

Governance of Ethnicity and The Rise of Conflicts in Africa: An Analysis of The Conflict in Cameroon

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Abstract: Since the end of the Cold War, the dynamics of conflict has changed as there is a decline in inter-state conflict and a rise in intra-state conflict. It is a global phenomenon as minority groups' glamour for self-determination due to suppression, marginalization, poor governance encountered from majority group, which has led to the rise of conflicts in most parts of the world most especially in Africa. Ethnic conflicts constitute a major challenge to international peace and security. The Balkans, the West Bank and Gaza strip and most especially countries in Sub Saharan Africa have witnessed the rise of intra-state conflicts as a result of poor governance of ethnicity. This paper seeks to examine the governance of ethnicity and the rise of conflicts in Africa with particular attention on the conflict in Anglophone regions of Cameroon. Centripetalism as the theoretical framework that guided the paper. The paper adopted a case study research design with the use of qualitative approach for data collection. The purposive sampling technique was used to interview 40 respondents from Mezam (North West) and Fako (South West) divisions. The paper used thematic as a method of data analysis. The finding of the study holds that poor governance of ethnicity could be held accountable for the conflict in Anglophone regions of Cameroon because differences in diversity have been poorly managed. The findings hold that factors such as colonialism, marginalization and state structure have equally played a role in the outbreak of the conflict. The poor governance and management of ethnicity by the government of Cameroon has led to the escalation of the conflict with huge displacement of people, loss of lives and destruction of properties in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. To better manage and govern ethnicity, there is need to introduce mechanisms that build an inclusive society without necessarily destroying the identities of the respective cultures. The study recommends that there is need to accept and recognize the identities of minority group as a way to manage and govern ethnicity in today's heterogeneous societies in Africa.

Key Words: Governance, Ethnicity, Conflicts, Cameroon and Africa

I. INTRODUCTION

The collapse of the Soviet Union changed the dynamics of war from inter-state wars to intra-state producing a rebirth of consciousness for secession in the minds of the ethnic groups. For instance the Estonians conflict of nationalism from the Union Soviet Society Republic (USSR). The Estonians complain of subjection to strict political and economic injustice by the USSR sighting the fact that the Russians who were in Estonian were better off economically and politically as compared to the Estonians. This led to the creation of the Popular Front of Estonia (PFE) as a major political alternative that championed the Estonian

independence movement and subsequently the Republic of Estonian (Molugno, 2011: 7).

Ethnic conflicts constitute a measure challenge to international peace and security. The Balkans, Chechnya, Ukraine, India, Sri Lanka, Israel, Iraq, the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the most of Sub Saharan Africa particularly the great lake region, all bare vestiges of the dangers of ethnic conflict. According to Stavenghagen (2008:1), there are a total of 111 of ethnic conflicts in the world, with 63 being internal conflict and 36 were described as "war of state formation", that is, conflict involving one government and an opposition group demanding autonomy or secession for a particular ethnic group or region. In the recent years, the number of inter-state conflict or war especially in the third world countries is rising tremendously. Stavenghagen (2008: 1) reveals that state sponsored massacres of members of ethnic and political groups are responsible or account for the worst and greater loss of human life than any other form of deadly conflict put together. Statistics hold that an average of 1.6 to 3.9 million unarmed civilians have died as the results of ethnic conflicts since the end of World War II (Gurr, 2000: 7).

Minority-majority has become a permanent feature for the global political debates creating a new attention on the subject by political scholars. Failure to manage minority issues have led to violent conflict within states and threatens state stability in many areas and could lead to secession, for instance South Sudan from Sudan, Katanga from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Biafra from Nigeria, Kabinda from Angola, Eritrea from Ethiopia (Wallenstein, 2007:70). The problem of minority group are usually very aggravated during and uncertain political or cultural situations and in order to cope, this minority groups turns to nurture a sense of group identity longing for loose opportunities and it desire to return to a specific political circumstances which sometimes become the main objective of the leaders of the minority (Lyombe, 2003: 2).

The relevance of ethnic or identity politics is amplified by the fact that the world is divided into approximately 5000 distinct ethnic groups and only 9.1 percent of independent states are ethnically homogenous (Davis, 1997: 87). The situation seems particularly profound in Africa, than in most other parts of the world more so with the continent's legacy of arbitrarily drawn boundaries which has given rise to situations such as that in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) where over 250 ethnic groups exist (Poku, 1997:52). It follows that the challenge for politicians, policy-makers and intellectuals is

how to transform the politics of identity along more benign routes from violence and exclusion to peaceful co-operation and accommodation. This thesis aims to provide insight into this transformation process by firstly examining what could be done within states and second, how the international community can assist in constructively intervening in the search for sustainable peace (Ouma, 2011: 21).

Cameroon like most other African countries has internal problems; although there has been no major armed conflict since the two entities (British Southern Cameroon and French Cameroon) came together following a plebiscite of 11th February 1961, the problem of minority group has been dominated unabated. Anglophone regions (British Southern Cameroon) of Cameroon has been at the forefront of ethnic nationalism, this fight has been championed by prominent Anglophone chiefs and lawyers in the likes of Fon Gorji Dinka, who demand for the immediate promulgation of the independent of Anglophone State (Mukong, 1990: 93-105), and proponents of the Anglophone State demands for the return to two state federation (West and East Cameroon). According to Konings and Nyamnjoh (1997: 2) there is a widespread feeling in the Anglophone regions that reunification of 1961 is the architect behind the growing marginalization of the Anglophone minority in the state project controlled by the majority Francophone elites, which is greatly endangering the political heritage and identity of the Anglophones Cameroon.

From the global perspective, humans are all different, diverse and heterogeneous in nature. The lack of proper mechanism to manage or govern ethnicity or diversity is a main bone of contention which has sparked off confrontation and the consciousness or awareness for self-determination and autonomy. Konings and Nyamnjoh (1997: 2), opines that there is a wide spread feeling in the Anglophone regions that reunification with Francophone Cameroon in 1961 has led to a growing marginalization of Anglophone minority. The majority francophone control state resources, politicized, manipulated and disrupted the original goals of unification as envisaged by the fore fathers, thus breeding hatred, division, exclusion, frustration hence conflict, thus, endangering the political heritage and identity of southern Cameroon. It was not until the political liberalization process in the early 1990s that the Anglophone regions started clamoring for self-determination and autonomy, reintroducing federalism and secession to the political agenda. Konings and Nyamnjoh, (2003:2) and Eyoh (1998: 249-276) posits that ethno- regional divisions and tensions also exist within the Anglophone community itself, known as the northwest southwest divide. Cameroon was viewed as the atlas of peace in sub-Saharan Africa because of the relative peace she enjoyed, coupled with the fact that Cameroon and Canada are the only two bilingual countries in the world. With the diversity in culture one would have expected Cameroon to use her pluralistic culture to her advantage but this is not the case as diversity has been seen as a weapon of division. It is from the foregoing that the study examines the extent to which ethnic governance has led to the

rise of conflict in Cameroon and to investigate the best forms of government that can help in resolving the conflict in Cameroon.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Propounded by Donald L. Horowitz and Benjamin Reilly in 1985, Centripetalism stresses on the believe that the ideal way to manage conflicts in divided societies is not to replicate existing ethnic divisions in the legislature and other representative organs, but rather to put in place institutional incentives for cross-ethnic behavior in order to encourage accommodation between rival groups in societies. Centripetalism reinforces believe that an actor or leader in a country should accept the diversity of other people, build structures that accommodate the various elements in a society. A Centripetalist becomes part of the central government and promotes national unity in its diversity. The goal is to build a collective identity by identifying different cultures associated with different people within that society, accept such diversities by instituting governance mechanisms to govern and manage the people without any discrimination. Benjamin Reilly (2018: 201) opines that centripetal approach to ethnic conflict management seeks to promote inter-ethnic accommodation and moderation by making politicians dependent on the electoral support of groups other than their own base. Matthijs (2013: 2) opines that the best way to manage democracy in deeply divided societies is to depoliticize ethnicity by promoting liberal leaders in the country who will accept the existence of other ethnic groups within the country.

Centripetalism is applicable because it seeks ways of governing and managing the ethnic diversity in Cameroon and how two peoples can overcome their differences, coexist within the same country without the feeling of discrimination, marginalization from a superior culture. Acceptance and accommodation of are the values on the theory of centripetalism, which if well applied in the ongoing conflict in Cameroon it will leads to the de-escalation of the conflict. Mechanisms such as power sharing, equal representation and active participation to decision making processes will create the feeling of belongingness among the Anglophone minority group. Federalism and confederation in a diverse society like Cameroon will guarantee the existence of both Anglophones and Francophones within the same country and their different identities, languages will be upheld thus living together in unity and harmony.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Marwan (1986) opines that good governance is a legal administrative law concept which strengthens the norms for the governments and the legal protection of the people. Implementing norms such as the prohibition of misused power, prohibition of arbitrariness, legal certainty, equality, protection and carefulness can help safeguard fundamental rights (Addink, 2008:35), good governance may provide crucial leverage in the promotion of equality and the prevention of discrimination. The exclusion, discrimination of

an ethnic group tends to breed frustration, marginalization which breeds conflicts. Thus, for a situation where there is diverse cultural backgrounds there is the need to build an inclusive society where the views of the minority will be taken into consideration in decision making hence an inclusive society which can only be achieved through good governance.

Raymond Breton (1991:191) views ethnic communities as a political entity, with political structures and processes that enable it to conduct its public affairs and cope with variety of problems in the socio-political environment. He opines that understanding of ethnic communities is incomplete without adequate consideration of their system of governance or more or less “institutionalized structures, mechanisms and practice” for coping with environmental problems and opportunities.

According to Deng (2008:10), he propounded that one of the ways in which ethnicity can be manage or contribute in resolving conflict is by consociational governance. Consociation governance is essentially a mechanism of structure and functional of power sharing between and among segments of the country. According to Rene Lemarchand (2006:1-2), he pointed out that power sharing or consociationalism, assumes “that ethnic conflict can best be managed through incorporation (or co-optation) of representative of the relevant ethnic segments in the government”. In addition to the establishment of a pluricultural “grand coalition cabinet” within the national government, Lemarchand (2006) suggests that African governance frame work should also include “proportionality in civil service recruitment, a high degree of autonomy for each segment (distinct group) to run it internal affairs, and constitutional vetoes for minorities”.

In Africa since the mid 1960’s there has been prolonged and protracted ethnic related violent political conflicts, including civil wars in countries such as Algeria, Burundi, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, The Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire), Cote d’Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra-Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan and Uganda.

The Somalia question, involved the demand for ethnic Somalis in the Ogaden and part of Ethiopia, in Djibouti and in the Northern frontiers of Kenya for the Unification with Somalia has been one of the major demands in post-colonial Africa, as was the demand, albeit on a less protracted scale, of the Ewe speaking people of Togo for reunion with their ethnic kith and kin in Ghana. The case of the ethnic Baganda in Uganda to recover lost territories and status was a revanchist attempt at developing a Bagandan nation within Uganda, which fell under the central authority in Uganda (Douma, 2003:110).

The magnitude of ethno-political and somewhat religious crisis that have engulfed the Federal Republic of Nigeria in recent times cannot be exploited in isolation from the historical forces, processes and factors that concretize them (Bello & Olutola, 2016: 70). The legacy of colonialism and

empirical inclusion of Nigeria between 1914 and 1915 shows the divergent territories populated by various ethnic nationalities within unitary systems (Aluko & Ajani 2009; Aluko. 1998). Such legacies laid the foundation of what Ebegbulem refers to as the “ethno genesis” which culminated into ethno tensions that has affected eventually all spheres of the country till date (Ebegbulem, 2012:76).

IV. GOVERNANCE OF ETHNICITY AND RISE OF CONFLICT IN CAMEROON

Governance refers to the objective of producing orderly, just and peaceful relations to deal with problems encountered in a complex, diverse and rapidly changing world. The essence of governance is that it is a process of continuing creativity in search for adjustments and accommodation in the midst of uncertainty. There is a growing recognition that many global problems such as insecurity, intra-state conflicts and refugee crisis, require institutions to manage them. Ethnicity is itself full of ambiguity in the Anglo-Saxon world and it is this ambiguity which provides for its constant recurrence. Ethnicity is describes as a group possessing some degree of coherence and solidarity, composed of people who are aware of having common origins and interests. An ethnic group is not mere aggregate of people but a self-conscious collection of people united, or closely related by shared experiences and a common history.

Wimmer et al (2004) argue that the problem in Africa is simply not because of the existence of many different ethnic groups in Africa, neither is it due to the diversity in those states for if ethnicity were to be Africa’s problem, then the continent would be experiencing far more ethno-national conflicts than it is already. Africa’s problem is the governance and management of this ethnicity. Ethnicity does not just lead to violent conflict formation but poor governance of ethnicity (Wimmer et al, 2004: 55). These scholars argue that the problem and reason behind these ethno-national conflicts lies in the way power is exercised in the country and the policies set up by states to govern all those ethnic groups (issues of poor governance and corruption). Wimmer et al (2004: 55) reveal that the experience of Africa reveals that states that have been authoritarian, dictatorial, or military in character manipulate constitutions, ignore all democratic values and rule of law, trample upon the rights of citizens, fuel divide and conflicts, and marginalize minority groups. In the context of Cameroon, the minority Anglophones have been marginalized deprive of equal opportunities, neglected and abandoned developmental projects in the regions, which has led to anger and frustration among the Anglophones community thus leading to the rise and escalation of the conflict. The ongoing conflict is as a result of the inability and the incompetence of the government of Cameroon to properly govern its diverse cultures. Hagg (2006:21) opines that the governance and management of cultural diversity can play a positive role in peace making.

According to Le Vine, (2004: 215), opines that ethnic factor has been and remains critical to Cameroon politics given the

country's extraordinary ethno-cultural heterogeneity and a number of important ethnic and cultural cleavages operating on both national and regional political areas, thus breeding hatred that in manifested in anger, frustration, deprivation, exclusion and marginalization hence conflict along ethnic ranks and conflict in Southern Cameroons. The ongoing conflict in Cameroon has some tents of ethnic nationalism conflict for two main reasons. Firstly, because the individual's environment in this case Cameroon is determined by a pyramid of social identities that people perceive (Reader, 2009:26). William G. Gunningham notes that ethnic identities are very much stronger because of the composition as extended kingship groups, which play a paramount role in the mobilization of in-group against the out-group (Cunningham, 1998).

Makolo (2019:1) Southern Cameroon's problem commonly known as the 'Anglophone conflict' is as old as the country. It is the expression of a poorly managed decolonization process, that saw two divergent (British southern Cameroons and French Cameroon) people come together to form a country void of any genuine foundations that grantee coexistence. On the eve of independence the diversity of these two entities were not taken in to consideration by the international community. However, the ethnic diversity and dialogical differences has been manipulated, thus the eruption of conflict in Cameroon.

In Cameroon, colonial boundaries have had an ambivalent impact on what has become to be known as the Anglophone problem (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 2003:9), which has degenerated into an armed conflict. On the other hand, the boundaries between francophone Cameroon has laid the foundation or set the pace for the construction of Anglophone-Francophone identities and the development of cleavages between these two elites. Colonial boundaries have further exacerbated the divide between Anglophones and Francophone. These two entities were drawn from different colonial backgrounds and had specific and linguistic legacies (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 2003:20). However, in this current configuration, it is not necessarily in the form of opposition to the colonial rule. It could best be explained in the context of reactions to ethnic parochialism, discrimination, idiosyncrasies and the domination of one or two or more ethnic nationalities over the other amongst others. This imbroglio has frequently led to the emergence and growth of ethnic conflicts and nationalistic movements (Frederick, 2009:12, Brett, 1995).

Anyangwe (2005) notes that Southern Cameroon equally known as Anglophone Cameroon was once a league of Nations Mandated Territory and later United Nations Trust Territory known as the Cameroons under the United Kingdom's administration. The territory lies between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and La Republique du Cameroun in West Africa. It has an area of 16,581 square miles and a population as of 2005 of about 6 million people (SCNC, 2005). In making a case for the restoration of the southern Cameroon's independence, Anyangwe (2005) reveal that

Southern Cameroon is large both in area and population than some colonies such as Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Djibouti, Burundi and Guinea Bissau.

The Southern Cameroon's nationalistic conflict or the rise of nationalism is a story of self-governed people with a homeland and a defined territory and a fully functioning democratic institutions (Munzu, 1993:8), but was complicated and Southern Cameroonians were compelled at independence by United Nations and the United Kingdom to achieve "independence by joining" one of its two neighbors the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the West and La Republique to the East (UN Resolution, 1608).

In an attempt to govern and manage ethnicity since the escalation of the ongoing conflict, the government of Cameroon has initiated certain measures even though these measures have not produced the desired outcome. Nsoh (2018: 7) discloses that the government of Cameroon has taken some measures to govern ethnicity since the escalation of the conflict such as recruitment of bilingual teachers, creation of the Bilingualism and Multiculturalism and creation of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Rehabilitation. The scholar noted that these measures put in place by the government to govern and manage ethnicity due to the escalation of the conflict are good but misplaced. Nsoh (2018) added that there is need for inclusive dialogue, build trust amongst all stakeholders and address the root causes of the conflict to enhance sustainable peace and security.

V. METHODOLOGY

The research design that suits this study was the case study research design. This study used the qualitative approach that gives room or opportunity for the researcher to explore the phenomenon under investigation.

Target population is that population to which the researcher wants to generalize the results of study (Mugenda and Mugenda. 1999). The target population was divided as follows;

- Teachers,
- Lawyers,
- Mayors,
- Chiefs
- Civil society leaders

In this article purposive sampling was used. The choice of this sample technique was guided by the desire to get in-depth understanding from the targeted respondents.

With regards to Sample Size, 40 respondents were sampled, 20 from Mezam division, North West and 20 from Fako, South West regions constituting the Anglophone regions of Cameroon.

Qualitative data was analysed using the thematic analysis approach with the aid of Themes, Thematic Explication, and Quotes.

VI. MAJOR FINDINGS

Ethnic governance and rise of conflict in Cameroon

Ethnic governance

Governance has to do with how the government puts mechanisms that will improve on the living conditions of its citizens. Governance implies the allocation of resources, not only allocating, but the equal distribution of resources. In the light of this study ethnic governance entails the mechanism put in place to properly govern the two entities that came into the union. From the macro perspective, there is no law that governs the over 250 ethnic groups that exist in Cameroon, no mechanism that governs the majority Francophone and minority Anglophone existence as pointed out by this respondent.

The government ought to have developed a mechanism to manage or govern these groups Cameroon has quite a good number of ethnic groups and tribes, but there is no law that governs these ethnic groups. We need to bear in mind that these groups are diverse in cultures and to govern them is difficult, but. The lack of this mechanism has led to the conflict in Anglophone Cameroon (FM1, 2021).

The lack of mechanisms that could govern these two entities has made some Cameroonians to see themselves as superiors and others inferior. A correspondent lambasted that:

There are no laws or mechanisms that govern ethnicity in Cameroon. This has made some Cameroonians feel more Cameroonians than others. Some ethnic groups or people from particular ethnic groups feel as if they have the legitimate over Cameroon than others. They control the economy, military, and other spheres of influence. They look down on others; they call them names, which have prompted the conflict we are confronted with in Cameroon (BW, 2021).

According to Fukuyama (2013), he defines governance as the government's ability to enforce rules and to deliver services, regardless of the democratic status of the country. He pays interest in what Michael Mann labels "infrastructure" rather than "despotic". The reasons why he is excluding democratic accountability is the fact that he will later develop a theory in relationship between governance and democracy. Governance entails accountability, respect for human rights and the rights of the minority. If these basic necessities are absent in a society, they tend to act as a springboard for conflict. The poor governance of the various ethnic groups has enhanced the favour game theory, as ethnic groups fell more superior over others. It could be evident in the distribution of state budget as some areas are given the pride of place over other areas.

Ethnic nationalism and rise of conflict

Ethnic nationalism is a form of nationalism when ethnicity assumes a political (an often territorial) dimensions that challenge the status quo. Ethnic nationalism refers to a sub

national movement for autonomy or independence organized along linguistic, religious or cultural lines. Ethnic nationalism can be seen as a form of ethnic mobilization, one strategy pursued by ethnic groups as they seek to improve on their minority situation. The spirit of nationalism developed in Anglophone Cameroon as far back as some six decades ago, when Southern Cameroons failed to achieve a loose federation that was much cherished by some elites in Southern Cameroon. The fact that a centralized federation was the outcome of the 1961 Fomuban meeting which gave an opportunity for French Cameroonians to seize and capture, as well as control the destiny of southern Cameroonians. Thus, the identity of southern Cameroonians was gradually destroyed and assimilated. To some respondents, the conflict in Anglophone regions is aimed at restoring the lost identity of Southern Cameroonians.

Southern Cameroon is fighting today because we want to restore our lost identity. We were an independent state; we had a government, population and a territory of our own. But we were forced into a union or we were forced to attach our self with another state, French Cameroon that had its independence on 1st January 1960, while southern Cameroon had its independence on the 1st October 1961. we are tired of this union, we have to fight for our identity, what we need is our independence (AD, 2021).

To some political observers, what transpired in Southern Cameroon could be classified as "an African country colonizing another". To others, a state was swallowed by another state and that swallowed state has refused to digest, thus leading to the conflict in Anglophone Cameroon. The conflict is an ethno-national conflict and equally an identity conflict, because it has to do with the identity of Southern Cameroon that has been trampled upon by their brothers, French Cameroon. To another respondent, they came to a union with an open mind in Fomuban. A respondent reveal that:

The Southern (English speaking) Cameroonian delegation that went to Fomuban with an open mind whereas French speaking Cameroonians whom they considered as brothers came with the hidden agenda to capture, colonize, and assimilate southern Cameroon. It was a betrayal from their so-called brother. We need to fight till the last man standing for our independence and identity to be restored (FG, 2021).

The people of Southern Cameroon had the Anglo-Saxon culture and were very frank in the deliberations in Fomuban, while those of French Cameroon had interior motives to colonize and assimilate the people of Southern Cameroon. From the time of President Ahidjo to President Paul Biya, the goal has been to directly integrate Anglophones into Francophones system as confirmed by President Paul Biya during a televised Paris Peace Forum in France. The goal of the separatist fighters is to create an independent state in which they will control, govern and manage the resources in

the North West and South West regions. the rise of self-determination is a modern emotional fusion, an exaggeration of two phenomena, nationality and patriotism. Nationalism is an in born characteristic the individuals feeling that they belong to a nation is as a continual process of social learning and habit forming (Hayes, 1926:29). According to Minogue (1967:53), he opines that nationalism is “a set of ideas...a form of self-expression by which a certain kind of political excitement can be communicated from the elites to the masses”.

Ethnic nationalism develops due to mistrust and tension run in a high other with the country, ethnic royalty remains stronger than national loyalty in Cameroon people feel more attached to their ethnic groups at the macro level and at the micro level people are more focus on either as Anglophone or Francophone. The spirit of nationalism and political consciousness set in went one faction or ethnic groups complain of marginalization and exclusion in the political and economic life of the state and the other part is accused of dominating the economy, civil society as well as the political life. Ethnic sentiments permeate national life in Cameroon everything is based on ethnic lines. With ethnicity at it pick there is bound to be marginalization, exclusion, discrimination between Anglophone and Francophone thus the clash of cultures as pointed out by Samuel Huntington in the clash of civilizations stating that differences among civilizations are not only real; they are basic. Civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, tradition and most important religion (Huntington, 1993: 22-49). The clash of civilizations could be seen in the Anglophone conflict and this has led to the rise of nationalistic feelings as the non- state actors aimed at restoring their lost identity thus the rise of ethnic nationalism.

Poor governance of ethnicity both at the micro and macro level has led to the ongoing conflict in Cameroon. The lack of mechanisms to govern the Francophone majority and the Anglophone minority has resulted to the clash of cultures between the two as indicated by the Centripetalism school of thought who holds that the rise of conflict arises due to poor governance and management of ethnic differences. A position further elaborated upon by Samuel Huntington in his work titled “The clash of civilization” in which he opines that conflict emanate from differences in cultures, languages, and ways of life (Huntington, 1993: 22-49). The poor governance of these two entities has led to dominance and marginalization of the minority Anglophones by the Francophone dominated state, this marginalization has created anger, frustration and hatred in the Anglophone as they feel suppress, assimilated and excluded from the affairs of the state. To some political pundit it’s a new form of colonization what they term “African state colonizing another African state”. The frustrations led to violence and because the violence could not be transformed from violence to non-violence, it degenerated in to conflict and with polarization of the conflict. This has led to the instrumentalization of the conflict by ethnic activist, political entrepreneur and intellectual.

Forms of governance to manage the conflict in Cameroon

Federalism

Federation as a system of government is said to emanate from the desire of people to form a union without necessarily losing their distinct separate identities.

Federation is something that we have experience and if we can go back there it might contribute in resolving the conflict, but what I need to point out it should not be centralized federation because it gives power to a single individual just as what we had back then. If we can have a loose federation then it contributes then it might help in resolving the conflict (GH, 2021).

The idea that federalism should be a form of state resulting from the union between Southern Cameroons and French Cameroon was first advanced by Foncha during a speech on Douala in November 1958. Federation was a good option to better managed and governed the two entities and will help them to maintain their distinct identities, but what southern Cameroonians preferred was a loose federation which will not give much power to a single individual. The constitution of the federal Republic of Cameroon was drawn up with three principal considerations in mind. These were; respect for unique character of each of the two part of the federal Republic of Cameroon without sacrificing the indispensable homogeneity of the life of the state; the consolidation of the authority of the state while at the same time avoiding the creation of a static administrative machinery which would be too cumbersome; and finally, the need of setting up flexible and progressive in institutions of the federation. For instance, the over-centralized administration subsequently became too cumbersome and attempt at “reforming” some of the institutions of southern Cameroons failed to respect the unique nature of the territory. The non-respect of the identity and uniqueness of the people of southern Cameroons has resulted into the Anglophone conflict, a conflict that has been term as a “restoration struggle” for the lost identity of southern Cameroons. Federalism is an attempt to represent diverse political, social, cultural, and economic interest within the frame work of a broader national unity. It typically involves a redistribution of power from the central government down to a number of constituent units sometime designated as “provinces” or “state” or “regions”. In a federal arrangement, each of the units typically has exclusive powers over a number of areas and share power over a number of matters with the federal government. In addition, the central government itself exercises exclusive power over jurisdiction over affairs like the foreign policy. Sidoine (2022: 210) opines that federal system of government is seen as a system that will allow the Anglophone people to maintain their cultural identity and still feel like they are indeed part of the system. Governing and managing ethnicity at different levels, power is effectively dissolved and everyone will participate in the decision making processes (Sidoine, 2022: 210).

Confederated state system

A confederation also known as a league or it is a union of sovereign groups or state united for the purposes of common action, confederation is a resemblance of the federal system. Since the members of the confederation retain their sovereignty, they have an implicit right of secession from the union. To this respondent confederation can equally act as a panacea to the Anglophone conflict in Cameroon.

For me confederation can be a steep in the right direction to solve the conflict. We confederation it will grantee the identity and integrity of the two states and the can equally move out of the union if thing is not moving for either one of the parties one of them. This can only be possible if the parties are fully committed to the union if not, conflict will still arise (DW, 2021).

Confederation are voluntary association of independent states that, to secure some common purpose, agree to certain limitations on their freedom of action and establish some joint machinery of consultation or deliberation of action of the member states may be as trivial as acknowledgements of their duty to consult with each other before taking some independence actions or as significant as the obligation to be bound by majority decisions of member states. Confederation usually fail to provide for an executive authority and lack viable central governments; their member states retain their separate military establishments and separate diplomatic representation; and member are equally accorded equal states with an acknowledged right of secession from the league. Confederation reduces minority conflict; however, conflict will be emanated if the terms are not fully respected.

Consociationalism governance

Consociationalism governance is essentially a mechanism of structural and functional power sharing and among major segments of the country in this case between Anglophone (southern Cameroons) and francophone (French Cameroon). Consociationalism governance has to do with power sharing or consociationalism, assuming that the ethnic conflict can be best be managed through incorporation (or co-operation) of the representative of the relevant ethnic groups or segments in to the government. A point advocated by this respondent.

This system of governance is good; consociationalism can go a long way in resolving the conflict between North West and South West. The system is ok because it gives a chance for equal representation for both faction, it takes in to account the specificities of the groups that came in to a union, equal chances are given for recruitment and greater autonomy is given to the various factions to take of certain aspect such education, projects and other economic matters (SB, 2021).

According to Lemarchand (2007:45), suggests that one of the mechanisms in resolving ethnic conflict is that it should be optionality in the civil service recruitment, a high degree of autonomy for each segment or distinct group to run it internal affairs and constitutional votes for minorities. It has been

observed that consociationalism power sharing works when the ethnic groups are roughly comparable in size, thus avoiding the rise of minority issues. Consociationalism depends largely on the willingness of its members and the constituent parts of the society which comprise of a sense of citizenship, and a shared commitment to the public good. However, these elements are mostly looking in a pluralistic society like Cameroon with diverse cultures, conflict arises due to the fact that homogenous ideology are forced in to a heterogeneous society thus conflict are bound to emanate.

VII. CONCLUSION

The aim of this article was to examine ethnic governance and the rise of conflict in Africa with specific focus on the ethnic conflict in Cameroon. From the investigation carried out in the field, the article concludes that the governance of ethnicity has played a great role in the rise of conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. Poor management and governance of ethnicity leads to conflict as propounded by the Centralism school of thought. The ethnic conflict has been instrumentalised by ethnic activist, intellectuals, and political entrepreneurs have equally politicized the conflict, that has led to the rise of political consciousness and awareness among Southern Cameroonians. However, some political observers opined that if the people of Anglophone regions are given the greater autonomy in which they can control their resources and other developmental projects as well as their social and political lives, then this might go a long way in governing and managing the conflict.

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