in health facilities, sporting activities, and the disrespect of bilingualism in public sectors.

A participant stated:

“Most government offices in Buea, including other places in Anglophones regions, only speak French. Visitors and clients to government offices are then expected to speak in French” (CFP 4, 2021).

Another participant emphasised this same point:

“Most of the sporting activities are based in the Francophone regions. The Cameroon National football team for example is dominated by Francophone...the Francophone are more privileged than the Anglophone in terms of sporting activities ...” (CFP 7, 2021).

The inferences from the participants are clear. This view portrayed a picture of people that have been deprived of services which they are legitimately entitled to.

This brings out the frustration and bitterness, which comes as a result of neglect from the French government.

In term of deprivation theory, which is centred on equality and shared principles of people in society, is further built on the premise that people bound by a constitution should submit to it. It also focuses on shared principles. However, discontent is expressed by the Anglophone Cameroonians through deprivation of what they believe was their right to benefits like the other French regions. Hence in the context of this study, the deprivation through the lens of social services, and inequality, explained the behaviours of frustrated Anglophones, who have adopted violence as a means to express their frustration of being unable to access what is rightfully theirs. As indicated in the conceptual framework (see chapter 2 section 2.8.2), the Cameroonian government is faced with the challenge of addressing deprivation faced by the Anglophones.

Unfortunately, the social situation experienced by the Anglophone people of the NW and SW regions flared dissatisfaction within the Anglophones, which has degenerated into the current political crisis in Cameroon. The above social assertion expressed by Anglophones in the form of exclusion, exploitation, and others, conform to the theory of Relative Deprivation.

To further generate more insight into the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon, a probing question was asked to establish if the former colonial masters played a role in the growth of the political crisis in Cameroon.

To answer this question, 80% of the respondents stated that the former colonial master also played a pivotal role in causing and sustaining the ongoing conflict in the two English regions of Cameroon. Likewise, 20% apportion blame to the strategies of some major powers such as America, the United Kingdom, and China. Figure 4.1 below presents the view of participants.

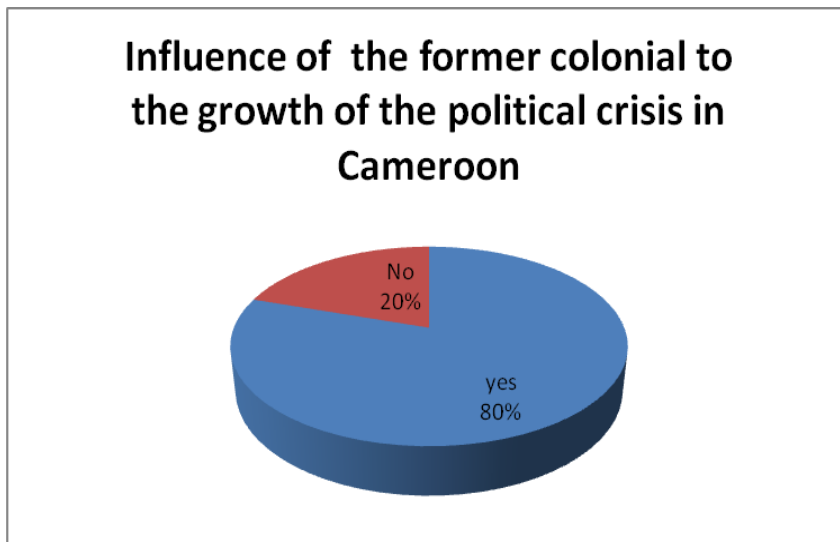


Figure 4.1: The Nature of the influence of former colonial powers

Source: Field study 2021

This graph shows that 80% of participants alluded to the fact that the political upheaval rocking the NW and SW regions in Cameroon is partly due to the role played by the former colonial masters. Participants cited the

“...creation of artificial colonial boundaries; impacting state formation; and dividing ethnic and cultural communities.” (CRONFP 11, 2021).

One of the participants stated

“The former colonial master (British Administering Authority) at that time did not secure outright independence for British Southern Cameroonians.”

Amongst other reasons, the British argued that the territory was economically not viable to survive on its own and was too small to stand on its own feet. By not granting Southern Cameroon full independence but handing its sovereignty to the British Ambassador of La Republique du Cameroon, who eventually handed it to Mr Ahmadou Ahidjo of La Republique, a colony was virtually passed from one master to another. The current conflict in the two regions of Cameroon would have been abated if the British had granted full independence to former British Southern Cameroon (CFP4, 2021). On the other hand, 20% of participants stated that the

conflict is getting worse by the day because of the profit the global powers earn from the sale of their weapons and arms to Cameroon. Evidently China has been benefiting by supplying armoured cars, military weapons and war-jeps to the government. The aforementioned points account for the Anglophone rivalry, which is ultimately both the remote and immediate causes of the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon. There is no doubt that the political crisis has socio-economic and political implications, both for the Anglophone regions, and Cameroon in general. The next section assesses the factors that favour the marginalisation of the Anglophone Cameroonians.

4.3 FACTORS THAT FAVOURED MARGINALISATION OF FORMER BRITISH CAMEROON

Although it is apparent from the above argument that the Anglophones blame the Francophone government for the predicaments they found themselves, by reuniting with French Cameroon, it is imperative to argue that the Anglophones also bear some responsibility for their marginalisation and subordinate position in the federation.

Generally, the political atmosphere in West Cameroon before unification was characterised by an intra-party divide amongst the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP), the Cameroons Peoples' National Convention (CPNC), and the CUP (Piet, 2005). During the late 1950s, there were tensions between the leading political parties that existed in former British West Cameroon concerning the political future of the territory. The KNDP of John Foncha advocated for reunification with Francophone Cameroon at independence, while the CPNC led by Endeley advocated for unification with Nigeria. This intra-party divide negatively affected the bargaining position of the Anglophone leaders at the Fouban Conference of 1961. Hence, the marginalisation of the Anglophones can be specifically blamed on the roles played by Foncha and Endeley. The foregoing sentiment was supported by Konings and Njamnjoh (2003), who argue that the Anglophones were already sold out to the French before Fouban. The authors state that "Foncha was wooed by Ahidjo promising to make him vice-president even before the Fouban conference and that Foncha had known about the pre-drafted constitution." Mbile (1985)

supports Koning and Njamnjoh, arguing that during the Fouban Conference, Premier Foncha had little interest in showing the proposals of the East Cameroon treating them as a 'secret' document [and] stood for swallowing the proposals virtually hook, line and sinker... we were being rushed through a difficult job... in order to make up for Foncha's fault (Mbile, 1985:40). Consequently, Foncha can be blamed for the Anglophone marginalisation while acting as a Francophone puppet.

Another reason that favours marginalisation was the fact that Southern Cameroonian delegates who went to the conference at Fouban in 1961 were unprepared when they confronted their Francophone counterparts at the negotiating table. This unpreparedness was due to ideological differences between the delegates, and political bitterness prior to the 1961 plebiscite (Ngoh, 1985:210-233). Ngoh concurs that the unprepared nature of the West Cameroon delegates was compounded by their personal ambition and political short-sightedness, which probably led them to think that they and their Francophone counterparts had equal political education. Little did they know what awaited them. In addition to the above, West Cameroon did not go to Fouban as equals to the French Republic, which had already had independence with a well-defined boundary, unlike the former which only gained its independence by joining the Republic of Cameroon. Due to this short-sightedness and unpreparedness of the Southern Cameroon delegates at the Fouban Conference, they ended up adopting articles in the Constitution. This ultimately led to their marginalisation. In addition to the above, the neglect of Southern Cameroon by Britain also contributed to the marginalisation, since the Francophones believed that, before unification, the French regions were more developed than the English regions: hence Ahidjo and his predecessor capitalised on his territory's status (Ngo, 1985:26-31) to exploit the Anglophones. So far, Southern (Anglophones) Cameroonians are responsible for their plight to an extent, as one cannot choose an end without choosing the necessary means to obtain the end. Having dealt with the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon and factors that favoured the marginalisation, this thesis turns its attention to the impact of the political crisis.

4.4 OBJECTIVE 2

Objective 2 was designed to determine the impact of the political crisis in Cameroon from 1972-2018. In order to address objective 2, the researcher presented the following questions to participants: “What are the impacts of the political crisis in Cameroon?” And “what are the other effects of conflict on neighbouring countries such as Nigeria?”

4.4.1 Impact of the political crisis in Cameroon

This section discusses the impact of the Cameroonian political crisis on the nation of Cameroon, given the fact that both conflicting parties exerted pressure on either side. After discussing the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon, this segment captures the impact of the political crisis. With regards to the impact of the political crisis on the nation-building of Cameroon, this study argues that, so far, there has been massive destruction of valuable properties, killing, kidnappings, violation of human rights, burning of houses and villages, lack of freedom in voicing alternative political views, poverty has increased, and there has been a surge in unemployment and insecurity. This study discusses the brunt of the political crisis under general impact, economic impact, and social impact.

4.4.2 General impact

After independence, Cameroon had been battling with some internal problems, but it never erupted into violent conflict. It was in 2016 that a peaceful protest, which was organised by Lawyers’ and Teachers’ Associations of the SW and NW regions ended in a fiasco that has plunged the country into violent conflict (Voice of Africa, 2018). The issues that triggered crisis in Cameroon include political and socio-economic issues, old grievances, under-development, and exploitation. “While the political crisis remains unabated, its implication for Cameroonians and the nation’s development is immeasurable and unquantifiable” [my emphases]; it is the political crisis that has hit the economy the hardest, with several sectors being affected. It has destroyed both physical and social assets. The 2016-2021 political crisis has had severe socio-economic and political repercussions on Cameroon (ICG, 2020).

4.4.2.1 *Destruction of infrastructure*

The political crisis has resulted in the destruction of both government and private assets. “Damage to public buildings” [my emphasis] includes schools, courthouses, council buildings, and health facilities, as well as telecommunication networks and electricity (ICG, 2019). According to a study conducted by the Regional Delegation for Basic Education for the South West (DREB) (2020), since the eruption of the political crisis, about 46 schools in NW and 77 schools in SW, giving a total of 123 had been burnt, with a further 86 vandalised in both regions. This is evidence of the fact that schools in the Francophone regions are full to capacity with learners who have had to enrol from the English regions. Consequently, DREB further estimates that, due to the attack on schools, about 25,847 children have simply stopped going to school (DREB, 2020). In a similar vein, a study conducted by a humanitarian organisation operating in the conflict area documented that, since the beginning of the political crisis, about 61 health facilities have been attacked, either by the separatist fighters or the military (Doctors without Borders [Médecins Sans Frontières], 2019). This evidence is supported by the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development, who affirmed that 15 percent of health facilities in SW had been destroyed from 2017-2020. In addition to the physical damage and destruction of properties reported above, there has been an increase in the levels of insecurity in the country, especially in the conflict zones, disrupting the provision of public services such as hospitals, schools, and pharmacies, and even scaring away investors (The Post, 2020). Besides the disruption of service delivery, the high level of insecurity in towns such as Fontem, Alou, Bamenda and many others of the South-West and North-West regions has affected government performance, as most of the Division Officers’ offices, courts, tax offices and schools are closed (Alphonse, 2019). In the same line, a study conducted by the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect confirmed that, since the onset of the political crisis in Cameroon, the security situation “has deteriorated due to the continuous fighting between the Government security forces and the Ambazonia Armed militias” (Global Centre, 2020). Again, attacks on humanitarian convoys, and non-governmental organisations involved in humanitarian services have become rampant. Also, the uses of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by the armed militants, and kidnappings, have also escalated.

To support the above, during focus group discussions and individual interviews, many respondents alluded to the fact that the political crisis in the regions has created insecurity in the form of unrest, killings, assassinations, kidnappings, and terrorism, which have become widespread. Others pointed out that the rate of insecurity in SW and NW is wild. The researcher used the following scale – low, medium, high – in order to rate the views of respondents, which is presented in Figure 4.2.

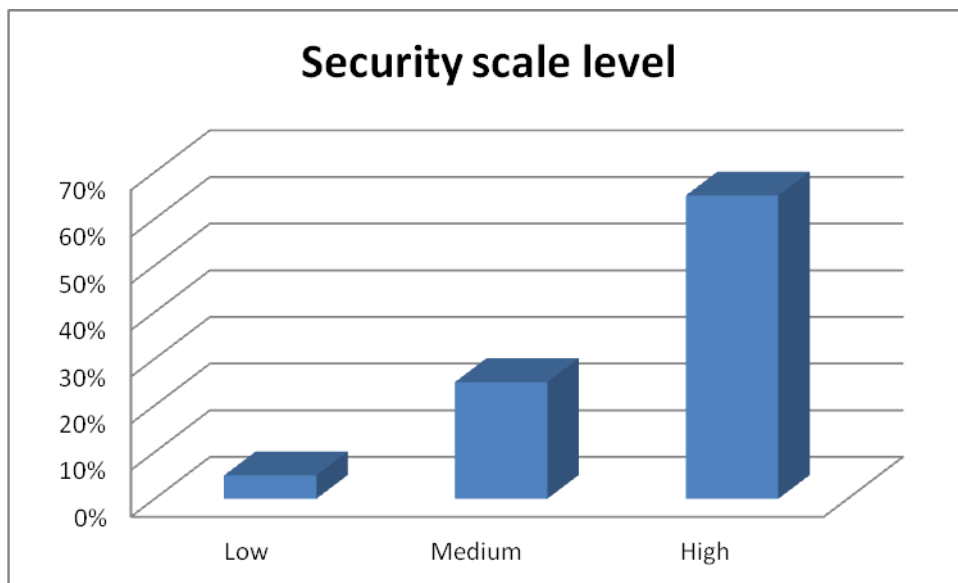


Figure 4.2: Insecurity scale level

Source: Field study Cameroon, 2021

Figure 4.2 indicates that several respondents reported that the rate of insecurity is very high in the two conflicting regions. This high insecurity has discouraged investors from the country. One participant cited the cases of

“...kidnapping, torture and beheading of black legs by both camps (the Government military and the Amba boys). The recent case in point is the kidnapping of schools principals, and the six Government Divisional delegates of Ekondo Titi in the Ndian Division; one killed and the others still on hostage, with the government unable to do anything.....” (CFP3, 2021).

Another participant added:

“So many principals and teachers have been kidnapped. Among others is the case of the principal, Father William Neba, of St. Bede’s College, in Ashing North-West region, was reported to have been abducted while celebrating mass with students and some prominent business people in the region.” (CFP 4, 2021).

Another participant offered the following shocking sense of insecurity in Cameroon:

“...the government is spending scarce resources on unnecessary items like the purchase of military ammunition and police to protect their interests at the expense of their people when disgruntled civilians go on protest.” (CRONFP 16, 2021).

The use of sophisticated weaponry by both sides of the conflict and in the regions amplifies insecurity within the country and across the sub-region. Ibeanu, *et.al* (2016) further support the fact that the recurring agitation of the Anglophone context has regional and national security implications, which may include mobilisation of potential protesters that eventually could escalate armed violence and worsen the existing level of insecurity in Cameroon.

Unfortunately, the horrifying scenes of violence in Cameroon since 2016 demonstrate the negative outcomes of leaving the state to manage secessionist groups as they deem appropriate. The inability of both conflicting parties to collaborate only aggravates the situation in the two English regions.

Moreover, Mueller and Tobias (2016) maintain that the political crisis has further worsened the breakdown of political institutions and law enforcement. This is evident in the destruction of business properties, loss of resources, and infrastructure. Besides, the resources which would have been used in developing infrastructural amenities for the betterment of Cameroonians are frequently diverted to build an intimidating security system. On that note, this study argues that in Cameroon, the political crisis has become a channel for draining the country’s resources.

4.4.2.2 *Impact on agriculture and trade*

Following the political crisis, trade and economic activities within the Anglophone regions and other regions in the country have been disrupted. This is premised on the fact that some of the border posts between Mamfe and Nigeria were closed during ghost town [country Sundays]. Besides, some of the biggest traders in the Anglophone regions were forced to relocate to other regions due to continuous violence and burning of their business premises. The conflict has affected both inter-state and intra-state trade, as separatist fighters keep disrupting traders to and from Nigeria and within the English region. In Cameroon, the pattern of trade depicts that agricultural products moved from the NW and SW regions to the Littoral and Central regions, while finished goods moved the other way round. The South-Western and North-Westerners engaged in intra-state trade with Nigeria, which generated revenue for the state. Due to the recurrent political tension, some of those involved in trade activities have continued to relocate elsewhere within the country, while some Nigerians who were involved in cross-border trade have relocated back to Nigeria and to other regions in Cameroon (Ministry of Agriculture, 2019). The conflict not only restricts human capital maximization, but further affects the cross-border petty trade between Nigeria and Cameroon which used to support the livelihoods of many. In a similar vein, following this escalation of violence and human violation rights, the US Government has notified the Government of Cameroon (GoC) of their intent to terminate Cameroon's trade benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) as of January 1st 2020 (United States of America (USA) Embassy, 2019:1).

With regard to businesses, it is apparent that a peaceful environment attracts both local and international investors, as nobody would want to engage in or set up a business in a hostile environment. Over the years, the conflict regions have witnessed a drastic decline in business. This is evidenced by the fact that, due to the hostile activities of the separatist fighters and the ghost towns holidays implemented by the Interim Government of Ambazonia, the regions have experienced the relocation of some productive facilities from conflict-affected areas into secure neighbouring regions like Littoral (The Post, 2019). The political crisis has further led to a decrease in trade, investments, and production, and an increase in prices. This price increase is due to a decrease in agricultural commodities and a fall in transport

availability emanating from the aura of uncertainty (Ministry of Agriculture, 2019). Furthermore, trade and other cross-border activities between Cameroon, Nigeria and Ghana have taken a knock due to border closures in Mamfe. Also, local arms manufacturers and local gun dealers are taking advantage of the conflict to expand their trade's business in illicit arms and ammunition.

In corroboration of the above, the political crisis has caused a massive drop in subsistence farming and the production of cash crops. Jude (2019) and Ngobesing (2020) maintain that the main crops (maize, beans, cassava, plantain, and bananas) produced in the NW and SW have all experienced a fall in production since the conflict escalated in the regions. Reasoning on the same line, it was observed that there have been even larger drops in the production of other crops, including cassava, yam, cocoyam, and plantain. Hence a study by Ngobesing (2020) estimates that the value of subsistence crops lost in 2018 exceeded US\$180 million in NW and US\$227 million in SW. Besides, other cash crops like cocoa have also been affected: for example, in the SW, the production of cocoa dropped by 23 percent, while palm oil dropped by 40 percent and bananas by 26 percent. The drastic drop in palm oil and bananas is attributed to the abandonment of CDC palm oil and banana plantations in the SW region. This fall in production has started to affect the productivity level of Cameroon, since the crisis appears unresolved.

The political crisis has on many occasions dealt drastic blows to Anglophones and Cameroon in general by impeding their economic activities, mainly because of obstruction of trade, an uncertain market, thwarted investment, and non-development. The crisis has hindered economic activities by creating fear in the minds of the people, resulting in the postponing of investments.

To support the above, during individual interviews and focus group discussions, many of the respondents were of the view that the ongoing political conflict has dealt severely with them, since they relied mostly on subsistence farming for income.

One participant stated:

“...since the conflict began in 2016, cocoa has been affected, production is very low because we do not have chemical to spray the cocoa bean.” (CFP3, 2021).

Another participant put it this way:

“I am a famer... since the conflict started production of cash crops is low. Most of the people are now living in the forest. They are scared to go work in their respective farms because of the fear from either the military or the Amba boys. ... some of the farmers have been abandon to the Amba boys since they are using them as their base ...” (CFP 5, 2021).

Another said:

“I have abandoned all my farms in Cameroon... am now living at the camp in Nigeria” (CRONFP 11, 2021).

4.5 ECONOMIC IMPACT

4.5.1 Impact of the political crisis on growth

The economic growth of Cameroon is determined by the capacity of the economy to produce goods and services (ADB, 2016). Having said that, the political crisis in the two Anglophone regions has exerted a negative impact on growth when compared with trends before the escalation of the conflict in 2016 (World Bank, 2019). From 2016 to the present, Cameroon has witnessed the most politically violent times since Independence. Indeed, during these five years of incessant conflict, Cameroon’s growth rate has dropped amid ongoing tensions and violence in the country. Before the outbreak of the conflict in 2016, the growth rate was 4.65% but because of the internal instability it had dropped to 3.7% by the end of 2017 and plummeted to 0.7% in 2020 (World Bank, 2020). Apparently, according to the World Bank, Cameroon runs a current account deficit of 3.785 billion U S Dollars amid weak governance and high internal instability, which attracts very low foreign direct investment, as inflation rose to 1.6% in 2016. Arguably, the closures and burning of some parastatals in the conflict regions account for the drop in growth. This is evidenced by the fact that the Cameroon Development Corporation and PAMOL, two of the country’s biggest

agricultural companies, both owned by the state, have lost up to 80 per cent of their capacity (Jude, 2019; Ngobesing, 2020). To further worsen the situation, in 2019, companies working in the Anglophone regions reported losses estimated about half a billion U S dollars since the crisis began. Moreover, shutdown of the internet by the government in the two Anglophone regions in 2017 was a severe blow to the already collapsing economy (ICG, 2017:8821).

The table below shows the growth rate of Cameroon during these years of political crisis.

Table 4.2: Crisis and growth performance in Cameroon 2014-2020

Year	GDP Growth %	Annual change
2020	0.7%	-2.9%
2019	3.72%	-0.34%
2018	4.06%	0.51%
2017	3.55%	-1.10%
2016	4.65%	-1.00%
2015	5.65%	-0.23%
2014	5.885	-0.48%

Source: World Bank, 2020.

From the above table, there is a most recent decline of -2.9%. As said earlier, this decline in the GDP growth rate is influenced by the political crisis in the English regions. Deterioration of growth in the period 2019-2020 impacted on poverty and income. Hence resolving the political crisis is critical in order for Cameroon to experience growth. In the same light, foreign direct investment is also affected by the political crisis, since no one is likely to invest where there is instability. On the expenditure side, an increase in the political conflict intensified government spending on military hardware. Consequently, there has been an increase in inflation as government spending on defence increases. Likewise, the import and export gap widens while foreign exchange reduces.

To support the above literature, during FGDs and individual interviews, participants were dismayed by the political machinations. They talked of the political and social institutions in Cameroon breaking down. They cited that parliament and municipal elections have been postponed for the second time in 2020 because of the malfunctioning of these institutions, and they attributed this to the instability reigning in the country. Thus the uncertainty associated with political crisis in Cameroon has created a very fluid political environment, which has stopped all investment and accelerated the economic decline on the country. Participants further decried the political crisis that has slowed economic growth and development over the years, especially in the conflict zones. This study argues that, based on the impact of the political crisis, resolving the stalemate in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon is critical.

4.5.2 Social impact of the political crisis on nation-building in Cameroon

The political crisis in the NW and SW has impacted severely on the people residing in the regions of conflict. For Cameroon, and more precisely the Anglophone people of Cameroon, the on-going political crisis comes with serious social consequences. Health and education sectors, just to name these in particular, faced chronic and severe dysfunctionality (DREB, 2020). The insecurity in the crisis regions is deteriorating because of a heightened shortage of humanitarian needs like water, food, shelter, health care services, and others. The aforementioned are documented in a study conducted by Humanitarian Overview (2020), which verified that about 5.4 million people in Cameroon require humanitarian assistance, with the majority being women and children (Humanitarian Overview, 2020).

This position was corroborated by the participants who lamented the consequences of the crisis for education, employment, and poverty. Some participants reported that the conflict has affected their social life. They went on to report that the unemployment rate has increased because of the instability in the country, coupled with low income, and poor health facilities leading to high mortality; education has been disrupted, and an increase in transport costs and rapid decline of investors and capital flight which have in combination negatively affected the country in all domains (CFP 4, 2021). Some respondents claim that, due to the ongoing conflict, they have

seen a rise in starvation based on the fact that, throughout this period of conflict, economic activities have stalled since people have fled to other regions, while some activities have been critically disrupted by the separatists. Participants also indicated that the conflict has led to psychological trauma because many children and adults saw their parents as well as close family members and friends dying in horrific conditions, experiences that cannot be easily forgotten.

Education: Many participants reported that since the conflict erupted in 2016 most schools in the Anglophone regions have closed, some were burnt down, and others disrupted for four years. This has affected school enrolment at all levels, as boys and girls stopped going to school altogether because of the fear of gunmen attacking them. It is no coincidence that most of them have picked up arms. Cameroon's illiteracy rate is on the rise.

A participant reported that:

“Too many youths are out of school as refugees in Nigeria, IDPs while some have decided to join the Amba boys, some involved in illegal activities like smoothing reburying of which many female have become prostitutes in towns like Douala, Bafoussam etc. social life is almost non-existent.” (CFP8, 2021).

Another one remarked:

“My children are no longer going to school, even here at the camp I cannot afford to send them to school. They are forced to do force labours by working in people farms to earn income for food...” (CRONFP 16, 2021).

Another claimed:

“The school boycott strategy implemented by the Ambazonian leaders has had a severe impact on children's ability to attend school and learn.” (CFP 13, 2021).

In contrast, some respondents stated that some schools in cities like Buea are operating, since there are military personnel encamped at the schools. Since the

Amba boys cannot disrupt schools in Buea, it was also found that some Anglophone children are attending schools in some of the French regions.

To support the above, a study by UNICEF (2020) confirmed that since January 2020, nearly 900,000 children in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon have witnessed the crisis in accessing education. Consequently, these children who dropped out are faced with risks such as sexual exploitation, abuse, and recruitment into armed groups, arbitrary arrest, prostitution, early marriage, pregnancy, and child labour.

Unemployment: during FGDs, most of the participants reflected on the fact that the unemployment rate has increased. Participants explained that self-employed people and businesses have been ruined due to the ghost town and constant attacks by both camps. People cannot take care of their basic needs any longer. This is inscribed in the following statements of participants:

“I used to work at the PAMOL plantation, now the plantation has been burned down, everything destroyed. The Amba boys will attack, behead and kidnap workers. They claim destroying the plantations is to cripple the French government involvement in their region, they don’t want any French companies in their regions.” (CFP 7, 2021).

The above sentiment was confirmed by the General Manager of the CDC who stated that

“In most of the estates, the workers have abandoned work; the crops such as bananas, rubber, palm, now have been overgrown by grass. Other structures of the corporation have been vandalised and some burnt down.” (National Times, 2019).

Another participant said

“I am only depending on my siblings who are abroad...I am unable to find a job. I used to teach in Fontem but with the current situation all schools are closed...” (CFP 9, 2021).

Participants further reported that the ongoing conflict in the English regions has led to development challenges which are a hindrance to nation-building. A majority of participants were in support of the view that the ongoing political instability has hindered development in the regions, jeopardising the ability to attract investment.

Poverty: Many respondents reported that, since the outbreak of the conflict, the rate of poverty, hunger, and starvation has increased. This is because farmers no longer cultivate crops, some have been displaced, and some have fled to neighbouring countries like Nigeria and Ghana.

To support data collected from the field, the World Bank in Cameroon (2017:1) confirmed that the overall number of poor in Cameroon have increased since the outbreak of the conflict in Cameroon. The World Bank Economic Country Memorandum (2017) further points out that if Cameroon is to become an upper-middle-income country by 2035, it would have to increase productivity and unleash the potential of its private sector. The above report indicates how poverty has become rampant in Cameroon as a result of the conflict in the English regions. All these aspects have negatively affected nation-building in Cameroon.

Furthermore, food insecurity is alarming in the Anglophone regions. Both the South-West and North-West are regions once considered as the bread basket of Cameroon. Today both regions are experiencing high levels of food insecurity due to the political crisis, since most of the farmers have fled their farms to neighbouring regions as well as other countries. As of the time of writing, food insecurity was projected to be worsening because of the continuous lockdowns and ghost town days enforced by the Ambazonian Interim Government and militias. GICAM (2019) shows that continuous lockdowns and ghost town have prevented farmers from working on their fields during critical farming periods. It is estimated that about 440 000 children under the age of 5 years suffer from malnutrition. This study argues that the more protracted the political crisis becomes, the greater the prospects of a heightened risk of food insecurity, not only in the two Anglophone regions but in Cameroon in general.

4.5.3 Impact on livelihood

Generally, what started as a peaceful protest in 2016 has escalated into an armed conflict, with secession as a last resort. Consequently, the war has had a negative impact on human life and development. The political crisis not only impeded the progress of economic development but has also negatively impacted on lives and livelihoods.

4.5.3.1 *Human displacement*

The displacement of the human population is considered in this study as a major consequence. This carries a significant economic and social cost, especially to the conflict regions, but often also for the nearby regions and countries that host the displaced people. The continuing political crisis has affected the livelihoods of Cameroonians, especially those residing in the conflict-affected areas. There have been significant displacements of thousands within Cameroon and to neighbouring countries like Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, and many others. For instance, about 680 000 persons have been internally displaced within Cameroon (OCHA, 2020), while according to the United Nations, approximately 630 000 Anglophones (UNHCH, 2020) are refugees in Nigeria (see figure below). Unlike some nations of the world where natural disasters displace people, in Cameroon, the political crisis has displaced more people. This is evidenced by the fact that, in 2020, the American immigration authorities in collaboration with the GoC repatriated about 57 (CRTV News, 2020), Anglophone Cameroonian asylum seekers who had fled the war for safety in America, with many still to be repatriated. In a similar vein, the ICG (2020) concurs that, since 2016, the conflict has claimed about 40 000 lives and caused loss of property, which is often accompanied by clashes between the military and the separatists. To support the above view, ICG further alluded to the fact that in different clashes, the military has often responded to the separatists with brutal force, resulting in the displacement of humans, causing casualties in its wake. Also, many fighters, including unarmed civilians, have been killed during demonstrations (ICG, 2020). This armed confrontation between the separatists and the government security forces has resulted in over 630 000 refugees in neighbouring Nigeria (UNHCR), and one million internally displaced (Center for Human Rights, 2019).

Most of the refugees in Nigeria are women and children, while most of the women are widows and most of the children are orphans (UNHCH, 2020). Figure 4.3 shows the numbers of Anglophone refugees in Nigeria from 2017-2020.

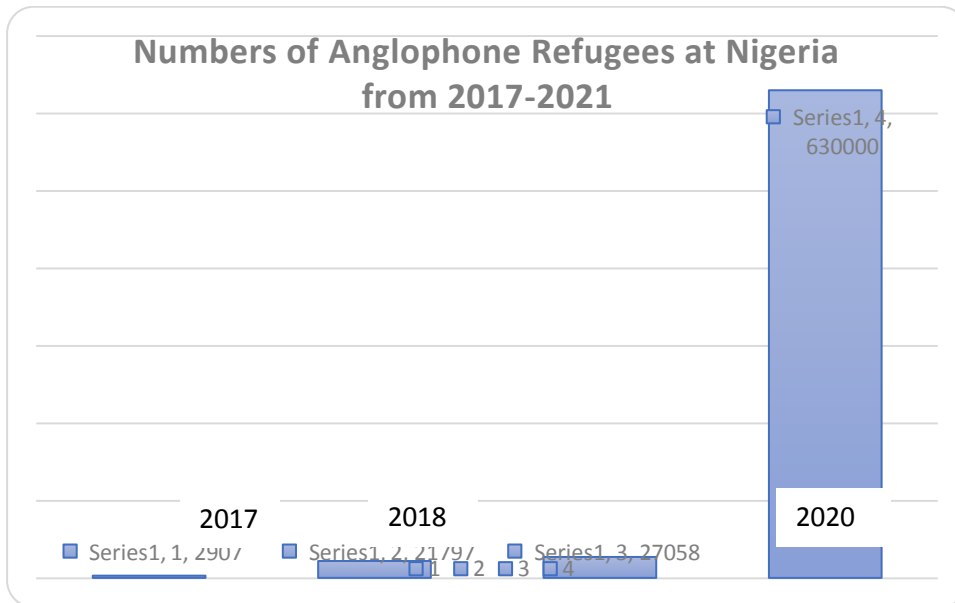


Figure 4.3: Anglophone refugees in Nigeria

Source: UNHCR Nigeria, 2020

Furthermore, the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (2018) confirmed that state reprisal against the separatist fighters’ groups in the Southwest and Northwest of Cameroon over the past five years has led to widespread humanitarian crises such as hunger, starvation, and massive forced displacement in Anglophone regions. At the same time, government armed forces carried out a “scorched earth” strategy, culminating in the excessive abuse of individuals, torture of civilians, firing on crowds, making arbitrary arrests, and destroying villages in the English-speaking regions of Cameroon (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

OCHA (2020) further observed that insecurity, displacement, and limited access to basic services have affected 2.2 million people in the two regions, and about 2 million people have limited access to employment and have lost their livelihoods due to the crisis. As a result, this humanitarian crisis in Cameroon is accelerating as the conflict is not resolved.

In support of the above, empirical interviews further established that, as result of the conflict in the two Anglophone regions, there has been a massive loss of lives, displacement of many Anglophones, a brain drain due to migration of many youths, and mistrust among the Cameroonians. The following are some horror stories participants shared with the researcher on the effects they have suffered from the ongoing conflict. A victim of the conflict who has fled to Nigeria told the researcher:

“My house was burnt by the military because the military suspect my son is an Amba boy, which is not true; now I am alone and my family are left with no home. That is why we fled to Nigeria for fear of our lives.” (CRONFP 11, 2021).

Another participant added

“There have been many killings in the Anglophone communities including children, women, elderly, and even young boys who are the main target by the security forces.”

The participant went further, reporting

“...that some people are hiding in the forest including babies, expectant mothers and the elderly. They live there, exposed to rain, snakes, and without food or medicine; right now we done stayed at home like before, we sleep in the forest because we are afraid of government soldiers. They usually come around 2-3 am early morning to carry out atrocities. So before dawn they are gone....” (CFP 3, 2021).

Another participant revealed that:

“Both the militaries and the Amba boys have committed horrible atrocities by killing of innocent people especially once they suspect you as a black leg. Both parties have burned market centres, private home of poor people, schools, even our council here in Muyuka was burned down. In addition more than 60 villages in the Anglophone regions have been burned down, for example Munyenge, Kwakwa, Ekombe, Tadu, Kombone mission, Kake I, Kake II, Ekona Mombo, Batibo, part of Ikata and Bafia etc.” (CFP 4, 2021).

Another participant said:

“We have gone through a lot in life during this period of violent conflict. Why do I say so? I, for example, as a woman, during military raid in our village we have to stay in the forest for more than a week. During such period it happened that I was on my period (menstruation). I had no choices than to use the empty cocoa pots to insert within me so the blood will not mess everywhere. This is horrible because is a terrible experience that I have never used before and besides the infections from the cocoa pots.” (CFP 4, 2021).

During focus group discussions, participants shared similar experiences of massive killing, kidnappings, horrible killings, burnings of schools, councils, prison centres etc. by both camps. An eyewitness shares a horrible incident of a four-month-old baby “baby Maltha” who was killed by BIR in Muyuka (CFP 5, 2021). The eyewitness said,

“It happened on one fateful day around 5pm in the afternoon. Suddenly the military came into Muyuka from Buea. Often when we heard the bell from the quarter leader everybody has to run, because is a sign that they (militaries) are around. So since baby Maltha was still very little her parents couldn’t run with her because they believed she was very little so the military would not kill such an innocent child. But to their greatest surprise, after the shooting is over, on arriving home to pick up their baby, they found but a lifeless Maltha on the sofa. ...with the presence of these “monster” (militaries) living with us our lives are not safe...” (CFR 5, 2021).

The participant even gave me a magazine with the picture of the mother holding the little dead baby for me to see. Attached below is the picture of Baby Maltha.



Source: Field study in Muyuka, Cameroon, 2021.

In short participants narrated horrible incidents that had just happened in the area of Muyuka that social media did not cover. In the words of one of the participants:

“We are at ground zero that we are seeing things that we pray our next generation should not go through it because they are not good at all.”

Another participant shared similar sentiments with the researcher about the death of six (6) children in Kumba. She stated:

“Last year (2020), around October, 6 school children aged 12-14 were gunned down to death. The Amba boys apportion blames the Military, and the military said they are innocent, that the separatist fighters are responsible for the death of those 6 children...” (CFP 13, 2021).

Another participant reported:

“According to him the Amba Boys are more deadly than the government security forces. The manner in which these boys are killing and kidnapping people, especially

people that is business guys, is rampant! The Amba boys are killing the militaries even more than we expect...” (CFP 16, 2021).

In relation to the above, this participant further revealed that uncounted residents have been destroyed; in some cases the whole village got burnt down like Kwakwa village, Ikata, Azi, and Munyenge to name just a few of more than 120 villages burned in the South West region. This is the ‘Anglophone Crisis.’

That said, since the outbreak of the political upheavals in Cameroon, it is not only this country that has been affected. On the contrary, some countries, for example, Nigeria, have to bear the brunt of these political disturbances. The impact of the political crisis in Nigeria is severe. Being host to about 600 000 Anglophone refugees, the economic burden of caring for additional people coupled with its own internal food security crisis and insecurity certainly has a strain on the public services delivery capacity of the Nigerian nation.

Despite the above negative effect of the crisis in Cameroon, there are some sectors in the country that have experienced growth during these years of incessant conflict; for example, transportation, financial services, trade, and telecommunications. The transport sector has experienced growth in the sense that the fare from the Anglophone regions to Francophone regions has increased, especially when the IG declared lockdown. Besides, within the Anglophone regions, transport fares have gone up due to a hike in petrol prices. The military sector has also experienced growth and a business boom. This is evident in the fact that, before the outbreak of the conflict, local arms dealers were not selling arms the way they have been selling in the context of the conflict. In other words, the conflict has been a great source of business for arms dealers, since the local population has a dire need for these arms to defend themselves. In affirmation of the above sentiment, the governor of the NW and SW regions of Cameroon warned those involved in the manufacturing and sale of illegal weapons to desist from such acts (*Journal du Cameroon, 2020*).

Considering all the above, and without taking into account the untold human loss and suffering, the GoC has spent a considerable amount, billions of CFA, on the political crisis. This also excludes the unrecovered loans given by the International Monetary

Fund (IMF) to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 4.4 below summarises the actors in the political conflict in Cameroon.

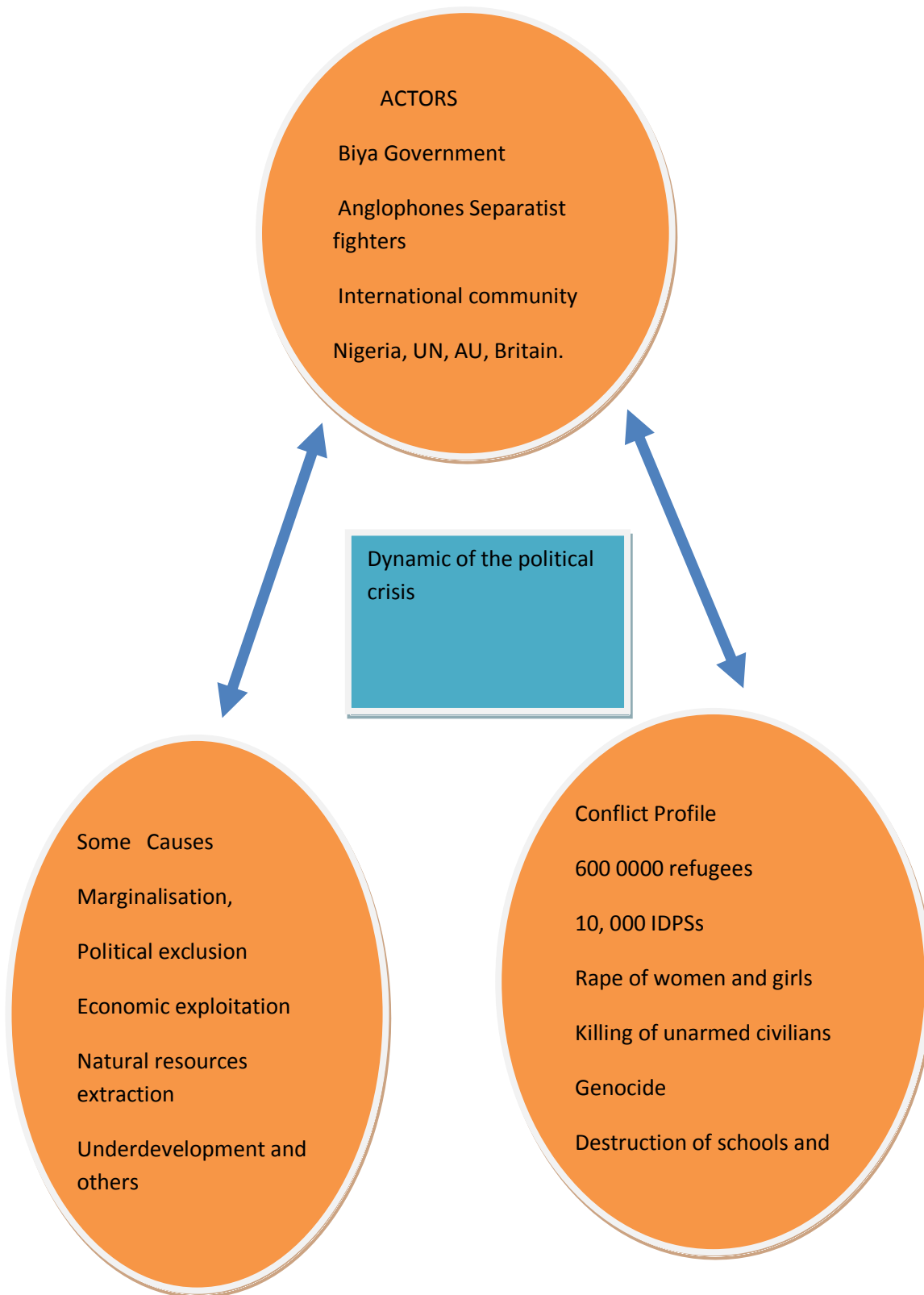


Figure 4.4: Map of actors in the political conflict in Cameroon

4.6 FINDINGS

The findings are based on the data collected through empirical data and literature review. The presentation of the findings derives from objectives 1 and 2 as highlighted above. Based on the data collected through primary and secondary sources, the researcher concluded that the political crisis rocking the two English regions of Cameroon can partly be blamed on the nature of the amalgamation of the two federating units. Other factors such as marginalisation, underrepresentation, the Fouban Constitution, and the status of being second-class citizens have characterised Cameroon's political landscape since independence in 1961 are also causes of the ongoing political crisis. The researcher also found that the refusal of French Cameroon to relinquish power to English Cameroon is premised on the fact that it would no longer enjoy economic benefits from the resources found in the English regions. It was again revealed that the high rate of unemployment due to low foreign direct investment (FDI), which could have created job opportunities in Cameroon, led to an escalation of the political crisis. It was also confirmed that greed and grievances were among other factors fuelling the dispute in the Anglophone regions, given the fact that the GoC does not want the Anglophones to benefit from the resources found in their regions.

The findings of the study further indicated that inequalities that align with culture, language, education, jobs, and exclusion are more likely to influence the political crisis in Cameroon. The study also found that, using the theory of anomie, the inability to obtain human needs is considered a factor of the conflict, since human beings will pursue their needs, either independently or in association with others, regardless of consequences. It was also found that, using the theory of self-determination, the Anglophone people of former British Cameroon are demanding independence from La Republic du Cameroon.

It was further found that killing, beheading, and kidnapping of thousands of people, unwanted displacements of Anglophone people both internally and externally, distrust among people, destruction of valuable state properties, high inflation, and, above all, a stagnant economy, are some of resultant effects of the political crisis.

The Gross Domestic Product has reduced tremendously due to the instability in the country (World Bank, 2019). This can be justified in the sense that the Anglophone regions which contribute about 60% of GDP to the country cannot function well enough to generate supplies that could boost the GDP. Also, the inability of citizens to continue working due to the recurrence of violence, and lock-downs (ghost town), often imposed by the separatist leaders, made citizens unable to provide for their basic needs, hence they have to depend on remittances from Nigeria and other countries.

The study also found that the continuous violence and the inability of the government to broker a peace accord has brought challenges such as reconciliation between the two conflicting parties, political parties and the military, reconstruction of the country, and rebuilding political and economic assurance in order to attract foreign direct investment (FDI).

4.7 SUMMARY OF THIS CHAPTER

This chapter addressed objectives 1-2 from chapter 1, which were designed to examine the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon from 1972-2018. This was in response to the question “What are the causes of the political crisis in Cameroon?” The findings all congregate around several factors, which contribute towards to the escalation of the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon. Some of the factors identified from the literature and empirical review are:

- i. Economic and political marginalisation of the Anglophone minorities by the Francophones, unequal representation in political appointments, and the colonial legacy.
- ii. Exploitation of natural resources without benefits to the regions
- iii. Second-class citizen syndrome, and poverty;
- vi. Assimilation, underdevelopment, discrimination, and inequality;
- v. Abrogation of the Constitution and disrespect of identity, among other reasons, have induced a political crisis which has escalated to war in Cameroon.

The political conflict is peculiar in the sense that, unlike other countries in Africa such as Sudan and Mali, the causes of political conflict is influenced by religious factors, farmer-herders, disputed hegemony, and other factors.

The chapter further addressed objective 2, which strove to determine the impact of the political crisis in Cameroon from 1972-2018. In light of the research objective, the following question was presented to interviewees: What are the impacts of the political crisis in Cameroon? The findings identify tremendous impacts of the political crisis on the nation of Cameroon and its citizens. Some of the impacts identified were:

- ❖ Destruction of infrastructure such as schools, health centres, courts, municipals councils, and prison centres, and the weakening of institutions.
- ❖ Burning of houses and villages and the closure of companies. In Cameroon today, especially in the English regions, many people are living from hand to mouth; many people are homeless, and hopeless.
- ❖ A high level of insecurity in Cameroon, especially in the regions of conflict, which is characterised with kidnappings, killing, beheading, torture, terrorism, looting, raping, burning of civilians, armed banditry, and other inhuman acts.
- ❖ Disruption of trade and agriculture
- ❖ High rate of infectious disease
- ❖ Decline in productivity, and investment, and a slow growth rate
- ❖ Drop in school enrolment at all levels of education
- ❖ Increase in unemployment and poverty
- ❖ High rate of migration and displacement of skilled labour
- ❖ High death rates, violation of human rights, genocide, increase in infant mortality, and low life expectancy.

It was noted that in order to address the political crisis in Cameroon there is a need to start at the grassroots level. It was also noted that the conflicting parties still need to reach an acceptable level for negotiations to take place. Furthermore, so long as inequality and marginalisation persist in the country, and the large number of people living in poverty, with unemployment, and in penury continue to increase, the number of disgruntled people is bound to increase, and violent

conflict could remain unabated. Having drawn the summary on Chapter 4 focus turns to Objective 3 and Objective 4, which are addressed in the next chapter of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

PATHWAYS AND ROADMAP TO A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE CAMEROONIAN POLITICAL CRISIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four presented the causes and the impacts of the Cameroonian political crisis. This chapter presents and analyses results of the data that were collected via structured interviews. As explained in Chapter 3, interviews were carried out with Cameroonians. The chapter also assesses the way forward to emerge from the conflict. This was achieved by addressing objective 3 and 4, as noted in Chapter 3. The third objective was addressed through interviews and a literature review.

5.2 BREAKDOWN IN THE PATHWAYS TO A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE CAMEROONIAN POLITICAL CRISIS FROM 1972 to 2018

To achieve this objective, the following questions were directed to respondents.

- ❖ What has the Cameroonian Government done in order to resolve the conflict in the country?
- ❖ Why did the previous pathways to peace fail in resolving the Cameroonian political crisis?
- ❖ What are some of the challenges faced by the Government of Cameroon in the quest to restore peace and stability in the country?

Objective 4 sought to examine mitigation pathways to resolve the Cameroonian crisis and achieve sustainable peace in the country. In order to address this objective, participants were asked what alternative peace building strategies they envisaged to resolve the Cameroonian crisis.

The data collected from the field were presented alongside secondary data from a literature review. As noted in Chapter 4, the researcher used codes in the final analysis in order to protect the identity of participants. The answers to these questions resonate with objective 3 and 4 and the manner in which these were addressed. The analyses of respondent's views were based on the theme of

pathways to peace in Cameroon. These responses represent the views of participants regarding the pathways to peace in the Cameroonian Political Crisis. Objective 3 is unpacked below.

5.2.1 What has the Cameroonian Government done in order to resolve the conflict in the country?

The responses to the above question are presented from the interviews as given below.

The age of the respondents ranged from 20-60. The study was impartial to gender, to enable the researcher to collect different opinions from both men and women, and to avoid bias. Most of the participants were educated. This indicates that most of the respondents were aware of the ongoing political crisis prevailing in the country. With regards to the question about what the Cameroon Government has done in order to end the conflict in the Anglophone regions, which has resulted in the death and displacement of thousands of Anglophone Cameroonians, 65% of participants alluded to the fact that the government has carried out several initiatives to put an end to the ongoing political crisis, but to no avail.

Regarding what the GoC has done to resolve the political crisis in Cameroon, a majority (65%) of the respondents reported that, since the crisis broke out in 2016, the government has been actively involved in identifying lasting solutions to the conflict. The following measures were verbatim suggestions by respondents of what the government has done so far:

- ❖ The creation of ad hoc committees to look into those problems that spark political conflict in Cameroon. This committee was chaired by Prime Minister Joseph Ngute.
- ❖ The Commission for Bilingualism and Multiculturalism
- ❖ It was also found that the GoC uses repression in order to quell instability in the conflict regions.
- ❖ The Government has opened a section in the School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM) for the training of Anglophone Magistrates.

- ❖ Government has also launched the recruitment of 1 000 bilingual teachers
- ❖ The translation into English of the OHADA code of Law
- ❖ Opening of the Faculty of Law in Buea University

Furthermore, in 2018, President Biya created the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration committee (DDR) centre for ex-combatants of Boko Haram and the separatists. Two of the DDR centres were established in the SW and NW, and one in the far North. Participants further stated that the creation of the DDR is showing double standards, because the government is using some of the ex-Amba boys who have put down their guns as at the rehabilitation centre they are used as spies to spot militias. As one participant put it:

“In my view all the effort or measures taken by the government of La Republic du Cameroun, all are cosmetic reforms to complete the assimilation of the Anglophone people of Cameroon.” (CFP 8, 2021).

In addition, one participant explained that, as the crisis in the English regions became more violent, the GoC had to call for dialogue. The first dialogue took place in Bamenda, chaired by the Prime Minister, but it ended up in a fiasco because the Consortium was too extreme with their demands. Again, in 2019, the president called for a Major National Dialogue (MND) which was unfruitful and unable to ensure any form of cessation of hostilities. Participants also reported that in order to ease tension in 2019 the president granted a “special statute” to the two Anglophone regions. But some participants expressed the view that the granting of special statute is not what they wanted, at the moment they wanted total independence. A participant put it this way;

“We [Anglophones], don’t want “special statute”, let Mr Biya keep his special statue to himself. We want independence.....”

The participant further revealed that

“The era of being slaves to our own brothers [French people] is over. Our boys are not backing back; we are going to fight even in the next 20 years until we obtain

independent. Something that our former colonial master (Britain) did not give us...” (CFP 8, 2021).

One participant further indicated that the government, coupled with non-governmental organisations, has also provided humanitarian aid to cater for IDPs:

“We have been provided with rice, sardine, gari, clothes, but we are not comfortable; we want peace not rice or gari.” (CFP 7, 2021).

Ironically, 35% respondents contradicted the above view by pointing out that Mr Biya, the president of La Republic, is not yet ready to end the war that he declared by calling the separatist fighters terrorists during his State of the Nation address in 2017.

Participants reported that the GoC has proven unable to resolve the internal instability, hence, there is an urgent need for the United Nations and other international organisations to come in to resolve the conflict rocking the two English regions of Cameroon and to end violence.

During FGDs, participants reported that Mr. Biya has never had the intention for any peace to be restored because, as the president of the country, he has never offered any dialogue. One participant stressed that:

“If the president wanted peace he could have been part and parcel of the national dialogue that he initiated.” (CFP 6, 2021).

Another participant added:

“Mr. Biya has never discussed the political crisis in the parliament.” (CFP 8, 2021).

Another participant said,

“For solidarity purposes, and to show that Mr. Biya is ready for peace, he should visit the Anglophone regions.”

The participant went on, saying

“Since the conflict break out in 2016, President Biya has never visited any of the conflict regions. He gave examples, of some countries in Africa like South Africa, that just a simple strike of service delivery, often the president will visit the province to address what spark-up civil unrest. But the case of Cameroon is different. The action of Biya speaks to the fact that he is not ready for any peace...” (CFP 5, 2021).

The participants went on to report that there has never been any genuine call for peace; all that has been done are window dressing strategies designed to complete the assimilation process.

A participant stated:

“The government is just using smooth screen mechanism or quasi-mechanism. How can the government be talking of peace and calling the Amba boys to disarm while he has not disarmed? That is practically impossible.” (CFP 6, 2021).

Another participant added

“All what the government has been doing is propaganda through certain radio stations and newspapers which claim that all is well and measures have been taken to ensure peace in the country.” (CRONFP 10, 2021).

Again some participants were very negative about the government, especially with the use of military force (BIR) in the two Anglophone regions which, according to them, the government is part of the recurrence of violence, since it does not want to listen to the plight of the Anglophones by demilitarising the Anglophone regions.

In support of the participants' responses, the International Crisis Group (2017) indicated that when the protest turned into violence in the respective regions, the GoC, between 2016 and 2017, held talks with striking unions but it ended up in a fiasco because of a police crackdown. In the same line, in 2017, the president issued a decree by recruiting 1000 bilingual teachers, redeploying Francophone teachers and creating a commission for bilingualism and multiculturalism (Presidential Decree,

2017). Amid participants' views, the GoC further created a common law bench at the Supreme Court, the National School of Administration Magistracy, and the introduction of Common Law Departments at Francophone universities (Cameroon News, 2017). Following the intense conflict in 2019, President Biya called for a major national dialogue (CRTV News, 2019). In addition to the above, during Biya's official inaugural speech as re-elected president in Yaoundé, he said "Efforts will be made to accelerate the decentralisation process. Measures will be taken as soon as possible to broaden the powers of local authorities in order to provide them with the means for greater autonomy." (Xinhua, 2018).

In relation to the above, in 2019, the government of Cameroon officially mandated the Swiss government to facilitate talks between the government and the separatist leaders (Jeune Afrique, 2020). To comply with the request from the Cameroon government, the Geneva-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), the Swiss facilitators, held talks with some of the secessionist leaders in June 2019 in Saint-Luc, a small village in the canton of Valais (CRTV News, 2020). However, the HD-led mediation was unsuccessful because of mistrust from the separatist movement. Another negotiation took place in Cameroon, led by Günther Bächler, a former mediator in conflicts in Darfur, Nepal, and other countries (African Report, 2020). During his visit to Cameroon, Günther Bächler had meetings with not just separatist leaders, but also with proponents of both decentralisation and federalism. He further met with the late Cardinal Christian Tumi to discuss the way forward out of the political crisis plaguing the Anglophone regions (Oliver, 2020), yet that did not end the violence.

Given the fact that the political crisis is getting more dangerous by the day, the GoC and the in-prison separatist leader, Sisiku Julius Ayuk Tabe, held a ceasefire negotiation outside the Kondengui central prison. However, this ceasefire talk has been condemned by other separatist leaders on the grounds that Sisiku Ayuk is not fit for negotiation (Maxwell, 2020:1). Beside Sisiku Tabe not being fit for negotiation, opponents of the ceasefire also alluded to the fact that the negotiation was a plot for the government to avoid international criticism. Due to the fact that tensions continue mounting between the separatist fighters and the government forces, the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, appealed to the Southern Cameroons Defence

Forces (SCDF) for another ceasefire. To yield to Guterres' appeal, the separatist group unilaterally called for another ceasefire (BBC News, 2020). Despite the effort by the government of Cameroon in trying to resolve the ongoing political crisis rocking the two English regions of Cameroon, so far there have been no positive outcomes, considering that the political crisis is getting worse.

5.2.2 Why did the previous pathways to peace fail in resolving the Cameroonian political crisis?

This section looks at reasons for the failed attempt by the GoC in solving the political crisis in Cameroon.

Respondents were asked why the previous pathways to resolve the political crisis in Cameroon failed. In response to this question, 65% of the respondents were of the view that President Biya is not yet ready to get to the root cause of what sparked the ongoing political instability in Anglophone regions. Hence one of the reasons why attempts to resolve the conflict have not been successful was traced by a participant in the following words:

“Until the government is ready to address the root causes of the political crisis, until La Republic is ready to call us as two equal federated states as it was before, to a negotiation table, the conflict will continue even in the next 30 years to come.” (CFP 8, 2021).

It was also revealed that the previous pathways to peace failed because at the onset of the conflict, the president used force by deploying his military to quell the situation rather than use dialogue in tackling the problem. A participant reported:

“We cannot go to a negotiation table while his security forces are armed and patrolling everywhere in our regions. What if we agreed to go for a negotiation and things does not fall in place according to Mr. Biya? What will happen to us with his military all over? If Mr President Biya want peaceful negotiation let him demilitarise...” (CFP 6, 2021).

Participants also report that the National Dialogue failed because there was no third party to initiate the dialogue between the two conflicting camps.

As a participant put it:

“Common sense will tell you that Mr. Biya is not ready for peace yet because two people fighting cannot resolve their problem without a third party to mediate. The Grand National Dialogue did not involve any third party.” (CFP 8, 2021).

It was also found that the lack of trust between both conflicting parties helps in weakening government efforts to restore peace in the two Anglophone regions. As a participant put it;

“The Anglophone population does not trust the Cameroonian army any more, hence little cooperation from the Anglophones.” (CRONRP 11, 20021).

Participants further revealed that previous dialogues to restore peace in Cameroon failed because the government has refused to release Ambazonian president Sisiku and members of the Consortium from prison, hence a peaceful dialogue cannot take place while the president of the struggle is in jail in Yaoundé. It was also revealed that the previous measures used by the government to restore peace and stability had failed because some of the strategies were window dressing mechanisms. As one participant put it:

“The establishment of the Commission for Bilingualism and Multiculturalism and the DDR are all smooth screen institutions which are not needed. It does not have anything to do with the problem of the political crisis.” (CFP 6, 2021).

Another participant put it this way;

“In my opinion, the previous pathways to peace failed because the government of La Republic du Cameroun is shying away from addressing the main problem of what brought us where we are today.” (CFP 8, 2021).

There were 35% of respondents against the above view. They pointed out that the government of Cameroon is ready to ensure peace and stability in Cameroon. This is in support of the fact that, since the outbreak of the conflict, the government has carried out some measures as stated above to resolve the political crisis. But all efforts by the government to resolve the ongoing political crisis have failed. This can be partly blamed on the side of the Anglophone leaders. It was found that the lack of co-operation causes disunity between separatist leaders, and other internal battles within the Ambazonian interim government have so far jeopardised the government's effort to seek lasting solutions to the ongoing political crisis.

Furthermore, participants' responses are in affirmation with literature which observes that the failure of the previous measures to resolve the ongoing crisis is premised on the following: (i) the National Dialogue, for example, failed to provide a comprehensive and integrative approach in the art of conflict transformation, (ii) the Grand National Dialogue was also considered as a ready-made product, for which the Anglophones believe history will not repeat itself, as happened in 1961 during the Fouban Conference, where French Cameroon came with a pre-prepared constitution, (iii) in its entirety all the strategies put in place by the government of Cameroon did not involve peacebuilding techniques and a vision to match the complex nature of the crisis (Achu, 2020:11). In a similar vein, the "special statute that was given to the Anglophones to resolve the political crisis ravaging the regions failed because it was not born out of negotiation and dialogue between the separatist leaders and the GoC. It was a unilateral declaration by the president, which did not work." (Achu, 2020:11-12).

As it stands, this current study argues that all previous attempts by the government to restore peace and stability have ended in a fiasco. After nearly five years of violent conflict both parties are still at loggerheads, despite Swiss-led efforts to broker peace. Nonetheless the failed attempts by the government to restore peace provide an opportunity for more suggestions to resolve the political violence in Cameroon. Hence the section below assesses the way forward to end the crisis and achieve lasting peace.

5.2.3 What are some of the challenges faced by the Government of Cameroon in the quest to restore peace and stability in the country?

After discussing why the previous measures implemented by the government to maintain peace and stability in the regions of conflict have failed, the study sought to establish some challenges faced by the Cameroonian government in maintaining stability in the two Anglophone regions.

This question was presented to participants in order to extract challenges faced by the GoC in its effort to restore peace and stability in the country. The challenges could be theoretical or practical. As deduced from the interview and focus groups, a majority (60%) of participants expressed that there are many obstacles and challenges that government and civil society organisations are facing to resolve the political crisis in Cameroon. The respondents identified the following challenges: disunity, non-cooperation, and the total failure of government institutions.

5.2.3.1 Disunity

According to the research participants, the differences in ideology within the Ambazonian interim government (AIG) and within the two regions of the North-West and South-West posed big challenges to the government. This is because the government finds it difficult to meet all the divided leaders. Hence the separatist leaders have to come together. A participant indicated the following observation:

“Last year the government held a ceasefire negotiation with Sisiku Tabe, who was the former Ambazonian president when the crisis started. But the ceasefire was condemned by the current president of the Ambazonian interim government (AIG), Sako Ikome, that Sisiku Tabe is not fit for negotiation.” (CFP 3, 2021).

Another adds:

“The IG is helping to confuse the people at ground zero [Anglophone regions]. The IG is not united, all what IG members want is fame, is to appear on social media.” (CRONFP 10, 2021).

The participant further stressed that if the IG had been as one, the war could have long been resolved.

5.2.3.2 *Lack of co-operation*

According to participants, the disagreements and lack of co-operation within the Ambazonian Interim Government, and within the fighters, coupled with the Anglophones' distrust of the government of Cameroon to achieve a common goal is a worrisome situation that has worsened the situation on the ground.

It was further revealed during focus groups that lack of trust, and disunity between both parties, and proliferation of arms and armed groups, coupled with the Boko Haram insurgences in the Northern part of Cameroon and the COVID-19 pandemic are major challenges facing the government in resolving the ongoing political crisis. In the same perspective, participants revealed that the discriminatory use of state resources, especially against the Anglophones, foments the disagreement between the separatist fighters and the government.

5.2.3.3 *Arms Proliferation and the rise of armed groups*

Participants submitted that since the crisis broke out in 2016, the English regions have seen a rise in arms proliferation and a rise in armed groups. This understanding is derived from some of participants' responses:

A participant posited:

“Indeed there are so many separatist groups that have emerged in the Anglophone regions. Some of these groups are more dangerous in their atrocities than we have ever imagined.” (CFP 5, 2021).

Another one said

“The rate of arms proliferation has increased in the conflicting regions.” (CRONFP 12, 2021).

Yet another participant added:

“Some of the separatist groups, for example Field Marshall leader of the Lebialem red dragons militias as we speak, produces one of the most deadly explosive devices that is being used to blow off war jeeps, armour cars and others.” (CFP 7, 2021).

The participant went on to state that most of Field Marshall explosives are very dangerous and all have local names which are named after Fons that have ruled over Fontem, such as Fontem Asonganyi, Fontem Defang, etc.

It was also revealed that political intolerance and lack of unity within parties is also a major hindrance for government to achieve its goal of maintaining stability in the conflict regions. In fact, a respondent remarked that:

“Instead of politicians to create a conducive environment for dialogue, rather they have conflicting ideas as was manifested when the Prime Minister (PM) visited the crisis areas advocating for complete dialogue; the Minister of Territorial Administration on the other hand has a contrary view.” (CFP 4, 2021).

However, despite government effort to neutralise and resolve the political crisis in the country, disunity amongst the Anglophone activists and differences in ideology of the Anglophone associations are real obstacles that have hindered their goal of achieving autonomy. Participants revealed that the separatist fighters stand as one of the major stumbling blocks, since they are apparently not ready for negotiation.

5.3 OBJECTIVE 4

To examine mitigation pathways to resolve the Cameroonian crisis and achieve lasting peace in the country. To address objective 4, the researcher presented the following question to participants:

- What mitigation and peace building strategies are feasible for conflict management in the political conflict in Cameroon?

- Prop-up question: In your opinion, has the role played by the international community contributed towards a positive outcome?

This question together with any necessary follow-up questions was presented to participants, and the answers proffered are presented below.

5.3.1 Mitigation strategies for conflict management in the political conflict in Cameroon

This section of the study examines alternative ways for peace in Cameroon given the fact that measures put forward by the government have failed. However, the view from participants is in no way denying the perceptions of the AIG. Considering the fact that several attempts by the government, as noted above, to maintain peace have failed, this opens a window for more concession to seek ways to end the conflict and provide lasting peace and stability in the country. To respond to this question, the views of participants were presented under the following themes.

Theme 1: Complete independence from French Cameroon.

Theme 2: A return to the previous federation;

Theme 3: A transparent, open and inclusive broad-based dialogue where all parties should be involved.

Theme 4: Decentralisation of power.

5.3.1.1 Theme 1: Secession

Some participants suggested that the best possible way to resolve the ongoing political crisis and achieve lasting peace is complete independence for the people of former British Southern Cameroon, or a referendum. A participant stated the following:

“Another alternative measure is to repeat what happened on the 11 of February 1961. A referendum should be organized to decide the fate of the people.” (CFP 7, 2021).

Another participant added:

“The UN and other international community [bodies] like the AU should send Biya out of Southern Cameroon since he is violating the rights of Anglophone Cameroonians.”(CRONFP 11, 2021).

Another one said;

“We want total restoration of Ambazonia, that is why we are called restoration fighters. Nothing more....” (CFP 3, 2021).

Another stated;

“The best way to achieve sustainable peace in Cameroon is for the Government to grant us independence, nothing more. We have come this far so we are not giving up....” [One of the separatists] (CFP 5, 2021).

Another participant put it this way;

“The government through its military forces want to swap all Anglophones. This is because the securities force goes around killing indiscriminately.” (CFP 8, 2021).

The above assertion confirms the demand for succession as indicated in the conceptual framework (see chapter 2 section 8.4).

The actions by the government were seen as escalatory thereby cementing the Anglophone position for secession. Still on the same phenomenon, another participant further emphasised the secession issue by stating that;

“Continuous militarization and heavy clampdown and arrests of Anglophone leaders coupled with unarmed civilians, the Anglophones considered unacceptable, and believed that secession is the only way that they can expressed their rights and enjoy freedom from the oppression of French Cameroon government.” (CFP 8, 2021).

In support of the above, research by Amnesty International (2021) revealed that the Anglophone people of former British Cameroon are demanding independence from French Cameroon, due to the way they are being considered underdogs by their French counterparts, and referring to some secessionists as “warmongers by the president Paul Biya during his New Year’s address (Sixtus, 2017). In the same line, a study by Reuters (2018) revealed that in 2017, thousands of Anglophones who were in support of secession, went onto the streets of all Anglophone regions, in towns, rural areas, and villages, carrying placards and flags with the slogan “WE WANT FREEDOM,” coupled with the name “the Republic of Ambazonia,” while others painted themselves with the colours of the movement.

Importantly, proponents for secession believed that independence of the state of Ambazonia, which is blessed with abundant natural resources such as petroleum, timber, rich soils for plantations and agriculture, minerals etc., will facilitate the economic sustainability and development of Ambazonia.

5.3.1.2 Theme 2: A return to federation:

Participants argued that a return to the previous equal state of federation can resolve the political crisis, because from the outset the Anglophones were not demanding secession; what they demanded was a return to the previous federation where they could control and benefit from their resources. The views of participants are presented below.

A participant stated:

“We simply want to participate in the running of the day-to-day life activities and the affairs of our regions.” (CFP 2, 2021).

Another participant added;

“In my opinion separation is not the solution; what we need is acceptance and co-operation. I am saying this because even within the two English regions there is disparity. So separating from French Cameroon the two English regions will continue the fighting because of power.” (CFP 6, 2021).

Another one said;

“With federation, the two cultures (French and English) could be encouraged to live their individuality in a federation so as to protect the two inherited cultures. The Constitution should be revisited for both English and French to feature equality. Minority rights should be protected.” (CFP 5, 2021).

In relation to the above, participants further reported that the government should grant audience to the suffering populations, especially those whose houses have been burnt down.

5.3.1.3 Theme 3, inclusive dialogue

According to some of the participants, President Paul Biya should humble himself and call for an inclusive dialogue in order to end the political crisis before things become out of hand. This is because force or conflict is not the best option to settle disputes, but rather dialogue. They also expressed the idea that for an inclusive dialogue to take place, the government should withdraw all military forces from Southern Cameroon. Also, the government should release Ambazonian leaders who are currently in prison, and collaborate with the diaspora, since the Amba boys are taking instruction from those in the diaspora. One of the participants indicated that;

“The president should call the Anglophone people for a negotiation since they have a legitimate claim, because Southern Cameroon was initially a nation before joining La Republic.” (CFP 8, 2021).

The above participant views account for the fact that the impact of political conflict in Cameroon is too massive, as opposed to its gains.

Some participants further suggested that a ceasefire could help to quell violence and killing in the conflict regions. Hence in order for the Anglophones and Francophones to co-habit, the Francophones have to accept the fact that “we” the Anglophones were formerly a nation before joining them. That is the only means by which we can move forward.

5.3.1.4 Theme 4, decentralization

During focus group discussions as well as interviews, some participants indicated that enforcement and strengthening of decentralization mechanisms seems an alternative way to strike a balance between Anglophone and Francophone. Participants further stated that if effective decentralisation is fully implemented and executed, it would foster harmony in the country. Participants also expressed the views that the encouragement of good governance would sustain peace and stability in Cameroon. Participants further suggested that other peace-building strategies feasible to maintain lasting peace in Cameroon between the French and the English if there is to be co-habitation, the government has to establish a conflict management mechanism to educate people on how to go through with conflict situations.

Participants further reported that the government should create more job opportunities that would employ young people and also “keep them busy because as the saying goes: an idle mind is the devil’s workshop.”

In support of the above participants’ views, studies maintain that the government of Cameroon and stakeholders should consider a citizen-centric approach to drafting a settlement to end the crisis (Chaos, 2020:5). The researcher further concurs that participation of citizens could facilitate and foster negotiation. Also, consultations with Anglophone citizens living in the diaspora are fundamental in resolving the on-going political crisis. In a similar vein, the international community needs to put more pressure on the government of Cameroon to call for an all-inclusive dialogue to end the political crisis in the country. After elaborating the alternative peace building strategies in Cameroon, the next segment turns to the next research question, as explained in section 5.3.2.

5.3.2 In your opinion, has the role played by the International Community contributed towards a positive outcome?

The question was presented to respondents to establish if the role played by the international community so far has contributed to a positive outcome.

Participants answered the question based on their understanding, which provided a broad range of perceptions of the role that the international community has played so far in the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon. 50% of respondents acknowledged the fact that the role played by the international community has, to an extent, contributed a positive outcome, but suggested that the international community needs to do more since conflict continues to ravage the two English regions. The quotes elicited from some of the participants' responses are presented verbatim in the following sections.

A participant offered this;

“The role played by the international community has been productive, for example, the Commonwealth of Nations and others like the United Nations, African Union have requested the government to called for a dialogue in order to resolved the conflict and seek lasting solution to the problem.”

The participant further added

“It is due to the pressure from the international community that the government has to called for the grand national dialogue though it did not yield any positive outcome.” (CFONFP 12, 2021).

Another participant added:

“Since we arrived here at the refugee camp, the UN and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been of great help to us. They profile shelters, foods and other basic needs. We do appreciate their kind gestures. But this is not enough because we want the international community to get involved in the crisis and resolve it so we can go back to our country, Cameroon.” (CRONFP 12, 2021).

Yet another participant reflected on this question in the following words:

“Very little contribution from the international communities since killings, kidnapping, and destructions of properties are ongoing as we speak.” (CFP 4, 2021).

One participant further said that some international organisations have been assisting them with foodstuff like rice and beans, and soap, salt and other essential items.

Participant CRONFP 11 added;

“We kindly plead to the international community to consider the conflict in our country [Cameroon] serious because every day our children are dying. This is five years our government is unable to resolve the conflict, the UN should called for a ceasefire as way to resolve the violence in the Anglophone regions.” (2021).

On the contrary, 50% respondents were of the view that the international community has not done enough to resolve the conflict in Cameroon. Some of their views are presented below.

A participant posited:

“The international community have not done enough yet! The UN and other international organisations should speed up peace process in order to resolve the conflict because as the days pass by the situation is getting worse since the Amba Boys now have in their procession a lot of guns.” (CFP 5, 2021).

Another one added;

“The international community have not done much to resolve the problem. They have just been advising the two parties.” (CRONFP 12, 2021).

Another one added;

“Some countries that belong to some international organisations, like China for example, are taking advantage of the political crisis in the Anglophone regions to sale their weapons, so little interest in resolving the conflict.”(CFP 6, 2021).

5.4 FINDINGS

The findings are based on the primary data collected through the interviews. The data was analysed through thematic analysis and document review from the literature. Cameroon, akin to many countries in Africa, has not enjoyed peace over the past 6 years. This is because the Anglophone people of former British Southern Cameroon have raised counter-claims of their marginalisation, discrimination and underdevelopment arising from their French counterparts.

From the data collected, the study found that the measures that the government has used, such as the use of military intervention, the creation of the Commission for Bilingualism and Multiculturalism, the recruitment of 1 000 Bilingual teachers, the use of repression, and the granting of special statutes to the Anglophones are all window-dressing strategies to complete the assimilation process of English Cameroon. In reality, the study also found that the government of Cameroon does not appear to be fully committed to address the problem which triggered conflict in the English regions of Cameroon, and find a lasting solution to the ongoing political conflict. This can be justified by the government's refusal to tackle the root causes of what sparked the political instability in the two English regions.

In this study, the researcher also found that, as the political crisis became more incessant, the government of Cameroon officially mandated the Swiss government to facilitate talks between the Government and the separatist leaders. This was seen as a discreet meeting held between the Swiss Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and some of the secessionist leaders at Saint-Luc (The Africa Report, 2020). Also another meeting was held in Cameroon, not just with the separatist leaders alone, but with wings in favour of decentralisation and federalism. This study found that, through the influence of the Swiss Government and the UN, the separatist leaders have agreed to a ceasefire in Cameroon.

The researcher also found that due to disunity, mistrust, lack of a comprehensive dialogue and political manoeuvring by some politicians, these all impede the attempts by the government to restore peace and stability. The finding further indicates that there is a need for international intervention, since the government of

Cameroon has not been able to resolve its own internal problems. It was verified that the Swiss government dialogue with the separatists and the government did not yield any positive outcome, since the conflict is worsening. The researcher also found that an all-inclusive dialogue is the only way through which both conflicting parties could come together to sit and negotiate the way forward to restore peace and stability in Cameroon.

5.5 SUMMARY OF THIS CHAPTER

This chapter addressed objectives 3 and 4 of chapter 1, both designed to show why the previous pathways to a peaceful resolution of the Cameroonian political crisis from 1972-2018 failed. This was traced through the following questions:

What has the Cameroonian Government done in order to resolve the conflict in the country?

Why did the previous pathways to peace fail in resolving the Cameroonian political crisis?

What are some of the challenges faced by the Government of Cameroon in the quest to restore peace and stability in the country?

The findings of objective 3 established several reasons why the previous pathways to a peaceful resolution of the Cameroonian political crisis have failed. Some of the reasons identified from the interviews are:

- ❖ Lack of co-operation between conflicting parties,
- ❖ Disunity amongst the separatists in their ideologies,
- ❖ Arms proliferation in the Anglophone regions,
- ❖ Cosmetic reforms as a means to complete assimilation process,
- ❖ Window-dressing strategies in the form of a peaceful dialogue,
- ❖ In-fighting within the separatists that is a stumbling block for a peaceful negotiation.

All these taken together confirm what interviewees said about the government's non-readiness for negotiation. The interviewees see the government as working on deceitful strategies to complete the assimilation process. It was also found that the breakdown of some state institutions in the Anglophone regions retards progress in terms of peace-building

The chapter further addressed objective 4, which was designed to suggest mitigation pathways to resolve the Cameroonian crisis and achieve lasting peace in the country. The findings suggest that the promotion of good governance and job creation could sustain peace and stability in the country. It was further verified that dialogue with a third party is an alternative way to resolve the political crisis in Cameroon. It was also confirmed that the government should engage the agitators in a round table discussion to resolve the politically violent conflict rocking the two Anglophone regions.

The study further established that a referendum, such as happened in Sudan, should be considered as an alternative way to end the ongoing violence in the English regions of Cameroon. This can be justified in the sense that with a referendum, people decide on their fate. This would do justice to end the ongoing conflict. Again other options from the empirical review include two states federalism, secession, and decentralisation of the ten state federation, and others. The data was analysed from the direct quotes and literature for in-depth understanding of the study. The next chapter presents a summary, conclusion and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This final chapter presents the major conclusions of this study and proposes the direction for future researchers. This chapter comprises sub-sections dealing with an overview of the study relative to the research goals as well as the research objectives. The chapter concludes the thesis by presenting findings from the research objectives and proffers recommendations for future research.

6.2 SUMMARY

This study was designed to assess the causes, impact, and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian political crisis. As a way of accomplishing the purpose of the study, as well as for the reader to follow the arguments, specific research objectives and questions were interrogated (see 1.4 and 1.5). An exploratory qualitative methodology was adopted. This research approach was adopted to accomplish the purpose of the study. The methodology justified comprehensiveness in analysing the causes, impact, and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian political crisis.

The research used Integration theory, Relative Deprivation theory, Anomie, and Self-determination theories to understand the causes and impacts of the Cameroonian political crisis. The concept of self-determination theory provides a useful framework for understanding the reasons for secession as demanded by the Anglophone region of Cameroon. The research problem was addressed through the four research objectives specified at the onset of this study. For coherent flow and comprehension of the findings, these are structured along the same lines as the research objectives (see chapter 1.4) as a summary below.

6.3 FINDINGS

It materialised from the research that the question derived from the objectives was answered by participants to the best of their knowledge, engendering a clearer understanding of the causes of the political conflict in Cameroon. From participants' responses, it is quite clear that economic exploitation, unemployment, poverty,

marginalisation, discrimination, the relegation to second-class citizens, and the manner of the amalgamation of both federated units, and many other factors have been significant triggers for the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon.

The study further established that the refusal of French Cameroon to relinquish power to English Cameroon is premised on the fact that they would no longer enjoy economic benefits from the resources found in the English regions. Some of the participants confirmed that the manner in which the GoC reacted in trying to resolve the political crisis contributed significantly to the current secession crisis. The study further verified from the interviews that bad governance, corruption, weak and unsuitable economic policies are seriously considered as the factors fuelling the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon. This finding is in line with what Minder (2019) confirmed, in submitting that bad government, corruption, and weak and unstable economic conditions have plunged most countries around the world, Africa and Cameroon in particular, into violent and political instability. To support the above observation, a study conducted by Reuters (2010) confirms that corruption in Cameroon is pervasive and has affected almost every sector of the government, civil society, and even the private sector.

It was also established in this study that grievances and greed were among other concerns that sparked the political crisis in the Anglophone regions, given the fact that the GoC does not want the Anglophones to benefit from the resources found in their regions. The findings of the study further indicate that inequalities that align with culture, language, education, jobs, and exclusion are highly likely to influence the political crisis in Cameroon.

Furthermore, with regard to the second objective, the study found that the ongoing political crisis has resulted in the deaths of thousands of both Anglophones and Francophones. The displacement of Anglophone Cameroonians to Nigeria (which stands at 60 000 refugees (UNHCH 2020) and 680 000 persons internally displaced (OCHA 2020) at the time of conducting the study), beheadings, kidnappings of thousands of people, high inflation, increase in insecurity, starvation, hunger and a stagnant economy are some of the resultant effects of the political crisis (interviews, 2021). Some participants posit that both the military and the Amba boys have

committed horrible atrocities by killing innocent people, especially once they are suspected of being a black leg. Both parties have burnt market centres, private homes of poor people, schools, and even municipal councils. In addition, more than 60 villages in the Anglophone regions have been burnt down. Both conflicting parties have carried out callous killings. The responses from the participants suggest that the impact of the political crisis has tremendously affected their lives and livelihoods.

The findings also verified that the Gross Domestic Product has been tremendously reduced due to the instability in the country. This decline has severe ramifications for Cameroon. The finding is in line with a study by the World Bank (2020), which confirmed that, since 2016, Cameroon's growth rate has dropped amid ongoing tensions and violence in the country.

It was also established that the ongoing political crisis has affected the production of cash crops mostly produced in the two Anglophone regions. This is in line with two studies conducted by Jude (2019) and Ngobesing (2020), intimating that since the outbreak of the political conflict, there has been a massive drop in the production of cash crops in both regions. The results show that, due to recurrent escalation of violence, the school enrolment rate has dropped, as boys and girls are no longer going to school because of the fear of gunmen attacking them, while some have joined the militants (Interview 2021). Also insecurity has been heightened, as kidnapping; unrest, torture, and beheading have become rampant in the two English regions. There is also a high rate of unemployment, and so, coupled with the high rate of poverty, hunger and starvation have increased. This confirms what has been reported in a study by the World Bank (2017:1), which suggests that the overall number of the poor has increased dramatically since the outbreak of the conflict in Cameroon.

The findings further demonstrate that the political crisis has on many occasions dealt drastic blows to Anglophones, and to Cameroon in general, by impeding their economic activities, specifically in obstructed trade, marketing, thwarted investment, and development. The findings further highlighted the need for heightened humanitarian assistance especially to the conflicting regions, the IDPs, and refugees in Nigeria. This is in line with a study by the Humanitarian Overview (2020), which

confirmed that about 5.4 million people in Cameroon need humanitarian assistance, with the majority being women and children.

In addition to the above, through the structured interviews conducted, several factors were identified that accounted for the failure of a peaceful resolution of the ongoing Cameroonian political crisis. Some of the factors identified from the interviews include the government of Cameroon under President Biya that is belligerent to tackle the root causes of the ongoing political conflict, the use of military intervention which has also failed, and the government's refusal to release Ambazonian president Sisiku and members of the Consortium from prison. The findings further verified that the previous pathways to peace have failed because most of the measures used by the government were cosmetic mechanisms which never dealt with the raw issues at stake in the Cameroonian conflict. This finding conforms to the study by Achu (2020:11), who posits that the National Dialogue failed because it did not provide a comprehensive and integrative approach in the art of conflict transformation. Again, Konings (2005) further insists that the previous dialogue had failed because the Anglophones considered it as a ready-made product where history will not repeat itself, as happened in 1961 during the Fouban Conference, where French Cameroon came with a pre-prepared constitution. The study further established that the previous pathways to a peaceful resolution failed because all the strategies put in place by the government did not utilise peace-building techniques and vision to match the complex nature of the crisis. However, this finding implies that the lack of collaboration between both conflicting parties could further extend the political crisis as it may not yet be ripe for resolution, since the conflicting parties are still at loggerheads.

Objective 4 seeks to understand mitigation pathways to resolve the ongoing political crisis in Cameroon. Here, participants were able to answer the research question derived from the objective which facilitates a broader understanding of the research objective. A number of alternative pathways to resolve the ongoing political crisis were conveyed by respondents which include, but are in no way limited to the following: (i) Complete independence from French Cameroon (ii) Two state federation, (iii) Decentralisation of power, (vi) Ceasefire, and an all-inclusive dialogue. However, in order to ensure lasting peace, participants also recommended

that the government should create more jobs and compensate those whose houses have been burnt down. The report from the objective further identified the need for improvement in the area of co-operation and unity within both parties which could foster dialogue.

These findings show that the government of Cameroon still has to have many consultations with peace-building organisations and other international bodies in order to resolve the political crisis plaguing the two Anglophone regions. The consultations with peace-building organisations could definitely have positive effects on the way forward in resolving the political crisis in Cameroon. The research to this effect concurs that disunity between the separatist movements and within the government politicians augurs grave consequences for the economic growth and development of the nation of Cameroon.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The goal of the study was to assess the causes, impacts and pathways to peace of the Cameroonian political crisis. The study was appropriately introduced with an extended background to the crisis. The problem statement clearly justified the need to explore the genesis, processes, and challenges of the Cameroonian crisis. In establishing the research problem, the research objectives were drafted. In order to actualise the study objective, four research questions were drafted. This was accomplished through information gathering from document analysis, structured interviews and insights from the conceptual framework which guided the study. Furthermore, literature review generated a broad understanding of the study and addressed the gaps in the research conundrum. This study adopted an exploratory qualitative research approach and design in order to collect and analyse data. Data was carefully collected, analysed, and discussed for in-depth understanding of the research problem. The current chapter further presents recommendations and areas for further research. The recommendations relate to ethics and practices of governance. The study contributes to new knowledge in creating awareness of the incessant violence and political conflict in the two Cameroonian Anglophone regions.

In this study, Cameroonian history appears as a presidential project of building a unified nation. This clarifies the fact that the peaceful protest in 2015 by teachers and lawyers has grown into a fierce battle where the military is faced by almost equal strength through the constellation of secessionist forces. Therefore, this study is crucial for the understanding of the implications of the causes, impacts and the pathways to peace in the ongoing political instability in Cameroon. The findings also show that differences which exist between the conflicting parties have to reach acceptable levels to opt fairly for the negotiation table. The findings further demonstrate that if a lasting solution is not found, as the days wane into each other, and with the development of implosive factions in the separatist fighters, the next resurgence of the political crisis could be very devastating. The thesis also highlights the challenges faced by the government in maintaining peace and stability in the country, and suggests further consultation with peace-building and peace-making organisations in order to end the violence in Cameroon.

In conclusion, despite all initiatives and efforts made by the government of Cameroon, the involvement of the Swiss government, and the call for dialogue by other international communities, much still needs to be done, because all the efforts have failed to yield positive results in the two English regions. This study concludes that an inclusive negotiated settlement between the government and the separatist leaders (AIG), whose mandate is to unite all conflicting parties and resolve all others internal grievances that spawn Anglophone agitations and narratives of disenfranchisement, should be the most laudable and implementable pathways for peace and stability to reign in Anglophone regions.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were derived from findings of this study. These recommendations may be used as guidelines for policy and decision-makers of Cameroon, separatists, stakeholders, peacemakers, and other countries facing similar challenges as Cameroon. It is critically important for the government of Cameroon to yield to the recommendations to address the situation so as to avoid future conflict.

6.5.1 For the government

- ❖ Government and the separatist leaders, and other parties involved in the conflict, should collaborate meaningfully to ensure that peace and stability prevail in the Anglophone regions. The study further recommends that government and local authorities should initiate the re-education and psychological healing of those who have gone through trauma due to the ongoing conflict.
- ❖ This study recommends that equitable distribution of resources and power should be immediately prioritised and undertaken as this is at the centre of the Anglophones' marginalisation, and a root factor of political crisis in the affairs of Cameroon. The above action is likely to reduce tension for any future conflict in Cameroon.
- ❖ There is need for a multi-track peace-building process in the area. The government of Paul Biya should sign a peace and ceasefire agreement with the Ambazonian militia. Then they should start the speedy repairs of government infrastructure that was destroyed in the theatre of conflict. Such repairs would lay the foundation for renewal of government in the regions, and a gradual return of a government presence in the vast ungoverned regions of Ambazonia. This would further be undertaken by empowering indigenous Ambazonian peace reconstruction initiatives that are sponsored by the ensuring sustainable national peace and development of the regions that have been badly devastated by the conflict.
- ❖ The government should endeavour to fight and combat corruption using the most plausible and acceptable strategies.
- ❖ The government should develop policies that could rapidly end the conflict, as well as design possible strategies apart from secession.
- ❖ The government should engage in multiple opportunities to de-escalate violence.
- ❖ Government should establish a commission that must protect the rights of minority groups in the country. This would further empower the Anglophone people, and further avoid any conflict that may arise due to minority issues.
- ❖ The government should make people believe in the government again. The government should also demilitarise the Anglophone regions.

- ❖ The government of Cameroon has to first of all recognise that Anglophone Cameroon (Ambazonia) was a defined territory with a well-defined border before joining *La Republic* in 1961. The government slogan of ONE and Indivisible Cameroon is a concept that only inflames violence. The study recommends the government should address the issues that generated the ongoing violence in the Anglophone regions. The study also suggests the government and its local councils ought to establish internal structures in the Anglophone regions to monitor further escalation of violence.
- ❖ The government should create more jobs.
- ❖ The establishment of an Anglophone Development Commission (ADC) by the government would go a long way in healing the wounds of the past. This Commission should be empowered with the mandate to review the infrastructural lapses, rural development, youth unemployment, and job creation in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. This action could instil in the Anglophone people a sense of identity and belonging to the Republic of Cameroon.
- ❖ The government should build more schools, since most schools in the Anglophone regions have been burnt down.
- ❖ The government should also integrate some of the separatist fighters that have dropped their guns to avoid future insurgences.

6.5.2 For the separatist leaders and fighters

- ❖ The separatist leaders (AIG) and the Ambazonia Restoration Forces should press for a ceasefire, and acknowledge they would uphold the ceasefire rules with a commitment to peace. This is because of competition and division within the different wings of separatist leaders. This study recommends that commitment by the separatist leaders will foster peace in the conflict areas.
- ❖ They should stop all forms of violence and political propaganda and hate speeches. The fighters should seek for better co-operation within their respective region.
- ❖ For victims, especially for those houses where burnt down, the government should embark on a massive rebuilding effort to provide housing.

- ❖ For those Anglophones who have fled from conflict, especially refugees in Nigeria and internally displaced people, the government should establish programmes that will educate and offer free counselling to victims of conflict. This will assist in building victims of conflict and reconciling them with their families.
- ❖ The separatists should stop killing, beheading, kidnapping, and abuse of human rights.
- ❖ After close to six years of violent conflict, peace negotiations have not succeeded in bringing the conflicting parties to the table to look for lasting peace. This study recommends that peacemakers should be consulted for insight on the causes and real motivations of the instability in order to appreciate the dynamics of the conflict. Only then would they be able to contribute meaningfully to the establishment of a lasting solution to the ongoing political conflict ravaging Cameroon.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study of the causes, impacts and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian political crisis is a serious contribution to understanding the challenge to good governance and democracy in Cameroon. Further research is recommended to explore the measures put in place and to assess how appropriate they are to addressing democratic challenges.

Firstly, an area that needs further investigation is the establishment of the frameworks of peaceful resolution to the violent conflict in Cameroon. The purpose is to avoid future conflict escalating in the country.

Secondly, the study also found in chapter four of the study that 60,000 Anglophone refugees are living in Nigeria, coupled with 680 000 internally displaced persons. This could be a future research opportunity for scholars on the wellbeing of refugees as well as of the IDPs.

Thirdly, the study also found in chapter one that the government of Nigeria became involved in the current crisis in Cameroon when it arrested Sisiku Ayuk Tabe, President of the Ambazonian separatist movement, alongside eight other leaders of

the Ambazonian Interim Government in a hotel in Abuja, during their visit to Nigeria. The study recommends further research on a framework on Cameroon-Nigeria diplomatic relations.

Fourthly, a comparison of the impact of the Anglophone crisis and that of the Boko-Haram in the far north of Cameroon should be conducted. This would help the government to fully assess the impact of both crises on the nation. This would also urge the Cameroon government to develop integrated and early warning mechanisms to mitigate future conflict.

A fifth area of study relates to the quantitative factors which explain the impact of the study. This derives from the fact that this study addresses qualitative factors in the Cameroonian conflict, and a comparative study of the Cameroon secessionist crisis and that in Sudan would be a welcome addition to scholarship on crises in Africa.

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APPENDIX 1: ETHICS APPROVAL FORM



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Fax: 018 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Senate Committee for Research Ethics
Tel: 018 299-4849
Email: nkosinathi.machine@nwu.ac.za

18 June 2021

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC)** on 17/06/2021, the Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Senate Committee for Research Ethics (NWU-SERC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: An assessment of the causes, impact and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian Political Crisis between 1971 to 2018.																															
Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Prof V. Ojakorotu.																															
Student/Research Team: C.H. Folefac (21505063).																															
Ethics number:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>6</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>A</td><td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Institution</td> <td></td> <td colspan="4">Study Number</td> <td></td> <td>Year</td> <td></td> <td colspan="4">Status</td> </tr> </table>	N	W	U	-	0	0	6	3	4	-	2	1	-	A	7	Institution				Study Number					Year		Status			
N	W	U	-	0	0	6	3	4	-	2	1	-	A	7																	
Institution				Study Number					Year		Status																				
<small>Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation</small>																															
Application Type: Single Study (PhD)																															
Commencement date: 18/06/2021	Risk: <table border="1"><tr><td>Low</td></tr></table>	Low																													
Low																															
Expiry date: 18/06/2022																															
Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.																															

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

<p>General conditions:</p> <p><i>While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The study leader/supervisor (principle investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the BaSSREC:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and</i> - <i>without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.</i> • <i>The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the BaSSREC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.</i> • <i>Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.</i> • <i>The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.</i> • <i>In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-SCRE and BaSSREC reserves the right to:</i>

- request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;
- to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process;
- withdraw or postpone approval if:
 - any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;
 - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the BaSSREC or that information has been false or misrepresented;
 - submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or
 - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.
- BaSSREC can be contacted for further information or any report templates via 21081719@nwu.ac.za / 13128388@nwu.ac.za.

The BaSSREC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the BaSSREC or the NWU-SCRE for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely



Prof Jacques Rothmann

Chairperson NWU Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Original details: (22351930) C:\Users\22351930\Desktop\ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY.docm
8 November 2018

File reference: 9.1.5.4.2

APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET



Building F13, Room 116
Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC)
21081719@nwu.ac.za

DATE:

BaSSREC Authorization	
Prof Jacques Rothmann	Digitally signed by Prof Jacques Rothmann Date: 2021.06.18 11:33:36 +02'00'
Approved 18 June 2021	

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

“An assessment of the causes, impact and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian Political Crisis between 1971 to 2018”.

ETHICS NUMBER: NWU-00634-21-A7

REFERENCE NUMBERS: 21505063

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Chapanyi Helen Folefac

ADDRESS: 5932, Unit 14, Mmabatho, 2735

CONTACT NUMBER: 0734793047

You are invited to take part in a research project that forms part of my Doctoral qualification. Please, take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please, ask the researcher any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part. Prior to publication of the study’s findings (or the point that publication is in process), you may also withdraw the data you generate.

This study has been approved by the **Basic and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC) of the Faculty of Humanities of the North-West University (NWU-00634-21-A7)** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the International Singapore Statement on Research Integrity (2010) and the ethical guidelines of the National Health Research Ethics Council. It might be necessary for members of the research ethics committee or relevant authorities to inspect the research records to make sure that we (the researchers) are conducting research in an ethical manner.

What is this research study all about?

- This study will be conducted by Chapanyi Helen Folefac and will involve individual and focus group interviews that will act as part of the field work for the research.
- The researcher has been trained to use the methods mentioned in the previous sentence.
- Approximately, a total of 53 participants will be included for both individual interviews and focus group discussion (FGDs) in this study.
- *The objectives of this research are to:*
 - To obtain an insight into the root causes of the political crisis in Cameroon.
 - To identify the nature and outcomes of the political crisis in Cameroon between 1972-2018.
 - To qualitatively study the effects of the political crisis on the Cameroonian State.
 - Explore the path to peace and stability in Cameroon.

Why have you been invited to participate?

- You have been invited to participate because you are part of the group that has been identified as a relevant source for the study. Your participation will aid the study since it is one of the requirements for the research project. Additional information obtained will contribute to the development of the study.
- You will be excluded if: You do not meet the requirements.

What will your responsibilities be?

- You will be requested to only respond to the questions attached in the interview form as an interviewee conducted by the above-mentioned researcher. Your participation is voluntary.
- You will be required to sign the Informed Consent Statement before commencement of the interviews and FGDs. *Take note of the Covid-19 declaration on the last page.*

Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

- The direct benefits for you as a participant will probably be acknowledgement of being part of a few individuals who contribute to the development of the study.
- The indirect benefits include the fact that you will add to the body of knowledge for future generations.

Are there risks involved in your taking part in this research and how will these be managed?

The risks in this study, and how these will be managed, are summarised in the table below:

<i>Probable/possible risks/discomforts</i>	<i>Strategies to minimize risk/discomfort</i>
Because you will spend about an hour in the course of an interview and FGD, it is possible that you will become tired.	The researchers facilitating the interview, will give you a 15-minute break.
Because the researcher will ask you questions about what you have heard or done in your life, you will need to think about difficult times in your life. This could make you feel uncomfortable.	The researcher has to approach such issues with great caution in order to reduce bias and prejudice in data collection. You may end your participation at any time during the interview and/or FGD without any repercussions.
Covid-19 infections.	Due to the potential of Covid-19 infection, the researcher will observe the following rules during Focus Group Discussions:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the current Covid-19 restriction levels do not allow for such in-person meetings, the interviews and FGDs will not take place. • That all persons wear a three-ply mask throughout the interview and FGDs. • That the researcher takes the temperature of the participants before the start of the interview and FGD. If this is too high, then you will not be allowed to participate. • That hand-sanitizer (with 80% alcohol-content) be used <i>before, during and after</i> the interview. • That social-distancing of 1.5-2 meters be observed between all persons <i>before, during and after</i> the interview. • If the participants do not have a three-ply mask or hand-sanitizer, this will be provided cost-free by the researcher. <p>Individual interviews will be conducted <i>virtually</i>, therefore the risk of Covid-19 infection is mitigated.</p>
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- *However, we do believe that the benefits to you and to science (as noted in the previous section) outweigh the risks we have listed. If you disagree, then please feel free not to participate in this study. We will respect your decision.*
- *Should we learn, in the course of the research, that someone is harming you, or that you are intending to harm someone, then we must tell someone who can help you/warn the person you are intending to harm.*

Who will have access to the data?

- *Anonymity* (that is, in no way will your results be linked to your identity) will be our first priority. Each participant will have a code and no personal information will be added in the reporting of the findings of the study.
- *Confidentiality* (that is, I/we assure you that we will protect the information we have about you) will be ensured by the researcher. Reporting of findings will be anonymous by the researcher.
- *Privacy* will be observed by the researcher not asking questions about matters that the participant may regard as private/personal.
- Only the researchers will make sure that data is kept safe and secure by locking hard copies in locked cupboards in the researcher's office and for electronic data, it will be password encryption protected.
- Data collected through the interviews and FGDs will be transcribed and analysed by the researcher.
- Data will be stored for five years after the study has been completed and then disposed of.
- Findings will be made available to participants on request at any time.

What will happen to the data?

The data from this study will be reported in the following ways: Data will be reported through hard copies that will be submitted to the University for examination and also through academic journals and book articles. In all of this reporting, you will not be personally identified. This

means that the reporting will not include your name or details that will help others to know that you participated (e.g. your actual name; your address, etc.).

This is a once-off study, so the data will not be re-used.

Will you be paid/compensated to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

No, you will not be paid/compensated to take part in the study; the study is for academic purposes and will not yield any financial gains. Participants will not be required to travel as the study will be conducted in organise venues agreed by both researcher and the participants. The researcher will go to participants.

How will you know about the findings?

- The general findings of the research will be shared with you by email or hard copies only if the participant is interested in getting the report.
- If you would like feedback on your personal results, then you may respond with a Yes/No and the researcher will forward you the final document after full completion of the study.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

- You can contact Chapanyi Helen Folefac (researcher) at 0734793047 or via email at helenfolefac@yahoo.com if you have any further queries or encounter any problems.
- You can contact the chair of the Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (Prof Jacques Rothman) at 018 299 1595 or 21081719@nwu.ac.za if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by the researcher.
- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I _____ agree to take part in a research study entitled: “An assessment of the causes, impact and pathways to peace in the Cameroonian Political Crisis between 1971 to 2018”.

I declare that:

- I have read and understood this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person obtaining consent, as well as the researcher (if this is a different person), and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I understand that what I contribute (what I report/say/write/draw/produce visually) could be reproduced publicly and/or quoted, but without reference to my personal identity.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.
- I also wish to bring to your attention that the process of data collection involves the use of an audio recording device. This is done to allow the researcher sufficient time to analyse data at a later stage. I, therefore, consent to the audio-recording of the interviews. *I may, however, request that the researcher stops the recording at any time during the research.*
- I acknowledge that the research interpreter will have to attend interviews that will be conducted.

- I acknowledge that the researcher will observe FGDs and interviews.
- I acknowledge that the research assistants will attend interviews conducted with participants and the research assistant will act as witnesses.

Signed at (*place*) _____ on (*date*) _____ 20 _____

Signature of participant

Signature of witness

- | | |
|--|--|
| • You may contact me again | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • I would like a summary of the findings of this research | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • I would like feedback on my functioning/wellbeing as reflected in the questionnaires I completed | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

The best way to reach me is:

Name & Surname: _____
 Postal Address: _____
 Email: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Cell Phone Number: _____

In case the above details change, please contact the following person who knows me well and who does not live with me and who will help you to contact me:

Name & Surname: _____

Phone/ Cell Phone Number /Email: _____

Declaration by person obtaining consent (if not the researcher)

I (*name*) _____ declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to _____
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (*place*) _____ on (*date*) _____ 20 _____

Signature of person obtaining consent

Signature of witness

Declaration by researcher

I (*name*) _____ declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to _____
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (*place*) _____ on (*date*) _____ 20 _____

Signature of researcher

Signature of witness

Declaration by researcher and participant

Personal face-to-face interviews during Covid-19 restrictions (VERY IMPORTANT)

Additional declaration by participant in those instances where the participant requests to participate in a personal face-to-face semi-structured interview:

By signing below, I _____, acknowledge the following information related to the required measures regarding Covid-19:

I declare that:

- It is my personal choice and preference to participate in a personal face-to-face semi-structured interview with the researcher.
- This requires that I consent to the following strict measures to safeguard the personal health and safety of myself and that of the researcher/interviewer/primary investigator:
 - I consent to the researcher taking my temperature before the interview using a thermometer. Yes No
 - I confirm that my temperature measured at _____ degrees. Yes No
 - I consent to use the three-ply mask provided by the researcher. Yes No
 - I consent to wear the three-ply mask for the full duration of the interview. Yes No
 - I consent to the researcher sanitising the interview context using a sanitiser with an 80% alcohol content before the commencement of the interview. Yes No
 - I consent to the researcher using a sanitiser with an 80% alcohol content before and during the interview if required. Yes No

Signed at (*place*) _____ on (*date*) _____ 20 ____

Signature of participant

Signature of researcher

APPENDIX 3: STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The aim of these questions is to seek your comments, in the gathering of data focusing on the causes, impact and pathways to peace of the political crisis in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. Your input will facilitate the exercise of generating data for this study. Rest assured that your opinion would be treated confidentially.

1 What do you understand by regional armed conflict? (in your own option what did you think are the causes that led to the crisis in Cameroon?)

2 What do you think are the causes of regional conflict in Cameroon, especially in the Anglophone Regions?

3 Do you think that the conflict in Cameroon (Anglophone Regions) has any form of political dimension? If yes, please explain.

4 Do you think that the regional conflict in Cameroon has any form of economic dimension? If yes, please explain.

5 Do you think that the former colonial master played a role in the growth of the regional conflict in Cameroon?

6 What is your opinion about Government's use of the military in the regional conflict within the two Anglophone Regions of Cameroon?

7 What in your view has the Cameroonian Government done in order to resolve the regional conflict in the country?

8 Describe what you feel are some of the challenges faced by the Government of Cameroon in the quest to restore peace and stability in the country?

9 Describe what you think are the other effects of conflict on neighbouring countries such as Nigeria?

10 Describe what you think are the roles played by the International community in the peace process?

11 Describe what you think should be the role of NGOs and civil society groups in the management of the regional conflicts?

12 Describe what you think are the mitigation and peace building strategies feasible for the regional conflict management?

Thank for your co-operation

Rédiger des questions d'entrevue

Le but de ces questions est de solliciter vos commentaires, dans la collecte de données se concentrant sur les causes, l'impact et les voies vers la paix de la crise politique dans les régions anglophones du Cameroun. Votre contribution facilitera l'exercice de génération de données pour cette étude. Soyez assuré que votre opinion sera traitée de manière confidentielle.

1 Qu'entendez-vous par conflit armé régional?

2 Quelles sont selon vous les causes des conflits régionaux au Cameroun, en particulier dans les régions anglophones?

3 Pensez-vous que le conflit au Cameroun (régions anglophones) ait une forme de dimension politique? Si oui, veuillez expliquer.

4 Pensez-vous que le conflit régional au Cameroun ait une forme de dimension économique? Si oui, veuillez expliquer.

5 Pensez-vous que l'ancien maître colonial a joué dans la croissance du conflit régional au Cameroun?

6 Quelle est votre opinion sur l'utilisation par le gouvernement de l'armée dans le conflit régional dans les deux régions anglophones du Cameroun?

7 Selon vous, qu'a fait le gouvernement camerounais pour résoudre le conflit régional dans le pays?

8 Décrivez ce que vous pensez être certains des défis auxquels le gouvernement du Cameroun est confronté dans sa quête pour restaurer la paix et la stabilité dans le pays?

9 Décrivez ce que vous pensez être les autres effets du conflit sur les pays voisins comme le Nigéria?

10 Décrivez quels sont, selon vous, les rôles joués par la communauté internationale dans le processus de paix?

11 Décrivez quel devrait être selon vous le rôle des ONG et des groupes de la société civile dans la gestion des conflits régionaux?

12 Décrivez quelles sont, selon vous, les stratégies alternatives de consolidation de la paix réalisables pour la gestion régionale des conflits?

Merci pour votre coopération

APPENDIX 4: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Focus Group Discussion

1 What do you understand by conflict?

2 From your opinion, can you explain to me the root causes of the regional conflict in Cameroon, especially in the Anglophone regions?

3 Describe to me what were your experiences during the period of 1972 to 2018?

4 What in your opinion are some of the effects of the Cameroon-Anglophone crisis?

5 Why did the previous pathways to peace fail in resolving the Cameroonian political crisis?

6 From your opinion, what are the possible strategies that can be implemented to restore peace and stability in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon?

Thank for your co-operation

Discussion de groupe de discussion

1 Qu'entendez-vous par conflit?

2 A votre avis, pouvez-vous m'expliquer les causes profondes du conflit régional au Cameroun, notamment dans les régions anglophones?

3 Décrivez-moi où sont vos expériences durant la période de 1972 à 2018?

4 Quels sont selon vous certains des effets de la crise camerouno-anglophone

5 pourquoi les précédentes voies de la paix n'ont-elles pas réussi à résoudre la crise politique camerounaise ?

6 D'après vous, quelles sont les stratégies possibles qui peuvent être mises en œuvre pour restaurer la paix et la stabilité dans les régions anglophones du Cameroun?

Merci pour votre coopération