

The Impact of the Anglophone Conflict on Youth's Education, Health and Nation Building in Cameroon from 2017 to 2023

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Abstract

For the past eight years, the Anglophone regions of Cameroon have experienced unprecedented instability that has escalated into armed conflict in various prefectures of the country. This study aims to analyze the impact of the conflict on youth education and healthcare, and the nation-building efforts in Cameroon. A qualitative method was employed to collect participants data while integration theory guided the study. The findings revealed that the conflict has significantly impacted the education and health of youth, as well as the well-being of individuals living in conflict-affected areas. Economic downturn, inflation, destruction of schools, hospitals, and health centers, migration, and other factors were identified as influences on the nation-building process in Cameroon. Economic losses appear to be the most significant mechanism affecting nation-building. This study further recommends the reconstruction of schools, healthcare and rehabilitation centers which can help alleviate the negative effects of conflict. As a peace building approaches, this study recommends efforts to promote empower and strengthen youth participation in nation-building efforts, especially those aimed at promoting peace, social cohesion and national development.

Keywords

Anglophone Conflict, Youth, Education, Nation Building, and Cameroon

1. Introduction/Background

The Anglophone region of Cameroon comprises two of the ten regions in the country. The prolonged conflict in these English-speaking areas, known as the "Anglophone crisis", is one of the significant ongoing crises in Sub-Saharan Africa that cannot be overlooked. After Germany's defeat in World War I, the Cameroon's

territory was divided between Britain and France (Ngoh, 1996). For administrative purposes, the French and British established distinct educational and legal systems in their respective territories (Kouega, 2018: p. 2). The French implemented a Civil Law system in their region, while the British introduced a Common Law system in theirs. (Kouega, 2018: p. 2) further concurred that the British-controlled area adopted the Anglo-Saxon educational system, whereas the French-controlled area adhered to the French educational system. In 1960, French Cameroon gained independence from France, while British Southern Cameroon voted in a UN plebiscite in 1961 to join French Cameroon. The ongoing conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon is rooted in the complex historical relationship between the French and former British territories.

Over the years, Anglophones have expressed concerns about their marginalization, social discrimination, and the dominance of political initiatives that target the Anglophone minority. These initiatives also attempt to distort the Anglo-Saxon educational system, among other issues (Ngenge, 2022: p. 3). Nonetheless, the complaints of the Anglophone were over looked by the French government which resulted to instability rocking the English regions.

In 2016, the Anglophone regions of Cameroon faced a devastating armed conflict between the government military and separatist fighter. According to Fongwa & Chifon (2016), the conflict is rooted in the structural division and dichotomy in style enacted at the reunification of both separate entity in 1961. Fonkwo et al. (2023: p. 2) further point out that since the inception of the marriage between French and English Cameroon, the concurrent British and French systems of education, policy, law among others have been a consistent point of contention, leading to a heated protest in 2016 and eventually escalating into an armed conflict in 2017. This situation has resulted in fatalities and property damage, causing people to be forced to leave their homes in rural areas for urban cities or outside the region. It has also disrupted healthcare and education services, as well as negatively impacting the living conditions and overall well-being of those affected. This is evident in the fact that a study by (UNHCR, 2019) concurred that since the beginning of the conflict, 1 million individuals have been internally displaced with around 74,000 of them finding shelter in Nigeria. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA, 2021) affirmed that 80% of schools and health facilities are non-functional in the conflict areas. It is the enormous destruction of school infrastructures as well as the hospitals in the two conflict regions that, this study is informed.

Agwanda et al. (2020: p. 3) further point out that the conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon stems from a long history of social exclusion and economic disregard for the Anglophone minority in Cameroon. Advocates for independence argue that the decolonization process in the region was inadequate, leading to the current crisis. The complaint above is based on the fact that the French government tried to suppress the Anglo-Saxon Education System, which has been practiced in English for many years.

The Anglophone marginalisation, which stems from over 50 years of historical

and political evidence of discrimination, social exclusion, and the difficult integration of the Anglophone-speaking minority in Cameroon by the Francophone-led government, has led to a violent armed conflict and the quest for secession (Ngam & Budi, 2021: p. 18). Following peaceful demonstrations by English-speaking lawyers and teachers denouncing government efforts to integrate the English and French education and justice systems in Cameroon, the demonstrations eventually led to violence by government forces (Kouega, 2018: p. 2).

The former British region has seen the increase in violence; it ended in an armed dispute. Consequently, institutions such as hospitals, schools, and government offices, among others, have remained subject to arson attacks by alleged separatist combatants and sometimes as a result of fighting with government forces. The confrontation between separatists and government military often disrupts schools and other activities in the areas. Consequently, it is important to assess the general impact of conflict on young people's education and health.

The lack of adequate measures to ensure safety in schools in the conflict-affected regions has prompted the government of Cameroon to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration in 2018, which emphasizes the importance of continuing education and the need to protect students, teachers, and schools during times of conflict (Akame, Crockett, & Anoma, 2021: p. 34). However, despite the establishment of the Safe Schools Declaration policy in 2018, and government efforts to ensure that all Cameroonians received free education (Mbwoye, 2024: p. 5), posits that accessing to education is extremely becoming difficult which is a deep concern. It is due to the unfulfilled commitments of the Safe Schools Declaration policy and the difficulties in accessing education coupled with the ongoing attacks on schools that this study aims to investigate the impact of the Anglophone crisis on education and health in the South West region.

However, there is limited information available regarding how the crisis has affected the health and education of youth in conflict-affected regions. This research aims to outline the repercussions of the crisis on youth education and well-being, as well as highlight suggestions from stakeholders on improving the education and health conditions of young people in these communities. The researcher focuses on the education and health sectors because both significantly, influence the economy of Cameroon. This study is crucial because, without addressing the issues within the educational system in the English-speaking regions, which is considered as a reprisal of the ongoing conflict thus youths, will be ill-equipped to bear the future responsibility of reconstructing the economy and the state, which are currently in decline.

Considering the current nature of the conflict, which is not yet conducive to resolution, there is a strong possibility that more youths may drop out of school. This situation has significant implications, contributing to a progressively negative trend in nation-building and the emancipation of youth education in conflict-affected regions.

This article begins by establishing the foundation of the unification of French and Anglophone (Formerly British Cameroon). It follows the short history of

dispute, its current situation, and the theoretical basis. The paper then describes the method used, and including the sample size and instruments employed, before presenting and analyzing the results. The discussion section, examines research issues, then conclude, practical results, and recommendations.

2. Research Design and Methodology

This study primarily relies on both primary and secondary sources of information. This includes online interviews with students, teachers, parents, and health professionals in the Southwest region to understand the impact of the conflict on health and education. The security risks associated with traditional data collection methods such as face-to-face interviews, participant observation, and focus group discussions supported the use of an online survey in the context of this study. Before interviews, the researcher has to call to schedule an appointment.

A qualitative study enables researchers to gather and examine non-numeric data to uncover specific ideas, viewpoints, and experiences of the participants (Ugwu & Eze, 2023). It utilizes simple random sampling to collect opinions on the factors that trigger conflict and how these conflicts have impacted the education and health of youth. This method of sampling helps the study avoid bias when selecting participants.

The target population for this study comprised students, teachers, parents, and health professionals, particularly in the South West region. Sixteen individuals residing in the South West region were purposively selected. The research setting was also located in the South West region. Four individuals were interviewed from Buea, Muyuka, Muea, and Kumba. Participants included individuals of both genders, aged 15 to 40 years, which enabled the researcher to gather original data. The questions posed to participants generated insights as they narrated their experiences regarding how the conflict has impacted the health and educational sectors. Responses from participants were categorized as field participants (FP), omitting direct identifiers such as names, ages, and genders to maintain anonymity due to the significant risks associated with revealing the identities of respondents in a conflict environment. Secondary data were sourced from books and journals. Thematic data analysis was employed to analyze the data.

3. Literature Review

This study contributes to the literature by emphasizing the importance of education and health for the nation of Cameroon. Conflict, in its various forms, represents one of the most significant security threats faced by Africa and the world at large in the 21st century (English, 2016). Cameroon is not exempt from the conflicts that have plagued the African continent. The Anglophone crisis began with peaceful protests in 2016 but was subsequently taken over by separatist groups, also known as restoration fighters, who resorted to violent attacks against community members, particularly targeting teachers and students (CG, 2022).

Supporting the above position, Gesesew et al. (2021) investigate the impact of

the Tigray war in Ethiopia on the health system of the Tigray region. Their findings revealed widespread destruction of livelihoods and a collapse of the healthcare system. It is evident that the conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia has adversely affected the education, health, and other sectors in the country. According to the [UNHCR \(2019\)](#), the education system has been impacted by elections in some African countries. This is exemplified by the case of Cameroon, where the last municipal and presidential elections in 2018 were characterized by significant socio-political tensions and security concerns, creating an atmosphere of instability that exacerbated insecurity in conflict regions. According to Doctors without Borders ([Médecins Sans Frontières, 2019](#)), the conflict in the Anglophone areas has far-reaching implications for the health system in Cameroon. They alluded that since the onset of the political crisis, approximately 61 health facilities have been attacked, either by separatist fighters or the military. To further support this assertion, the Ministry of Economy, Planning, and Regional Development confirmed that 16% of healthcare services in both regions have been affected due to the conflict.

In support of the above, [Ngenge \(2022: p. 11\)](#) in his research evaluating the effect of armed conflict on higher education in Cameroon's Anglophone regions points out that the ongoing armed conflict in these areas has negatively affected student enrollment and academic performance, particularly at the tertiary level of education. He further asserts that the conflict has adversely impacted overall performance on Continuous Assessment Tests (CAs) and has led to a decline in Cumulative Grade Point Averages (GPA).

[Kaila et al. \(2021\)](#) analysed the immediate impact of the Boko Haram attacks in the Far North region of Cameroon on education and child welfare. Using data collected from Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and the department of Education, the study found that Boko Haram attacks resulted in an immediate increase in school dropout rates and a reduction in healthcare facilities.

Research by [Tchakounte & Sambu Loic \(2023: p. 2\)](#) explored the impact of the armed conflict in the Central African Republic. The researcher conducting multiple cluster surveys found that the conflict has tremendously affected the masses, on account of household wealth and the number of internally displaced persons. The results also revealed a decline in agriculture and child nutritional health. The researchers call for the strengthening of agricultural empowerment, launch job and cash transfer programs to help rebuild household assets in the absence of agricultural income.

Research by [Hussain, Iqbal, Taji, and Khan \(2012\)](#) on the effect of terrorism, on the mental health of men and women in Islamabad observed that terrorist attacks expressively affect the mental health of individuals in Islamabad despite the gender.

Similarly, a study by [Ali \(2021\)](#) concurred that conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa has damaged educational institutions, leads to the use for military activities or as a refuge for displaced individuals, endangers the lives of teachers and students by exposing them to the risk of death, injury, or abduction, and results in

psychological distress. Reasoning on the same line, a report by UNESCO revealed that sub-Saharan Africa is home to almost 30% of the world's out-of-school children, with 1 in 5 African children not being in school due to humanitarian crises or conflict.

Although scholars such as Akame, Crockett, & Anoma (2021), Fonkwo et al. (2023), Kouega (2018), have written on the causes of conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon, from different dimensions. This current study argues that their work did not look into the effect of the conflict on education and health. This current study zooms into the effect of the conflict in Cameroon on the health and education of youth to fill this gap.

It should be noted that there is limited empirical studies so far on the impact of the Cameroon Anglophone conflict on youth education and health. This current study fills this research gap.

4. Theoretical Review

This study employed integration and educational theory to assess the impact of the Anglophone conflict on education and health. The integration theory addresses the unification of French and former British Cameroon in 1961, which ultimately led to the establishment of the Federal Republic of Cameroon (Folefac & Ani, 2022: p. 50). Since this merger, the primary point of contention has been the differences that exist between French-speaking and English-speaking Cameroon.

This theory provides a viable theoretical explanation for the Anglophone conflict. It is based on the fact that the Anglophone minority has been expressing grievances regarding their marginalization by the French-speaking government.

This theory aligns well with the context of the ongoing conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon, which is rooted in the marginalization of the Anglophone minority.

Grissemann & Stokburger-Sauer (2012) affirmed that integration is the process of social connection and mutual accommodation among different entities. This justifies the application of this theory in this study. The integration theory is particularly appropriate in the context of the conflict in the Anglophone regions, as the failure to integrate both federated units appears to be the most credible explanation for the ongoing conflict. Over the years the English people complaints regarding the assimilation of Anglo-Saxon educational practices in the English-speaking regions. This discontent was later exploited by separatist fighters, who called for school boycotts and the prohibition of French teachers' deployment in schools within the Anglophone regions, where many teachers struggle to express themselves in English, the primary medium of communication.

This theory is well-suited for this study because it elucidates the reasons behind the failed integration of both federated units, thereby highlighting its influence on the ongoing conflict in Cameroon.

5. Initial Conceptual Framework

Conceptual frameworks demonstrate the expected relationship between the variables of the study. The initial conceptual framework of this paper is presented in **Figure 1**.

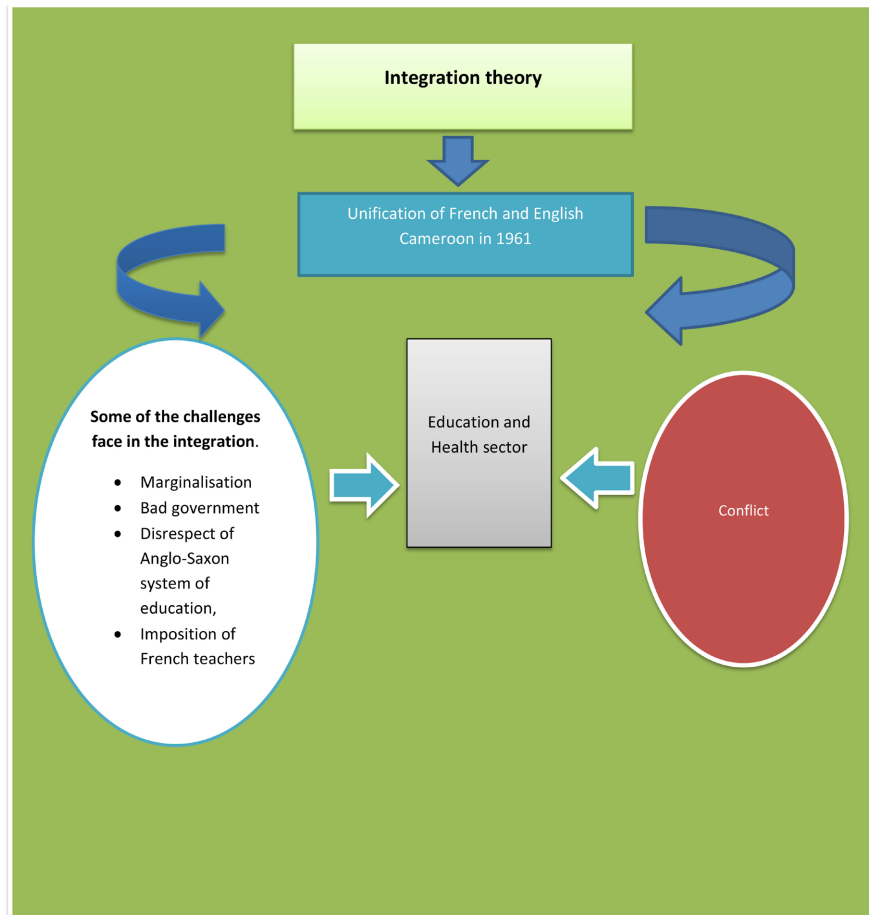


Figure 1. Initial conceptual framework (Author's own compilation).

The initial conceptual framework illustrated in **Figure 1** is developed from the abovementioned theory and literature. The figure demonstrates how the failed integration of the Federal Republic of Cameroon led to the marginalization of the Anglophone minority, resulting in armed conflict in the country. The literature also highlights the challenges faced by Anglophones during the unions in 1961. These challenges include underdevelopment, the status of second-class citizens, and an inferiority complex, particularly when submitting documents in Francophone regions, among others. This conceptual framework is significant as it serves as a roadmap for data collection and the interpretation of findings for the study.

5.1. Impact Analysis of Conflict on Youth Education and Health

This section of the study discusses the implications of the Anglophone conflict on the education and health sectors in the affected areas, particularly in Cameroon

as a whole. The study examines the impact of the conflict on both education and health. While the conflict in the English-speaking regions of Cameroon remains persistent, its repercussions for Cameroonians and the nation's development are immense and unquantifiable. It is a conflict that has affected various sectors across the country.

5.2. Impact of Conflict on Education

Since the onset of the conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon, the educational sector has experienced chronic and severe dysfunction. In many areas, particularly towns and villages considered hiding spots for separatists, schools and hospitals have been burned down. In some locations, both government and Christian schools have been destroyed and closed (CG, 2022). A survey conducted by UNICEF (2022) reported that since the beginning of the conflict in 2016, 120 schools have been destroyed in the two regions. While some school buildings are being used as hiding places for non-state fighters, as well as barracks, battlegrounds, and detention centers, in violation of their law.

To support the above assertion, the participant further emphasizes that the conflict has adversely affected their education. Schools in conflict-affected areas, such as Muyuka, Muyenge, Fontem, Muea, Mamfe, and many others, have been closed since 2016. As a result, young people and university students in these regions have experienced significant interruptions in their education (FP1, 2024; FP4, 2024; & FP7, 2024). Similarly, thousands of youths in the conflict zones have had to suspend their studies for more than three years.

A participant describes that *"I was in form five (5) and about to write my General Certification of Education (GCE) when the crisis breaks out and due to the continued encounter and violence between the Amba Boys and the Military couple to the fact that my school was burned down I could not continue my study"*.

Regarding the academic performance of students, some respondents believe that the conflict did not significantly affect their children because they were able to send them to the Francophone regions and to Buea, where they could continue their studies (FP5, 2024, & FP7, 2024).

Another significant impact of the Ambazonia conflict on education is the decline in student enrollment. Since the outbreak of the conflict, the Anglophone regions have experienced a substantial drop in youth enrollment in secondary and high schools. Due to the closure and destruction of schools, both boys and girls have ceased to enroll in educational institutions (FP3, 2024, & FP10, 2024). Additionally, teachers assigned to areas deemed hotspots—villages and towns—have been unable to work due to threats and the fear of kidnapping or violence (FP3, 2024, & FP10, 2024). Consequently, it is not surprising that a significant number of youth from both genders have taken up arms. As a result, children who have dropped out of school face numerous risks, including recruitment into armed groups, early marriages, wrongful arrests, prostitution, and human trafficking. Therefore, it is evident that Cameroon's illiteracy rate is on the rise, as the conflict

continues unabated.

5.3. Impact of Conflict on Health

To gain deeper insights into the impact of the Anglophone conflict on youth, a probing question was posed to determine whether the conflict has affected their health. In the context of this study, health is defined as a complete state of physical, social, and mental well-being, rather than merely the absence of disease or infirmity (World Health Organization, WHO, 2006). The findings revealed that 95% of participants agreed that the conflict has significantly impacted not only the health of youth but also that of the general population. It was observed that the conflict in the English regions has adversely affected the mental health of individuals (FP4, 2024 & FP6, 2024). Fear and anxiety were identified as factors that increase heart rate, resulting from experiences such as gunfire or explosive blasts.

A participant cited that “*Her ear drums was affected due to severed gunshots from both parties*” (FP4, 2024).

Another participant state that “*the conflict has affected my mental health especially because I witness my brother whom the military suspected to be an Amba Boy, shoot and kill*” since then my heart keeps thrusting when I see a military man carrying a gun” (FP2).

Nonetheless, the destruction of several hospitals in areas such as Muyenge, Kumba General Hospital, Muyuka, Mamfe, and various villages in South West and Bamenda has made it difficult for the population to access healthcare services. Doctors without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières, 2019) reported that approximately 61 health facilities have been attacked, either by separatist fighters or the military.

Likewise, 5% disagreed with the aforementioned perspective. They argue that towns and cities such as Buea and Limbe, which did not experience a complete shutdown of schools or hospitals, continued to provide essential services to the community. As a result, most residents were able to pursue their education and receive medical attention in the event of health issues (FP3, 2024, & FP11, 2024).

Consequently, the turmoil and violence resulting from the insurgency of both the Ambazonian separatist fighters and government forces in the Anglophone regions have dealt a significant blow to both the regions and the nation as a whole.

6. Implication of Conflict on Nation Building in Cameroon

The Anglophone regions of Cameroon are estimated to contribute 60% of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Crisis Group, 2022). Therefore, the prolonged conflict in these regions is expected to have a significant impact on the nation of Cameroon. Regarding the effects of the conflict on nation-building, the study found extensive destruction of valuable properties, loss of life, kidnappings, human rights violations, and the burning of homes and villages. Additionally, schools and hospitals have been affected, and there is a lack of freedom to express alternative political views. Poverty has increased, and there has been a rise in

unemployment and insecurity.

The conflict has adversely impacted both the regions and the nation as a whole. In particular, the armed conflict in the English-speaking regions of Cameroon has significant repercussions on the conflict zones and Cameroon in general, especially in the health, education, and other service delivery sectors. For instance, the Monday lockdowns and other spontaneous calls for “lockdowns”, particularly on commemorative national days and at the beginning of each academic year, sometimes last for several days or weeks. However, the enforcement of these lockdowns affects not only education but also various business sectors. This study argues that, since the conflict is not yet ripe to peaceful negotiations, the number of affected youths and other citizens continues to rise.

Furthermore, with the closure of schools in some areas, young individuals who were supposed to develop skills and contribute to the nation’s progress have dropped out of school and taken up arms. I argue that this trend is detrimental to the nation-building efforts in Cameroon. The lack of skills development will have long-lasting effects on the development of the affected communities, regions, and the nation as a whole. Additionally, the decline in school enrollment over the past five years has exacerbated the illiteracy rate in Cameroon. For instance, a survey by the [Cameroon Literacy Rate \(2024\)](#) indicated that the country experienced a 77.07% decline in literacy in 2018 and a 78.23% decline in 2020.

Moreover, the destruction of hospitals in certain hotspot and urban areas, despite international humanitarian law—which mandates the protection of healthcare facilities during armed conflict—has been documented by reputable organizations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW), Crisis Group (CG), and the United Nations (UN). These reports indicate that some health centers have been set ablaze, often under the misguided belief that they are treating tourists. This destruction has rendered many healthcare centers non-operational, forcing individuals to travel longer distances to access medical services. The damage to healthcare facilities significantly undermines healthcare services and adversely impacts the well-being of people in conflict zones, both in the present and for the foreseeable future.

Despite the negative effects of conflict, the health and education systems partially experience some positive aspects. This is evident in the fact that the health system started making use of technological platforms (FP2, 2024 & FP4, 2024). FP2 (2024) & FP4 (2024) further stressed that online health platforms were created and some schools delivered online lectures. However, this could not last for long because shortly after the onset of the crisis, telecommunication networks were blocked in both regions.

Another negative impact of the conflict is that it has reversed improvements in poverty reduction and development outcomes and jeopardized reform implementation. Also, inflation is estimated to rise due to the fact that farmers have abandoned their farms due to the conflict since agriculture contributes a significant proportion of the country GDP.

The above statistics showed that the economy of the Anglophone regions and

the national development of Cameroon are on a meltdown regression. This study argues that revenue that the government could have used in the advancement and building of more schools, hospitals, and other infrastructure is now directed to reconstructing already existing hospitals, schools that were burned, and the purchase of more weapons from China. Again, since the armed conflict is still ongoing, its repercussions on the nation-building of Cameroon are still on the rise.

Besides the above implications of the conflict for the nation of Cameroon, this study argues that the conflict has affected the nations in different dimensions. For example, there has been a massive exodus of youths migrating to different parts of the world for either safety or for greener pastures. This is detrimental on the fact that the nation is gradually losing its attractiveness as migration continues to experience an upward trend (Folefac & Ani, 2022: p. 14). A survey by Sasu (2024: p. 1) further concurred that currently, there are 88,279 refugees registered in Nigeria.

It is worth noting that the list of the implications of the Anglophone conflict on the conflict-affected areas, and Cameroon in general cannot be exhausted. However, there is a need for policy structures and strategic methods that can foster lasting peace and stability in Cameroon.

7. Discussions of Findings

This study examined the framework of the Anglophone conflict with youth education, health, and nation-building in Cameroon. A holistic approach was employed, utilizing data obtained from telephone interviews, articles, magazines, books, and book chapters.

The findings of this study underscore the importance of raising awareness about the impact that the ongoing conflicts in the two English-speaking regions have had on youth education, health, and nation-building in Cameroon. The data is presented alongside interpretation and analysis, revealing several emerging themes and patterns. The conflict has led to the displacement of youth and increased idleness. The study also found that thousands of young people have dropped out of school and taken up arms, while others have engaged in illegal activities and prostitution. These social and economic circumstances have made youth more vulnerable to illegal activities, such as forced recruitment into separatist groups and sexual violence, among other abuses. This aligns with a study conducted by Kaila et al. (2021), which revealed that the Boko Haram insurgency in the far north of Cameroon has resulted in an increase in school dropouts.

The study also found that idleness is prevalent among youth. This idleness is influenced by the closure of many schools, and even those who left their villages or communities eventually dropped out of school. Additionally, it was found that the mental health of individuals has been adversely affected as a result of the conflict. Fear, anxiety, and insecurity were variables that triggered an increase in heart rate due to the sound of gunfire. In line with these findings, a study by Hussain, Iqbal, Taji, and Khan (2012) also revealed that the conflict in the Central African

Republic has significantly impacted the health and well-being of individuals, as well as the nutritional health of couples and children.

Similarly, the researcher found that the conflict has adversely affected the economies of the impacted regions and the nation-building efforts in Cameroon. The destruction of schools, health centers, and other government facilities in these areas represents a significant setback for the country. The impulsive lockdowns observed every Monday, along with additional lockdowns at the beginning of each academic year and during national commemorative days, are viewed as obstacles to both the regions and the nation, as they halt businesses, schools, and other corporate activities.

The study also found that the migration of youths has increase in the past 5 years. Consequently, the young mind and energy they could have put in the nation building of Cameroon are migrating to other part of the world for safety and greener pasture, since the government interest is on purchased of weapons and not jobs creations and development. The above phenomenon is common with Anglophone migrates in Nigeria who claims that they migrated because of safety (UNOCHA, 2021). The findings of this study are fundamental to understand the implication of the armed conflict especially the long term effects on nation. Moreover, the findings are significant and it is recommended that policy frameworks are essential to address the economic, physical and psychosocial impacts until the crisis is resolved and peace is restored to the region.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the impact of the Anglophone conflict on youth education and health. The results show that, over the years, youth education and mental health have been severely affected by the ongoing armed conflict. There has also been a significant drop in school enrollment, which has led to youth engaging in illegal activities and experiencing sexual abuse. Additionally, the destruction of healthcare facilities and schools has been documented. Furthermore, the conflict has undermined regional development and contributed to an increase in the number of internally displaced individuals.

This study contributes to the growing body of literature that estimates the impact of conflict on welfare and education. It is an empirical investigation conducted in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon, which have been affected by eight years of armed conflict between various armed groups. The findings enhance our understanding of the broader implications, particularly the long-term effects of conflict on growth and development. In summary, the loss of healthcare personnel, youth migration, and damaged infrastructure will have lasting consequences for the rehabilitation of the health and educational sectors in the Anglophone region once the conflict concludes. In light of the evidence presented in this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Given the ongoing conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon, the government should enhance security, particularly around school premises. The

conflict has resulted in a high rate of school dropouts and numerous attacks on educational institutions (FP2, 2024; FP4, 2024; & FP6, 2024). By strengthening security measures, students will be able to attend school and study in a safe environment.

- There is a need for the government to reconstruct schools, hospitals, houses, and offices in areas where they were destroyed during the conflict as a peace-building strategy. This will inspire those whose homes were burned to return to their respective villages and towns. The study further recommends that the government develop rehabilitation centers to educate individuals who have experienced trauma in various forms due to the conflict.

- The government should initiate large-scale socio-economic development projects aimed at creating jobs in both regions. This will encourage young people and other unemployed individuals to seek employment opportunities.

- The government should engage with stakeholders to explore strategies such as community engagement dialogue, encouraging the creation of community schools, deployment of mobile health units and establishing lasting peace and stability in the country.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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