

# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ARMED CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA AND CAMEROON REPUBLICS

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## Abstract

*Several African states are experiencing intra and sometimes inter- states conflicts due to multifarious reasons. Adopting Frustration-Aggression theory and using secondary sources of data; the study discovered that armed conflicts in Nigeria and Cameroon have some elements of frustrations, which lead to aggressions and examined the similarities and differences in the two armed conflicts as both of them are happening in Africa; have claimed and are still claiming lives and properties; while one is conflict for self determination, the other is towards religious ideology or jihadism. It concluded that the two armed conflicts are disastrous to stable economy, national and international security in and between the states. The two neighbouring states are to awake and ensure their borders are well protected; provide the dividend of democracy to all its citizens without any sectionalism or marginalization and the international community to come to the aid of these two countries for amicable resolutions of the conflicts for national and international security and socioeconomic development.*

**Keywords:** Armed conflict, Boko haram, ISWAP, Ambaboy, Region.

## Introduction

Conflict means crisis or upheavals that ensue because of sharp disagreements or irreconcilable differences. To Oyeshola (2015), there is conflict when there is sharp disagreement or clash for instance, between divergent ideas, interests or people and nation. Such interest or ideological differences can occur between individuals, groups, communities, nation-states etc. Armed conflict involves the use or carrying of firearms and ammunition by each of the parties in the disagreements. According to Nuhu and Hamidu (2017), conflict is one of the common phenomenon in every human society and organizations, which can be violent or non-violent. Violent conflict is synonymous to armed conflict, because weapons/violence is involved, while non-violent conflict is similar to non-armed conflict are conflict that does not or may not involve the use of weapons or physical attacks. In the quest for independence in Africa, several states used violent and non-violent means to achieve their goals. Conflict are caused by several factors, in this study however, Frustration-Aggression theory is used to examine the causes and compare similarities and dissimilarities in the two-armed conflicts in Nigeria and Cameroon republics.

## Methodology

The study relied on secondary sources of data, such as Journals, Newspapers, Conference papers, books and internet materials to generate and analyzed data on the armed conflicts in Nigeria and Cameroon.

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## **Theoretical Framework**

### ***Frustration-Aggression Theory (FAT)***

Frustration-Aggression Theory (FAT) was developed by John Dollard in 1939, among other associates. Other scholars like Yates (1962) and Berowitz (1962) modified or gave this theory more variations (Mbaegbu, 2018:236). Frustration-Aggression Theory (FAT) states that aggression is always a consequence of frustration. Dollard posits that frustration causes aggression and when the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression is displayed onto an innocent target. The main thrust of this theory states that the occurrence of aggressive behaviour always presuppose the existence of frustration and contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression. This theory specified that motivational strength towards aggression is a function of, the reinforcement value of the frustrated goal response; the degree of frustration of this goal response; and, the number of frustrated response sequence. Corroborating with the above Mbaegbu (2018:236) concur that aggression is the function or result of frustration. Aggressive behaviour such as violent protest result from frustration individuals feel when they are restrained from achieving valued goals.

Explaining the above more clearly, Frustration in this context, according to Dennen (1999) was specified as the thwarting of a goal response, and a goal response, in turn, was taken to mean the reinforcing final operation in an ongoing behaviour sequence. Frustration is used to refer not only to the process of blocking a person's attainment of a re-inforcer but also to the reaction to such blocking. Consequently, being frustrated means both that one's access to re-inforcers is being thwarted by another party and that one's reaction to this thwarting is one of annoyance.

Aggression on the other hand, is defined as an action with the intent to harm, and can be physical and non-physical. There are many areas where aggression manifests in societies. They include domestic violence, abuse, school bullying and war (<http://rint.rechten.rug.nl/rth/dennen/a-fat.htm>). Frustration is the condition, which exists when a goal-response suffers interference. The failure to obtain a desired expected goal leads to aggressive behaviour. However, aggression is not always the response to frustration. In political science, the frustration-aggression theory has been used to explain violence and conflicts especially wars according to (Mbah, 2014:128). Four factors that influence frustration-aggression theory include magnitude of frustration; aggression cues; arbitrariness of frustration; and, cognitive and emotional processes. These are explained thus:

- i. Magnitude of frustrations implies the gravity or intensity of blocking goal-directed behaviour. Dollard's frustration-aggression theory explains how intense the situation can be, for it became the antecedent to an aggressive act. In other words, being so close to one's goal and being neglected may be one act in an aggressive manner, due to the excitement and expectation of receiving one's goal.
- ii. Aggressive Cues identify the aggressive reaction resulting from a barrier to goal attainment. The aggressive cues verses the neutral cues tend to enhance frustration, which leads to aggression. Consequently, frustration facilitates aggression in the presence of the aggressive.

- iii. Arbitrariness of frustration connotes that unexpected blocking of goals can lead to frustration and aggression. In other words, expecting a goal however ultimately being prevented from it all of sudden explains the arbitrariness of frustration and frustration-aggression actions or behaviour.
- iv. Cognitive and emotional process implies that frustration is likely to lead to aggression when an individual's emotional experiences conflict in their environments. This therefore tends to explain the causes of frustration to some of emotional and cognitive experiences (<http://www.psychwiki.com/wiki/Frustration-Aggression-Theory>).

Paradoxically however, not all frustration leads to aggression. For frustrations do not cause aggression outburst by necessity; potential outbursts may be effectively inhibited or may result in alternative actions. Never the less, frustrations produce instigations to a number of different types of responses, one of which is instigation to some form of aggression. In other words, frustration actuates motivational forces that diffuse rather than being specific to aggression according to Miller (1941:336-337). The revised frustration-aggression theory, Mbah (2014:128), observed firstly maintains that, frustration instigates behaviour that may or may not be hostile or aggressive; and, secondly, any hostile or aggressive behaviour that occurs is caused by frustration. This implies that frustration is not a sufficient or the only reason, but it is a necessary condition, for hostility or aggressive behaviours. This theory seems to be appropriate to describe the causes of armed conflicts in Nigeria and, Cameroon.

Boko Haram's goal was to get and train people base on their perceived knowledge of how Islam is to be taught and practiced; they established Mosque and school to that effect in Maiduguri, which was halted and destroyed by the authorities during the 2009 clash. Some of their personnel were apprehended and incarcerated by Nigerian security operatives, their training camps, other properties in Maiduguri and in other hideouts like the Sambisa forest were also spoiled, and some of their members killed. These made the group to be frustrated, which ignited aggressions. They therefore direct their aggressive behaviours on whomever they perceived to be responsible for thwarting their desires: first the security operatives, later the civilians and all aspects of the economy (Mbaegbu 2018:237). The same can be said of Ambazonian boys in Cameroon where their quest for equal treatments between the French and English speaking parts/regions of Cameroon was halted by the authorities. French language and instructors were more glorified and posted to the English speaking regions; their peaceful demonstrations were banned; members of the Ambazonian groups arrested, some were sentenced to death, while others killed by the authorities. These made the Ambaboy to be frustrated and resorted to armed conflicts against the state and any one that seems to stand against their quest for independence/self-determinations. It is imperative to briefly examine the background of each of the conflicts for proper comparative analysis.

### ***Background of Boko Haram Armed Conflict in Nigeria***

One of the most challenging moments in Nigeria was the emergence of an alien religious movement in some states in north-eastern Nigeria called Jama'at al-Hisnna Lid Da'awat Wal-Jihad, popularly called 'Boko Haram'. This religious sect's

name according to Katsina (2011) is a combination of Hausa and Arabic language, which is literally translated to mean 'western education is forbidden'. They are Sunni Islamic fundamentalist sect, which advocates a strict form of adherence to the Sharia (Islamic law) and its implementation in Nigeria (David, 2001). Originally, the intention or objectives of this group were to preach and teach how to practice Islam in the way the prophet handed it over to his disciples. To this effect, they had a School and Mosque in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital as the medium of carrying out their mission.

The actual date and the initial founder of the group seem to be in disputes by some scholars and personalities. For instance, Governor Moudou Sharriff of Borno (2003-2011), under whose regime the sects came to prominence, and Onuoha (2010) asserted that this group seem to be in existence since 1995 with Mallam Abubakar Lawal as the leader, operating under various names like Ahlul Sunnah Wal Jama'ah Hijira; later Shabbaab, Muslim Youth Organization; Nigerian Taliban; to Yusufiyyah sect, to Boko Haram. The advocates of this theory disclosed that that the first major activity of Boko Haram was in Kanama, in Yobe State before it later moves to Borno state (Yakubu, 2014:15).

According to another theory, Mohammed Yusuf is said to officially form the group called Jama'at al-Hi-sunna Lid Da'awat Wal-Jihad, popularly called 'Boko Haram' in 2002 in the city of Maiduguri where he established a religious complex that included a Mosque and a School where many poor families from within and across Nigeria enrolled their children. Yusuf's leadership allegedly opened the group to political influence and popularity. The group continued its activities such as preaching Islam in a more radical way; vehemently speaking against bribery, corruption, injustices in the social or political system. Such teachings gave the group more adherents. Corroborating with the above, Maiangwa (2014:115) states:

*The movement was critical of government inefficiency, lack of accountability and corrupt practices which has resulted into unemployment and increase in poverty in Borno state in particular and Northern Nigeria as a whole. On several occasions, the group leader (Mohammed Yusuf) had spoken against Western liberal democracy and the ills it has brought to his own community which according to him, encouraged corrupt leaders to relegate the religion of Islam and perverse justice*

In a juxtaposed however, the political class saw this group and its teachings as a threat to political stability of Borno state and the nation at large, as Mohammed Yusuf's popularity and his teachings got him more adherents among the less privileged population (Maiangwa, 2014:115). Some people perceived his aim and teachings as the establishing a Sharia government in Borno State. Such kind of teachings gradually brought suspicion and tension in the metropolis between the politicians/ruling elites and the ruled, especially the masses over the group's advances. Borno and northern Nigeria being religious sensitive, made the authorities cautious on the immediate crackdown; but there were some cases of underground arrest since 2008 (Maiangwa, 2014:115). The group clash with security operatives in Maiduguri from 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2009, which led to its leader, Mohammed Yusuf, killed in questionable circumstance

while in police custody. The death of about three hundred and fifteen of its members; arrest of some of the members and the demolition of its properties in Markas in Maiduguri according to Ibrahim (2013) and Maiangwa (2014:116) was the last straw, which broke the Carmel's back. This circumstance warranted the group to take to violence in the states. Nigerian security operatives were able to silence and halt the excesses of the group then, especially in the township and manhunt was mounted on other members.

As an organism and living movement, the group therefore went underground and relocated to the outskirts of the metropolis and gather momentum, which made her to resurface on a revenge mission. The group went after members, stations and Barracks of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) attacking, killing, collecting their weapons and freeing prisoners. At this level, the sects were only after their perceived enemy, the Police and other security operatives. As the situation persists, Borno state, especially Maiduguri became insecure as gunshots could be heard; stray bullets could hit innocent person(s) anytime; more Police Mobile Force were drafted to Borno state. The year from 2010 to 2011 and beyond, Boko Haram became more radical and militant (Fineman, 2018:114).

The successor to Mohammed Yusuf, Imam Abubakar Shekau, the leader of the group in a YouTube video released in the year 2012, mentioned three reasons for their violent attacks on Nigerian State:

- i. To avenge the killing of their leader and other members in July 2009 by Nigerian Police;
- ii. To avenge the ill-treatment the Christians are meting out to Muslims and Islam in Nigeria; and
- iii. To correct the present secular constitution which he described as un-Islamic.

Because of frequent search and arrest of suspected Boko Haram members by security operatives and local vigilante group known as Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in their Bulabulin Ganaram area in Maiduguri metropolis and environs, the sect members left Maiduguri Township to Sambisa forest. Sambisa Forest was a Game Reserve that shares west Sudan savannah and the southern boundary of the Sahel savannah, located 60 kilometers south-east of Maiduguri. It occupies parts of the states of Borno, Yobe, Gombe and Bauchi states along the corridor of Darazo, reaching other states (Bodurin, 2014) and (Mbaya and Malgwi, 2010:133). By 2013, the sect has established its hegemony in the game reserve and forest. Taking advantage of this isolated and peaceful serene atmosphere, Boko Haram recruited more members, trained them in making and using Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and made itself a formidable force (Aju P.C and Aju J.A (2018).

Boko Haram has graduated from being a local insurrectionary group to a terrorist group with international affiliations according to Fineman (2018:107) whereby she has established links with various terrorist formations groups. For instance, on 7 March 2015, Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), headed by Abubakar Al-Baghdadi. The confirmed affiliation/nexus between Boko Haram and ISIL gave or metamorphosed and upgraded Jama'at al-Hi-sunna Lid Da'awat Wal-Jihad, popularly called 'Boko Haram' to its

new status and name as the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP). This implies that Boko Haram is beyond the shores of Nigeria; it is now upgraded to a West African militant group. Boko Haram militant organization based in northeastern Nigeria is also active in Chad, Niger and northern Cameroon republics. Boko Haram has killed tens of thousands and displaced 2.3 million from their homes and was ranked as the world's deadliest terror group by the Global Terrorism Index (2015).

Paradoxically however, after the allegiance to ISIL, there was perhaps internal friction among the Boko Haram Commanders/fighters and the ISIL leadership on another hand which prompted one faction to break away. On 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2016, the Islamic State reported in the 41<sup>st</sup> issue of its newspaper, al-Naba, that Abu Musah al-Barnawi had been appointed as the new leader of their West African branch (BBC News Hausa Service. 6:30am 4/8/2016). Today, there are two different factions of the terrorists group. Al-Barnawi, that is backed and connected to ISIL leads ISWAP, while the initial and most popular one in Nigeria and across the region, Boko Haram is still headed by Abubakar Shekau. Whichever of the group attacks, it is labelled as Boko Haram. Both of them have the mission of establishing caliphate in Nigeria and beyond; however with some slight differences between the groups were outlined by Hamidu (2020) thus:

*Shekau's faction (Boko Haram) take harder lines on who is an apostate Muslim and therefore deserving death while the ISWAP headed by Al-Barnawi seems to be moderate. Secondly, Al-Barnawi considers the population in particularly Borno and Yobe states to be Muslims while Shekau conclude the populations, who don't belong to their sect, are non-believers. Thirdly, Boko Haram in 2014 abducted 276 Chibok school girls in Borno state and release few in exchange with some of its forces/foot soldiers; while, ISWAP in 2018 abducted 110 school girls in Dapchi, Yobe state and returned all, except Leah Shuaribu, who refused to renounce her faith in Christ Jesus (this may attest to their radical and moderate stands of the two different groups). Fourthly, Boko Haram attack indiscriminately, while ISWAP target security forces. Fifthly, Boko Haram seems to be more proactive in Sambisa/Adamawa axis, while ISWAP is along the Lake Chad axis. Both of them are however deadly and had their stronghold in North-eastern Nigeria.*

The United Nations, through its Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon says Boko Haram insurgency killed 27,000 civilians in ten years (Ajayi, 2019:8), beside the destructions of properties and abductions.

### ***Background of Armed Conflicts in Cameroon***

Cameroon has had several international interruptions, which seems to affect her and created the ground for armed conflicts. It is believed that several European traders visited Amba Bay freely until 1844–1862 when the British concluded trade treaties with various Amba Bay chiefs. Some British Baptist Missionaries established a safer zone for freed slaves in this axis, which was later named Victoria and in 1884 Britain established a protectorate in Amba Bay with Victoria as its capital. After the Berlin Conference, in 1887, the British handed over Victoria and its surrounding territory to the Germans who had occupied an adjacent small mudflat area in Duala east of Amba

Bay. On their parts, the Germans undertook to expand the Kamerun protectorate through a combination of explorations, military expeditions and warfare with local communities. Owing to superior weapons, the Germans finally took control of Buea and Sasse which they named Einsiedel, Bojongo (Engelberg) and the regions from Tiko, through Bimbia, Victoria, Debunscha, Idenau to Bakassi by 1891 and in 1902 Buea was made the Capital of Kamerun among other conquests (Le Vine, 2004:6).

In 1914, as World War I raged Britain reclaimed the Ambas Bay coastal area from Tiko through Bimbia, Victoria, Idenau all the way to the Bakassi Peninsula stretching inland to present-day Nkambe, and then further north to the Lake Chad areas. That whole strip of territory was then denoted as British Cameroons, which was administered as an appendage of Nigeria. In 1916 Britain and France signed a treaty known as 'the Simon-Milne Declaration', to respect the frontiers between the British Cameroons and French Cameroon. When Germany was finally defeated in 1918, she was compelled to sign the Treaties of Versailles in 1919, relinquishing control of all its colonies to the Allied and Associated Powers, including the territory known since 1916 as the British Cameroon. On 10 July 1919, Britain and France reiterated the boundary treaty concluded in 1916 and both undertook to administer their respective new colonial territories in accordance with Article 22 of the League of Nations Covenant. British sovereignty over the Southern Cameroons was maintained until 1922 when Southern Cameroons became a Mandated Territory by the League of Nations (Anyangwe, 2010).

The British Cameroon's Administration Ordinance, 1924, as subsequently amended up to 1929, divided the British Cameroon into the Northern Cameroon (administered as part of Northern Nigeria) and the Southern Cameroon (administered as part of Eastern Nigeria). When the mandates system was transmuted into the trusteeship, system in 1946 this arrangement was again provided for in the Order-in-Council of 2 August 1946 providing for the administration of the Nigeria Protectorate and Cameroons under British mandate (Mbile, 2011). Meanwhile, the boundary between the British Cameroons and French Cameroon was more exactly defined in an agreement signed by the Governor-General of Nigeria and the Governor of French Cameroon in 1930 and approved by Britain and France (Gardinier, 1963). In 1953, the Southern Cameroon's representatives in the Eastern Nigerian Legislature demanded from Britain a regional status for the Southern Cameroon with seat of government in Buea. The Order in Council of 1954 established a Legislative House known as the House of Assembly of the Southern Cameroon, with an Executive Council was also established. The Southern Cameroon gained limited autonomy as a quasi-region within the Nigerian Federation. The first sitting of the House of Assembly of the Southern Cameroon met on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1954. Dr. Endeley emerged as leader of the Southern Cameroon. His official title was Leader of Government Business, the reason being that the Southern Cameroon a quasi-region and therefore only semi-autonomous.

In 1958, the Southern Cameroon attained the status of a full region and became autonomous and self-governing. Dr. Endeley's official title accordingly changed to that of Premier (Prime Minister) (Le Vine, 2004:6) In 1957, United Nations Resolutions 1064 (XI) of 26 Feb 1957 and 1207 (XII) of Dec 13, 1957 called on the Administering

Authorities to hasten arrangements for Trust territories to attain self-governance or independence. In 1958, the House of Assembly and the House of Chiefs called for complete separation from Nigeria and total independence. In 1959, the opposition party Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP) won elections making it the first time in Africa that power changed hands peacefully from a government in power to an opposition party. John Ngu Foncha leader of the KNDP became the second Premier (Prime Minister) of the Southern Cameroon. Furthermore, United Nations' resolutions 1350 (XIII) of March 13, 1959 and 1352 (XIV) of October 16, 1959 called on Britain, the Administering Authority to organize a plebiscite in the Southern Cameroon under UN supervision based on the following two 'alternatives': independence by joining Nigeria as one of the autonomous regions of that country or French Cameroon in a federation of two states, equal state in status (Mbile, 2011). In 1960, the Westminster Parliament in London enacted a constitution for the Southern Cameroon known as the Southern Cameroon (Constitution) Order in Council. The Constitution put in place a full-fledged parliamentary and ministerial system of government modeled after that of the United Kingdom. This constitutional measure was taken contemporaneously with the separation of the Southern Cameroon from Nigeria. The Southern Cameroon attained the status of a full self-governing Territory though still a United Nations Trust Territory under Britain.

In line with United Nations decision, all trusteeship territories were granted unconditional independence but British Southern Cameroon was faced with a choice: attaining independence by joining the French Cameroon Republic in a federation of two equal states or joining Nigeria as one of its federated regions. The reason for this position was based on the 1959 Phillipson Report, which claimed that Southern Cameroon was not economically capable of sustaining itself as an independent state (Gardinier, 1963). The United Nations initiated discussions with French Cameroon on the terms of association of Southern Cameroon if the outcome of the plebiscite was in favour of a federation of the two countries. The plebiscite was precipitously organized and took place in 1961 Southern Cameroon had voted to join French Cameroon to form a federation that was full of grey areas (Chiver, 1966)

French Cameroon which took over virtually all powers in the federation was renamed East Cameroon and the Southern Cameroon were renamed West Cameroon. French advisors of President Ahidjo recommended the introduction of bilingual schools to educate and assimilate Southern Cameroonians in favour of French Cameroon. The aim was to slowly absorb the 'Anglo-Saxon' Southern Cameroonians into the francophone hemisphere. There were many internal challenges in the new federation. On 20 May 1972, a referendum was conducted with a favorable outcome for President Ahidjo. The whole process was in violation of Article 47 of the constitution of the federation, which prohibited any attempt to change the federal form of the state. The name of the state was changed from 'Federal Republic of Cameroon' to the 'United Republic of Cameroon'. He then divided West Cameroon into two parts, which he called 'North West and South West' provinces (Mbile, 2011).

On 6 November 1982, Ahidjo resigned and handed over power to Paul Biya who continued with the assimilation agenda. In February 1984, he changed the official name



of the country from the United Republic of Cameroon to the Republic of Cameroon – the name that French Cameroon held before its unification with the Southern Cameroon. From the mid-1980s, the break between the Southern Cameroon elites and the Francophone-dominated central government is becoming increasingly apparent. Political exclusion, one-sided economic exploitation, cultural assimilation were criticized more and more openly, French language and culture were glorified and to be forced on all the regions' institutions. Effort to solve these challenges amicably became difficult hence the people of Southern Cameroon resisted through strikes, public peaceful demonstrations and the current Ambaboy's armed conflict with the security forces; consequent upon the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017, declaration of independent state named Ambazonia. The government of Cameroon sent in forces, and large-scale fighting broke out. On November 30, 2017, the President of Cameroon declared war on the Anglophone separatists. This marked the start of a very violent confrontation between Government forces and armed separatists. The conflict started in Manyu Division where the Ambazonia Defense Force operated and spread to other counties like Lebialem, Fako, Momo, Bui, Ngoketunjia. Several different armed factions have emerged such as the Red Dragons, Tigers, ARA, Seven Kata, and ABL amongst others. Several Villages and towns burnt down include Kwa-kwa, Kembong, Tadu in NSO and Muyenge (Anyangwe, 2010).

### ***Comparative Analysis of the Armed Conflicts in Nigeria and Cameroon***

The armed conflicts in Nigeria and Cameroon seem to have some fundamental similarities, both on positive and negative aspects in the under mentioned ways:

- i. ***Africa***: Africa is one of the continents on globe with several sovereign nation-states and those aspiring for self-determinations. Nigeria and Cameroon are both in Africa, they share similar boundary and had one time been to the International Court of Justice at Hague over land dispute. They share several socioeconomic affinities and bilateral relations.
- ii. ***State and Non-state actors***: In every conflict, there are two or more parties. In the Nigeria and Cameroonian armed conflicts, there are two major parties; the state actor and the non-state actor. State actors are the government or security operatives and the non-state actor are the civilian or unofficially recognized groups carrying arms. In the Nigerian armed conflict, like that of the Cameroon, the armed conflict is between state and non-state actors, that is the country's armed forces and the militias, armed groups (Boko Haram and Ambazonian boys). The armed conflict is not with another country or against other states operatives who are mutiny or organizing coup d'état.
- iii. ***Leaders were arrested***: Both in Nigerian and Cameroonian armed conflicts, the supposed leaders or arrowhead of the non-state armed groups were arrested by the states. For example, Muhammad Yusuf was arrested as well as Sisiku Julius Ayuk Tabe (the supposed President of the Ambazonian republic) was also arrested. In spite of the arrests however, their members continued the armed conflict against the state.
- iv. ***They have one special mission***: In both the Nigerian and Cameroonian armed conflicts, the mission of the non-state actors are the same; that is, they want to have an enclave, a segment of the society that they would be in charge, which will be purely base on their philosophy and ideology. For example, Boko Haram

wants to see and establish Sharia system or caliphate in northern Nigeria. The Ambaonian boys want the entire English-speaking region to be free from French dominance and have self-determinations. All of them are after certain level and dimension of freedom from external control/influences.

- v. ***Established their hegemony:*** In both of the armed conflicts, the non-state actors have carved an area of influence and established their hegemony. For example, Boko Haram established its caliphate in Gwoza, Borno state and its headquarters in 2014 before the security operatives dislodged it in 2015. Similarly, Ambazonian republic was declared on the north-west and south region of Cameroon, which Cameroonian authorities vehemently resisted. The armed conflict that is actually between the non-state actors and the state apparatus, the little or temporal hegemonies of the non-state actors were brutally silenced by the state security operatives.
- vi. ***Loss of lives and properties:*** In both the Nigerian and Cameroonian armed conflicts, there were loss of lives from both the state and non-state actors. The insurgents killed many Nigerian and Cameroonian soldiers; the insurgents also lost their lives in the battle. Similarly, the civilian population also lost their lives in the armed conflicts either as direct attack or in stray bullet or in cross fire. In other words, the armed conflicts in Nigeria and Cameroon have consumed the lives of both the fighters and that of the innocent civilian in and around the conflict areas.
- vii. ***Closure and destruction of schools:*** Education and educational institutions seem to be one of the worst hits by the armed conflict in the two countries. In Nigeria for example, many schools were closed as a result of Boko Haram attacks in north-eastern states like Yobe, Borno and Adamawa (Marama, & Nwankwo 2015). Like that of Nigeria, in Cameroon, schools were also closed due to the armed conflict. For instance, Idris (2019) reports that Cameroon's English-speaking regions are fighting to break away from the French majority to create their own state; that has forced 98 percent of the schools in Anglophone regions to shut. Corroborating with the above, Tah (2019), states that the regions are heavily militarised, with troops battling insurgents who use hit-and-run tactics. Schools were due to open on 2 September 2018- instead parents and children have been fleeing their homes in their thousands, as they fear an escalation. The pressure tactics forced the majority of schools to close during the 2016-2017 academic year, and as of May 2018 an estimated 42,500 children were still out of school, according to UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Most schools did not re-open in 2018. In June 2019, the UNICEF put the number of schools destroyed at 74. Both in Nigeria and Cameroon, UNICEF, says the ban on education has affected about 600,000 children, with more than 80% of schools shut and at least 74 schools destroyed in the troubled regions.
- viii. ***Abduction of staff and students:*** In northeast Nigeria, many students were reported missing in those areas, which observers said the insurgents forcefully abducted and recruited them as most of the insurgents and the schoolboys and girls are in the same age grade. The abduction of over two hundred girls in Government Secondary School Chibok on April 14<sup>th</sup> 2014 and that of Dapchi school girls in Yobe state in 2018 validates the earlier assertion, even though the girls could as well be used for other purposes. On 27<sup>th</sup> July 2017, some

University of Maiduguri lecturers were abducted by Boko Haram fighters while dead bodies of some lecturers were recovered and buried later. In Cameroon, there are also similar cases of abduction of staff and students were recorded. In one incident, 80 pupils, their principal and a teacher - who defied the school lockdown - were kidnapped in the year 2018, before being released about a week later. Separatist fighters denied involvement, but the Cameroonian government blamed them for the abductions. On November 5, up to 78 school children were reportedly kidnapped in Bamenda, North West region, by unknown gunmen. They were released two days later. On April 30, Father William Neba, Principal of St. Bede's College, in Ashing near Belo, North West region, was reported abducted while celebrating mass with students. In September 2019, unidentified gunmen attacked a girl's school in Bafut, North West region, kidnapping five pupils and severely wounding the principal (Tah, 2019).

- ix. ***Release of some abductees:*** In both Nigeria and Cameroon armed conflicts, some of the abductees were later released. For example, Dapchi schoolgirls that were taken away in 2018 were returned, except for Leah Shuaribu who refused to denounce her faith in Christ Jesus. In addition, some staff of the University of Maiduguri that were abducted by Boko Haram fighters were later released. On the Cameroonian part, some of the staff and students that were abducted by the Amaboys were also returned or set free. For instance, Father William Neba, Principal of St. Bede's College, in Ashing near Belo, North West region, was reported abducted on April 30 2018, while celebrating mass with students. He was released two days later (Human Right Watch, 2019). These releases of the abductees could either be after monetary compensations or otherwise, although authorities of the two countries often deny knowledge of such deal.
- x. ***Low numbers of pupils/students enrolments in schools:*** The Armed conflicts in Nigeria and Cameroon has directly affected students and pupils' enrolments in many schools in northern Nigeria, due to the fear of being lynched or abducted by the insurgents. Prospective students, either for Ordinary Level (OL) or Advanced Level (AL) no longer seek admissions to far places or trouble spots; hence students' enrolments in several schools in Yobe, Borno and Adamawa states has declined drastically. Similar fate was recorded in Cameroon according to Tah (2019). He states that schoolchildren have become pawns in the fierce conflict between Cameroon's mainly French-speaking government and separatist fighters demanding independence for the country's English-speaking heartlands. The separatists are enforcing a lockdown across cities, towns and villages in the North-West and South-West regions to ensure schools remain shut for a fourth academic year in a row. The regions are heavily militarised, with troops battling insurgents who use hit-and-run tactics.
- xi. ***Displacement of families/school children:*** Many families have become refugees in their father's land. A visit to many states or villages near those affected by the insecurity, will make one encounter thousands of displaced families (Abah, 2013). These Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) have increased the rate of street begging by children who are supposed to be in schools in places like Yola, Maiduguri (Ibrahim 2014) and some families have migrated to places like the Republic of Niger, Chad and Cameroon for safety, which has effects on children's education. The Director General (DG) of National Emergency

Management Agency (NEMA), Mr. Sani Sidi disclosed that the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) by Boko Haram and other national disasters had increased to 981, 416 (Amaefule, 2015). It should be noted that women and children are always the majority and the worst affected in any conflict/crisis. In the Cameroonian armed conflicts, families displaced and dislodged went about seeking shelter and security. This is a monumental threat to the global and particularly the two nation's goal for academic excellence and other socio-economic development (Tah, 2019).

- xii. ***Psychological trauma and health related challenges***: As a direct response and reaction to the points above, many families and particularly children in some of the states in both Nigeria and Cameroon are traumatized. As a victim of hearing incessant gunshots, bomb blasts and seeing human corpses and body parts littered on the streets and in mortuary, children and women hardly sleep peacefully. For example, my family, especially the little daughter was shedding tears throughout during the December 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 attack in Damaturu, owing to the heavy and rapid sound of bomb blasts and gun sound. It took her sometime to recover, but certainly the experience is not out of her memories. Even people that escaped death and were taking refuge in the displaced people's camp, many of them are traumatized; some have psychological imbalance because of what they saw and what happen to them. There were and are those who could not see one or two of their loved ones or family members (Hamidu and Audu, 2017). It is also said in Cameroon, students, teachers and school officials have been exposed to violence and intimidation since 2018. More than 300 students and teachers were abducted and subjected to trauma by non-state armed groups (Tah, 2019).
- xiii. ***Using of teenagers as suicide bombers***: Owing to the armed conflicts in Nigeria and Cameroon, young boys and girls who are supposed to be in school learning, were abducted and used as child soldiers. For instance, Boko Haram fighters abduct, brainwash and radicalized innocent pupils/wards against the state. Some of such abductees and innocently radicalized young boys and girls are used as suicide bombers to attack schools, market places, motor parks etc. Such under age schoolboys and girls were used by the armed-group to attack many places in Maiduguri, including University of Maiduguri (<https://www.naij.com/tag/boko-haram.html>). On the Cameroonian side, children are used as child-soldiers. Worst of all, children have been orphaned and some of them have gone into the bush to join one of the many armed groups that have emerged to fight for what they call the independent state of Ambazonia. What was once unthinkable has become a reality: Cameroon - like some other African states - now has child soldiers.
- xiv. ***Hosting of refugees from each other's country***: Consequent upon the armed conflicts in the two countries, refugees of great proportion sought shelter across the international boundaries. For instance, Cameroon hosts more than 90,000 refugees and asylum seekers, from Nigeria. Similarly, Nigeria, along Cross River, Benue and Akwa Ibom states have also hosted several Cameroonian families fleeing from the troubled regions (African Renewal News, 2019).
- xv. ***Human Rights abuses***: In the Cameroonian armed conflict, Human Rights Watch found that government forces responded to the growing separatist

insurgency by carrying out abusive security operations against communities suspected of supporting secessionist groups. Security forces committed extrajudicial executions, used excessive force against civilians, tortured and abused suspected separatists and other detainees, and burned homes and other property in scores of villages. Similar incidences were also recorded in the Nigerian armed conflict where the military torture civilians in the name of searching for or accused the civilians of supporting the Boko Haram insurgents. Many people were arrested, incarcerated and several others unlawfully detained in dehumanizing conditions while security operatives against rational justice killed others. Both Nigerian and Cameroonian military are accused of using excessive force against the civilians as well as on the insurgents/separatists sides.

- xvi. **Humanitarian crisis:** The humanitarian consequences of the Boko Haram attacks and separatist insurgency are of growing concern. As of November 2018, the United Nations estimated that more than 244,000 civilians were displaced in the Far North and 437,500 in the Anglophone North West and South West regions. About 32,600 Cameroonians found refuge in Nigeria. In addition, Cameroon has continued to forcibly return Nigerian asylum seekers, fleeing Boko Haram attacks in north-eastern Nigeria (Human Right Watch: World Report, 2019). The armed conflicts have boosted humanitarian crises in the two countries, which need urgent action to manage or control.
- xvii. **Closing down of internet for security purposes:** In Nigeria, the authorities shut down mobile telephone network in three states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe for security purposes. While this measures helped to reduce some of the group's activities then, it also caused communicational and commercial hardship for the innocent people, scholars and other users of the internet (Jacob and Akpan, 2015). In Cameroon, also, on 12 October 2016, lawyers and teachers started demonstrating peacefully. Schools were closed and the 'ghost town' strikes started – for several days each week, shops and institutions closed their doors. The government responded by shutting down the internet, arresting and intimidating protestors. The shutting down of the internet was to prevent the mobilization of people to continue with the strike and vandalize government properties. This also affected scholarship, media practitioners and other users of the internet.

Other similarities include, the armed conflicts in two states are ongoing; the countries are still in existence; elections were held in spite of the threats and challenges of insecurities etc.

### ***Difference between the two Armed Conflicts***

In spite of some basic similarities in the two states' armed conflicts, there are also some differences in terms of the issues and circumstances in the armed conflicts of Nigeria and Cameroon thus:

- i. **Different Socio-political Region:** Though Nigeria and Cameroon are in Africa and share the same boundary; the countries are on different regions. Nigeria for example is in West Africa, while Cameroon is in Central Africa. This makes them to have some unique differences in the approaches and modus operandi as far as the armed conflict is concern.

- ii. **Different colonial masters:** Though Nigeria and Cameroon are in Africa and were colonized by the Europeans, their colonial masters were different. Nigeria was for instance colonized by Britain for several years before independence was granted. Germany, France, and some part by Britain on the other hand colonized Cameroon. This multiple colonial experiences have affected social harmony, cohesion among the various ethnic nationalities and serve as one of the rationale for the incumbent armed conflicts in the country.
- iii. **Mission of the non-state fighters:** The non-state actors in Nigeria and Cameroon have their reasons for embarking on the armed conflict against the state. For Boko Haram of Nigeria is to capture northern Nigeria and established Sharia System while for that of the Cameroon, was to get self-independence. The desire for self-determination remained alive in the people of north-west and south region or Southern Cameroons (Song, 2018), hence they declared independence of the two English speaking regions of current Republic of Cameroon to become The Federal Republic of Ambazonia, with an Interim Government. This lead to war, and the separatists strive to achieve *de facto* independence on the ground (Idris, 2019)
- iv. **Different Regions:** The origin and battle ground in Nigeria, is Borno states. However, states like Adamawa and Yobe, all in northeast were also affected, while other parts of the country are peaceful. For that of Cameroon, in October 2017, separatist leaders unilaterally declared independence of the North West and South West regions, and the formation of a new nation, Ambazonia, while French-speaking parts are relatively peaceful. The following month, President Biya announced that Cameroon was under attack from terrorists and vowed to “eradicate these criminals.” The pace and scale of separatists’ attacks against security forces, government workers, and state institutions increased, especially following the arrest and deportation of 47 suspected secessionist activists from Nigeria in January 2018.
- v. **Radicalization:** In the Anglophone North West and South West regions of Cameroon, the absence of a genuine political process to address decades-old grievances against the Biya government contributed to the radicalization of the discourse and tactics of Anglophone activists. Since mid-2017, Anglophone separatists have attacked government institutions and threatened, kidnapped, and killed civilians perceived to side with the government. In northeastern Nigeria, Boko Haram took advantage of its Sambisa forest stronghold, to radicalize the youths it wooed or captured; where they were trained to make explosive devices, carry weapon against the state and the citizen; under the strong guise of religious indoctrination.
- vi. **Starting time:** Nigerian armed conflicts started in 2009 when the security forces clashed with the Boko Haram members in Maiduguri. In Cameroon however, the current crisis started in 2016 when lawyers and teachers went on strike over the use of French in English dominated courts and schools. In October 2017, the activists declared autonomy over the two English-speaking regions - a move rejected by Cameroon's President Paul Biya was what ignited the armed conflict.
- vii. **Arrest, Litigation and charges:** In the Cameroonian conflict, there were some notable arrest and court sentence for some of the accused perpetrators. The defendants had been arrested in Nigeria in January 2018 and deported back to Cameroon. The long list of charges included rebellion, complicity in terrorism, financing terrorism, revolution, insurrection, hostility against the state, propagation

of fake news and lack of identification. The court also ordered the 10 to pay a fine of 250bn CFA francs (\$422m; £359m) to the government for civil damages and 12bn CFA francs for court costs. Among the 10 who were convicted was Sisiku Ayuk Tabe, the leader of the so-called Governing Council of Ambazonia - the name separatists have given to Cameroon's Anglophone North-West and South-West regions. A leader of Cameroon's separatist movement, Sisiku Ayuk Tabe, and nine of his followers have been given life sentences by a military court in the capital, Yaoundé (BBC NEWS, English Service 6:00am, 20 August, 2019). In the Nigerian armed conflicts, there was the arrest of Mohammed Yusuf by the military who handed him over to the police. Unfortunately, there was no litigation as he was killed extra judicially and many other Boko Haram fighters suffer the same fate while others remain imprisoned under military surveillances.

- viii. **Arrest in Nigeria:** The Boko Haram leader, Mohammed Yusuf and Cameroonian separatist leader, Sisiku Ayuk Tabe and some of their strongmen were arrested in Nigeria and by Nigerian authorities. The Cameroonian war-lord and his men were later handed over to the Cameroonian authorities. Nigeria is therefore serving as terrible place for asylum seeker as Charles Taylor; one time Liberian president was arrested in Nigeria and handed over to their authorities.
- ix. **Terrorist and non-terrorist:** The insurgents in Nigeria were branded or labelled as terrorist group, as they seem to attack and killed anybody including members of the international communities. For example, there were several kidnap of foreign nationalities, attacks on United Nation building in Abuja by the Boko Haram. Ambazonian army are not yet labelled terrorist group by the international community, (except by their home government) even though they also killed and terrorized people in the region.
- x. **Killing of Staff and students:** This is prominent in Nigeria but not too conspicuous or wildly recorded in the Cameroon armed conflict. In the Nigerian armed conflict, both staff and students were attacked and killed by the insurgents in the northeast sub-region. Adebayo (2014) quoting sources reports that 'over 170 teachers were killed in Boko Haram related killings following attacks on schools. On Monday November 10, 2014, some students of Government Comprehensive Senior Secondary School Potiskum were killed by a suicide bomber; Staff and students of Bayero University Kano were killed by the insurgents at the University's old sites; and on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2017, some lecturers of University of Maiduguri and Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) staff were attacked and some killed by Boko Haram fighters when those educators and officials were exploring the possibility of drilling oil in the area. In the Cameroon armed conflict however, this is not visibly noticed or recorded (Atabong, 2018).
- xi. **Jihadists and Separatists:** Boko Haram fighters in Nigeria can best be described as jihadist, since the expansion of Islamic caliphate is their ultimate task. The insurgence or fighters in Cameroon can best be described as separatists as their ultimate aim is to separate the English from French speaking section of the people, and become a sovereign nation-state.
- xii. **Aligning to other groups:** In the armed conflict in Nigeria, Boko Haram aligned with or sought alliance with Al-Qaeda terrorist organizations in 2015. This will give her more supporters in terms of fighters and weapons. In the Cameroonian armed

conflict, there was no news of the Amba boys aligning with either Britain or any of the super powers for military supports or other logistics.

- xiii. **Break-up of the group:** In the Nigerian armed conflict, Boko Haram break up into Boko Haram and ISWAP with different leaders and strongholds, but with similar mission. In the Cameroonian conflicts, there was no such clear break-up, as all those claiming marginalization and desire to be free are from the English speaking side/region, even though there could be smaller, smaller armed groups.

### **Conclusion**

From the above presentation, one can clearly understand that the security operatives stood against the mission or goal of Boko Haram and the Ambazonian boys, this made them frustrated and caused the two non-state armed groups to be aggressive and carry arms against the states. One can conclude that insecurity due to the armed conflicts in Nigeria (Boko Haram/ISWAP) and in Cameroon (secessionist/separatists) activities is seriously devastating the economy, ecology, social system and educational structures in the two countries. This have also caused severe damages to human lives, properties, cost of governance and tarnished the image of the two countries on the African continent, which should not be allowed to continue any further.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the above, the under listed is therefore recommended:

- i. Government of Nigeria and Cameroon should awake and re-strategize to halt the excesses of non-state armed group in their respective states;
- ii. Authorities should respect peoples' views, human dignity and observe rule of law;
- iii. Governments at all levels should give and ensure that all it citizens are well catered for irrespective of political and geographical difference;
- iv. Government of the various states should beside the military option, use discussion/dialogue approach with the fighters to avert or solve the tense situation caused by the armed conflicts like the ones happening now;
- v. Nigeria and Cameroon should revive and boost socioeconomic and security surveillances to halt the excesses of jihadist and separatists of whatever guise across their common borders for national and regional development; and,
- vi. UN and other members of the international communities should intervene in the Cameroonian armed conflicts to save lives, facilitates the amicable resolution of the conflicts or the freedom of the English-speaking region.

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