

THE VIEWS OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE ON THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND  
IDENTITY: ANGLOPHONES OF CAMEROON

by

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The Views of the Local People on the Right to Self-determination and Identity: Anglophones of  
Cameroon

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science at  
George Mason University, and the degree of Master of Arts at the University of Malta

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## **Dedication**

For the Anglophones of Cameroon, that they may have the justice and peace they truly deserve

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## ABSTRACT

### THE VIEWS OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE ON THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND IDENTITY: ANGLOPHONES OF CAMEROON

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The primary topic of the thesis is the Anglophone population of Cameroon and how this population's identity has shaped their views on self-determination. The context behind this research is that the Northwest and Southwest Regions of Cameroon have been plunged into a conflict known as the 'Anglophone Crisis' (Shulika & Tella, 2022, pp. 616). Many factors are at play in this conflict, including identity and self-determination, but it is especially important to note that the name of the crisis is tied directly to a form of identity: linguistic identity. Generally, the right to self-determination is a very controversial topic with the role of identity potentially playing very much into this; a facet that is true in the conflict seen in Cameroon currently. The different theories of identity along the definition of self-determination chosen for this research provides a framework that allows for an adequate analysis to be conducted on this topic. Theoretical literature is the foundation for the context of the research question and methodologies that are discussed in this paper. This thesis is a result of both existing research and fieldwork conducted in the Southwest Region of Cameroon. A case study is conducted investigating what the perception is and what role identity and self-determination have in Anglophone society; This is done utilizing existing research. The fieldwork conducted for this paper in the Southwest region, being one of the two Anglophone regions in Cameroon, provides

great insight into how individuals interpret self-determination and identity presently, therefore allowing for the examination of potential connections. Fieldwork was only conducted in the Southwest Region of Cameroon, as while interviews were planned for the other Anglophone region, being that of the Northwest, the deteriorating security situation all but prevented this. It can be stated that conflict has played a significant role in anglophone identity formation, and as conflict can be tied to self-determination, it would prove detrimental to exclude this topic. Even with this geographic limitation, a wide variety of individuals were able to provide valuable opinions that contributed significantly to this study. Both of these methodologies seek to determine the views of the local people and with direct population participation, it is hoped that this research will be able to deeper reflect the current views of the Anglophone community. The results that were reached stemming from these methodologies were that the relationship between identity and self-determination in the Anglophone populations of Cameroon is not clear-cut. Due to various factors playing out in the Southwest region, perhaps with the most notable being the Anglophone Crisis, the relationship between identity and self-determination is complicated. Many people view the treatment they receive from the Francophone government as unjust, pushing many towards adopting an identity or parts of an identity that supports self-determination. However due to the violent nature of self-determination that has been pursued in this region over the years, support has dwindled for this ideal, resulting in many Anglophones associating with an identity that is tied to the state of Cameroon. These results contribute to existing scholarship in that identity and self-determination are fluid concepts in Anglophone Cameroonian society, and as such the actions of the government and separatist fighters continue to shape the relationship between identity and self-determination. This fact must be taken into

consideration when approaching conflict resolution, as the division between those who want separation and those who want reconciliation grows daily.

## INTRODUCTION

Cameroon, a country in west-central Africa, is a very complicated state, in all forms, as its environments, its peoples, and its problems are all extremely diverse and different from one another. This variety is most prominent through its peoples, as Cameroon has around 200 different ethnic groups, each with their own unique language and culture (Monga, 2000). In many other African states, ethnic divisions have proven to be the source of great conflict and have even torn states apart. Cameroon for most of its history has been able to avoid this type of conflict and prevent internal strife that's its neighbors have faced over the years. Only in the last decade has the environment begun to change in Cameroon. This change, stemming from two vastly different conflicts, has led Cameroon to become an unstable state. One of these conflicts stemmed from tensions rising to an unsustainable level, which in turn lead to an outbreak of violence and is tied directly to the ideas of identity, language, and self-determination. This violent conflict has only broken out in the last 10 years; however, grievances have been simmering for decades in two of these regions (Beseng et al., 2023). Language is at the heart of these grievances, as Cameroon has two official languages and is officially a bilingual state, with English and French being the working languages of the country (Tangwa, 1999). Stemming from this fact is language is what forms the basis of what can be described as an unofficial apartheid state in Cameroon, with discrimination stemming from both the central government and the Francophone population towards anyone who is an Anglophone. As a result of this, Cameroon has been faced with an internal crisis that has dramatically escalated in the last decade (Beseng et al., 2023). At the heart of this crisis is the Anglophones of Cameroon, whose mal-treatment from the Francophones and their ensuing response has been referred to as the 'Anglophone Crisis' (Shulika & Tella, 2022, pp. 616-617)). This crisis is steeped in the history of these two

Anglophone regions; however, it officially began as a result of lawyers and teachers protesting francophone influence in various aspects of their sectors (Beseng et al, 2023). Peaceful protests broke out and as the government had a monopoly on violence, it utilized brutal tactics to crush the protestors. This brutality led to all-out war with the government, as separatist groups began to form, rallying behind an idea of separation and the creation of a state many felt was denied to them since decolonization (Beseng et al, 2023) (Ebai, 2009). This conflict has led to the destabilization of Cameroon and has resulted in the government utilizing draconian tactics to try and regain control over the two regions (Beseng et al, 2023). The reasoning behind why this conflict has broken out may seem apparent, however this crisis is not as simple as it may seem. It can be stated though, that Anglophone Cameroonians are dissatisfied with their place in society and after putting up with a system that has marginalized them for decades, are seeking a new path forward.

In order to truly understand how the Anglophones reached this point, the history of both their population and their relationship with the state of Cameroon must be broken down. Cameroon being a state in Africa, a continent with a long and varied history, was created through a decolonization process similar to other states. Many borders of African states were drawn without any regard to the peoples who lived in these areas. As a result, when decolonization occurred, conflicts would break out regarding territorial control and governance. In many instances, these conflicts were extremely violent and prolonged, especially if they became proxy conflicts for the global superpowers of the time. Cameroon was somewhat an exception to the rule, as while it did avoid the violence trap, the complications of being split between the British and French and how these colonial powers went about decolonization would lead to a dilemma

(Beseng et al, 2023). Reflecting on the past, Cameroon was first colonized by Germany, with France and Britain each taking part of this territory after WW1. (Ebai, 2009). France's Cameroon colony achieved its goal, being that of independence, while British Cameroon was not granted the right to independence even though this was sought after, and as a result, of the options given it, the people voted to join La Republique du Cameroun (Tangwa, 1999). This united Cameroon was known as the Federal Republic of Cameroon which worked for a while, with problems starting to arise due an agreement made by the Anglophones with the Francophones being broken and mistreatment by the Francophones (Tangwa, 1999) (Ebai, 2009). Authoritarianism, like in many other African states at the time would take hold and would destroy any hopes Cameroon had of becoming a full-fledged democracy (Tangwa, 1999). As problems persisted into the present day and with the conflict breaking out in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon, questions could arise of how Cameroon got to this point. Many could point to historical factors, others economic factors, and finally identity could be to blame. What would push Anglophone Cameroonians to pick up arms and wage violent conflict for the chance at self-determination after sixty plus years of being part of Cameroon? This idea of identity contributing to this development is something that has been seen in other conflicts of a similar nature such as in Biafra and in Kurdistan. What kinds of identities and how these identities play a role in what is occurring in Cameroon today is of vital interest, as identities define who people are and if a population feels compelled to preserve or safeguard their identity through waging war against the state, then this is something that must be understood if any solution to the crisis is to be found.

In order to determine what relationship exists between identity and self-determination, in the context of the ongoing Anglophone Crisis, two methodologies were employed for this study. The first methodology is a case study investigating the perception and the role of identity and

self-determination as concepts and how this has changed over time; This is done utilizing existing research. The second methodology is semi-structured interviews, where through a combination of local contacts and cold approaches, Anglophones from various communities in the Southwest region were able to participate in this research and provide their opinions on this topic. These interviews were based off preselected questions and the participants were required to give their consent. Through these interviews, a wide swath of society was able to participate, with individuals from various different ethnic, economic, and social groups taking part. And while these individuals shall remain anonymous due to safety precautions, the differences in the responses show that interviews proved extremely effective for this type of study. As questions were directly connected to the topic of research, this methodology was able to reveal what connection identity and self-determination had in the context of the ongoing crisis and the causes of this connection. The importance of interviews cannot be stated enough as they give small glimpses into how the people from these communities view their identity, along with how they view self-determination.

This paper begins with a literature review analyzing theories and ideas of identity in a way that demonstrates their applicability to this research. Theoretical ideas on how social identity theory and social Categorization theory are discussed first and national identity and ethnic identity are discussed in the section after. Identity Management and collective identity are then broken down to demonstrate their useability. And finally, group bias and theories on violence are included due to their relevance to the ongoing crisis. As for self-determination, one definition has been chosen to represent this concept and it is defined in chapter 2. Along with this definition, other concepts will also be broken down in order to demonstrate their applicability to this research. This chapter will provide the basis for understanding the setup of Methodology in

Chapter 3. Chapter 4 outlines the interview process and how this was conducted. The two preceding chapters each pertain to a specific type of methodology utilized in this paper. Finally, the last chapter is a conclusion that wraps up the literature, methodologies, and results together in a comprehensive and cohesive way. This will allow for the paper to conclude in a logical manner while leaving open the possibility of further research, as while what was done here attempted as much as it could given its restraints, there is endless potential for further research.

## **I. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature review is composed of four sections titled “Social Identity and Social Categorization Theory”, “National and Ethnic Group Identity Formation”, “Identity Management, Collectivity, and Boundary Theory”, and “Group Biases and Theories on Violence”. The layout of each section will be so that a theory or concept is introduced and briefly examined given the literature chosen to represent it. This process will occur for each theory included in each section. The purpose of the literature review is to introduce to the reader theories on identity that will prove useful in comprehending the results section of the study, along with the reached conclusion. And as this study focuses on a topic of vast complexity, the literature review shall provide the appropriate framework in which to interpret the rest of this paper.

### **1.1 Social Identity and Social Categorization Theory**

Prior to the examination of these two theories, a quote on what defines these theories from each other is included: “The two theories can be differentiated based on their views on social and personal identity. Whereas SIT suggests a continuum of interpersonal versus

intergroup behavior, SCT pronounces that both—social and personal identity processes—may be at work simultaneously” (Trepte & Loy, 2017, pp. 1).

Social Identity Theory is a concept that can be applied in order to understand the process of how individuals come about in forming shared identities. The definition of social identity chosen for this paper is that of Tajfel, an individual well versed in this concept. In the *Chapter Social Identity Theory*, Michael A. Hogg examines this concept and includes Tajfel’s definition being, “individual’s knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership” (Hogg, 2016, pp. 6, as cited in Tajfel, 1972, p. 292). Building off of this theory, the principal focus of this concept is intergroup behavior and groups overall, a facet that all the authors referenced regarding social identity agree on. Delving more into this idea of social identity and intergroup relations, various academics have agreed on certain tenets that are part of this and help to create what this concept is. There are however differences in terms of what is included when examining these topics. Hogg starts off by mention how Tajfel & Turner’s social identity theory of intergroup relations and how this helps in creating the concept of intergroup relations while also stating group comparisons are done by individuals as they seek reinforcement to their own identity formation (Hogg, 2016, pp. 7, as cited in Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Building off of this, Hogg lists three tenets that are crucial to this concept being social mobility, social change, and subjective belief structures. Other factors referenced by him are uncertainty-identity theory, optimal distinctiveness, and self-esteem (Hogg, 2016, pp. 9-10 as cited in Hogg, 2007, 2012 and as cited in cf. Leonardelli, Pickett, & Brewer, 2010). Self-esteem and optimal distinctiveness were two idea that overlapped with the tenets put forward by Sabine Trepte in the paper Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorization Theory (Trepte & Loy, 2017). In this, Trepte lists 7 key

components to social identity, excluding self-esteem and as she calls it 'positive distinctiveness', the other factors are social identity, salience of social categories, individual mobility, social creativity, and social competition, and social comparison (Treppe & Loy, 2017, pp. 3-5).

There are three motivations behind social identity theory being, positive social identity, uncertainty reduction, and optimal distinctiveness (Hogg, 2016). In this, essentially the group through the individual is maintained to a very high degree as this is where everything is and as such overcoming other groups is a must (Hogg, 2016). The self-esteem hypothesis, while facing issues, states self-esteem goes up when identification occurs and intergroup behavior along with group identification potentially is a result of low self-esteem overall stating that there could be implications regarding actions taken by intergroup and group (Hogg, 2016). Subjective belief structures are then mentioned as something that the identity of the group utilizes to control and this essentially comes down to how people in the group look at their own group and look at the other organizations out there in terms of a few factors. These factors are legitimacy, cognitive alternatives, border permeability, and status (Hogg, 2016). Superordinate re-categorization is then discussed as it is impossible for people to choose this as an identity and being part of a social category is something that people value which in turn is responsible for intergroup problem solving not being that possible (Hogg, 2016). This in turn can lead to violence as groups view this as an identity threat (Hogg, 2016). Three ways of getting around this being multicultural framing of intergroup relations, intergroup relational identity construction, and crossed-categorization (Hogg, 2016).

In the paper, Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorization theory, Sabine Treppe and Laura S. Loy, rely heavily on the work of Turner and Tajfel, but do reach an idea that a certain

number of principles take up this theory with the principles being – 1. Group categorization occurs, 2. depending on the background, salience of the group may be possible, 3. Social comparisons happens, 5. Aspects of self-categorization help to shape what social identity becomes here, 6. Self-esteem is affected by step 5, 7 (2017, pp. 2). How certain things get impacted such as social creativity, stereotyping, social competition, and individual mobility (Trepte & Loy, 2017). From this though the authors seem to stress the ideas put forth by Tajfela and Turner and if this is the concepts of social status and self-image and how people try to achieve their best in these regards (Trepte & Loy, 2017). In order to do this however the use of in groups and out groups become prevalent and that is how these goals are able to be established and reached (Trepte & Loy, 2017). The author then explores these concepts through the lens of media, where the conclusion is reached regarding media where self-esteem goes up for people that utilize media and positive social identity gets related to by these people (Trepte & Loy, 2017). The author then lists a case study done by Weaver 2011 where black and white participants influenced what media people consumed in terms of whether they have majority black or white movies and in-group was a facet of this in the end choice was not impacted by the color of one's skin (Trepte & Loy, 2017).

Continuing off of this, social categorization theory and its off shoot self-categorization theory provide insight into how people are able to be categorized and how they categorize themselves. Starting with social categorization theory, Michael A. Hogg first gets into the idea that categories of people make up social groups and that categorical difference is what makes a specific social category (Hogg, 2001). Moving on from here categorization is looked at where Hogg says that when it comes to cognitive process this is absolutely necessary and that this helps an individual decide on the relevancy of something to them (Hogg, 2001, pp. 58). He then goes

into the idea that planning is possible thanks to the idea as predicting things that occur in the world is easier and the example of a predator tells a person how to act and what to expect (Hogg, 2001). Building off of this, Hogg then states that comparison is essential to categorization (Hogg, 2001). Regarding the drivers of this, Hogg states that in order to be a good member of society that views the social system both predictably and with a purpose, categorization by an individual is a necessity (Hogg, 2001). Hogg starts off by stating that individuals get a specific category attached to them as a result of social categorization (Hogg, 2001). Hogg then goes onto to bring up both Turner et al. and Oakes, Haslam, & Reynolds in terms of meta-contract, where it says “which is thought to govern the context-dependent representation of groups as prototypes” (Hogg, 2001, pp. 60, as cited in e.g., Turner et al., 1987; also see Oakes, Haslam, & Reynolds, 1999). Furthermore, metacontrast essentially assists in prototype formation (Hogg, 2001). Hogg then goes into the ingroup and how it is greatly affected by prototype-based depersonalization and self-categorization in terms of social categorization (Hogg, 2001, pp. 62).

Essentially Hogg reaches the conclusion that either self-esteem and self-enhancement as stated by Abrams & Hogg or uncertainly as put forward by Hogg & Mullin lead to the categorization of individuals for differing reasons (Hogg, 2001, pp. 59-60, as cited in (e.g., Hogg, in press b; Hogg & Mullin, 1999, and as cited in e.g., Abrams & Hogg, 1988; Turner, 1982). Moving on to differentiation within groups, intragroup prototypicality comes into view with deviance, leadership and power, and structural differentiation within groups are the factors (Hogg, 2001, pp. 66, 68,71). Structural differentiation within groups meanwhile can lead sub groups to be a consequence of social categorization and an idea of roles can make it so social categories are looked for from groups (Hogg, 2001).

## 1.2 National and Ethnic Group Identity Formation

Identity formation is relevant to different conflict dynamics. This is something that can vary drastically depending on which part of the world is examined and the histories behind the peoples being looked at. In many societies, various different identity groups can take hold, leading to polarization and other problems that can weaken the unity of a state. Two identity groups that have appeared very prominently in many conflicts and that generally encompass the entire population are national identity and ethnic identity. Starting with the overall identity of national identity, this is something that entails the overall state and it is something that is formed under certain circumstances.

In the paper *National Identity: Inside and out* by Paul A Kowert, a description provided for national identity is – “If national identity is defined as similarity among individuals, manifest in their shared identification with the nation-state, then the field of international relations has contributed relatively little to an understanding of it.” (Kowert, 1998, pp. 7). The author goes onto state that there are three parts to national identity being social groups that have influence benefit, autonomous social processes, and individual needs are no longer an issue (Kowert, 1998, pp. 7).

While National identify plays a very important role when it comes to viewing identity, Ethnic identity, especially in Africa, plays an even bigger role and is just as deserving of an analysis. The chapter *A Family Resemblance* by Horowitz mentions that ethnicity has a source and that while most cases have a combination of both of these sources, many times it is either a birthright or it has to be granted upon an individual (2000). Also, those that share some kind of relationship such as being someone recognized by the group or being an individual who while different has been with the group. There are more parts to this though, such as the ability for one

to decide on whether to be in a group found the term “affiliation” and the ability for choice and birth is something that gets put together when language comes into play (Horowitz, 2000, pp. 55). Overall, though with all of this when it comes to ethnicity, people are with them for their entire lives for the most part, but with this being said both groups and someone that had identified with a group have the option to go for switching their ethnic identity (Horowitz, 2000). Ethnicity though is not something that is set in stone as shown by two examples from the author with things such as boundary change like the Sikhs trying to prevent more Hindus from joining them presently, a big change from the past and where as if certain requirements are met regarding expectations and marriage then one can be part of the ethnic group like with the Karen of Myanmar and Thailand border regions (Horowitz, 2000). It can be concluded that kinship and ethnicity are extremely similar due to the factor of birth playing such an important aspect of this (Horowitz, 2000). The author further goes on to stress this relationship between ethnicity and kinship as the dichotomy of how groups interact, along with the fact of putative descent makes these people closer together (Horowitz, 2000). The author further doubles down on this with an example from Cameroon. The author states that disagreement among families was the cause of Cameroonians and Gabon Fang people came to in terms of why their groups were apart and as such they could now attempt a reconciliation, while common ancestor theory is what the Yoruba of Nigeria utilized (Horowitz, 2000). Another example, albeit in a different form, is fisherman in the Philippines where essentially time of arrival plays a role when looking at the profession of the peoples (Horowitz, 2000). The author then goes into the idea of families having certain things regarding culture and the ethnicity can be affected (Horowitz, 2000). The author also mentions how groupings of people are formed by the unconscious prototype of the family according to Freud (Horowitz, 2000). The author then continues with the idea of family making

up ethnic groups and states that essentially a pyramid shape takes form regarding family ties and ethnicity ties connection and that this is an ascriptive affiliation (Horowitz, 2000). A quote the author includes “is the basis of one’s felt bond to one’s own kind. It is the basis of one’s solidarity with them in times of stress. It is the basis of one’s right to presume upon them in times of need. It is the basis of one’s dependency, sociability and intimacy with them as a matter of course.” by Joshua A. Fishman (Horowitz, 2000, pp. 59-60 as cited in Fishman, 1976, pp. 5). The author continues as can be seen in another quote “ethnicity may be the maximal case of societally organized intimacy and kinship experience.” Also by Fishman (Horowitz, 2000, pp. 60 as cited in Fishman, 1976, pp. 5). Finally with this background established, kinship and ethnicity in politics is looked at (Horowitz, 2000). He states that family and ethnicity can come hand in hand in politics with military regimes having a prominent position (Horowitz, 2000). Kenya here is utilized as an example where even though one ethnic group reigned supreme, some groups and eventually family of the previous came into play therefore connecting all of these aspects together (Horowitz, 2000). Kinship, the author states, makes it so that part of ethnicity in terms of family importance and is foundation regarding ethnicity, certain parts of the world such as Africa having this as such an important facet, and ethnic conflict and the level it is conducted (Horowitz, 2000).

### **1.3 Identity Management and Collective Identity**

Identities are not static ideas, once formed as discussed prior, they are subject to alteration through dynamic process. Certain theories and concepts explore how this occurs and as such for this paper the theories of identity management, collectivity, and boundary change are examined.

Identity management can be described as either being a complete theory or more of a process that extends from social identity depending on the scholar. Gerianne Merrigan in the paper *Identity Management Theory* builds upon the idea that the concept is a theory, referencing the definition put forth by Cupach and Imahori he states that “IMT explains how people establish effective bicultural or multicultural relationships, by attending to one another’s face needs and working to develop a shared relational identity. Over time they may come to view their own cultural identities as transformed by the relationship.” (Merrigan, 2017, pp. 1 as cited in Cupach and Imahori, 1993). Alternatively, the idea put forth by Mathias Blanz et al. in the paper *Responding to negative social identity: a taxonomy of identity management strategies* supports the idea of identity management being more of a technique that can be applied to situations based in social identity (Blanz et al, 1998). This idea of utilizing social identity in terms of strategies is also employed by Ulrike Niens and Ed Cairns in the paper *Identity Management Strategies in Northern Ireland* (Niens & Cairns, 2002).

Collective Identity focuses once again on a specific type of identity, however in a context of more than one individual (Flesher Fominaya, 2010). In the paper *Collective Identity in Social Movements: Central Concepts and Debates* by Cristina Flesher Fominaya, she includes various different definitions of collective identity theory as created by other scholars with two being “an individual’s cognitive, moral and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution” from Polletta and Jasper and “the shared definition of a group that derives from members’ common interests, experiences and solidarity” from Taylor and Whittier (Flesher Fominaya, 2010, pp. 394 as cited in Polletta and Jasper, 2001, pp. 285) (Flesher Fominaya, 2010, pp. 394 as cited in Taylor and Whittier, 1992, pp. 105).

## 1.4 Group Biases and Theories on Violence

Group biases are an aspect that can be described as a result of identity formation. The form this group bias takes however can vary and as such the first that will be analyzed is ingroup bias. Ingroup bias is defined as “favorable comparisons of relevant ingroups versus relevant outgroups” in the paper *Social Identities, Group Norms, and Threat: On the Malleability of Ingroup Bias* (Giannakakis & Fritsche, 2011, pp. 84). How ingroup bias is approached in this paper is that it is looked at in conjunction with terror management theory which essentially states that individuals panic as a result of mortality and self-preservation and this in turn leads to bias (Giannakakis & Fritsche, 2011, pp. 84 as cited in TMT; e.g., Greenberg et al. 1997; Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 2004). The conclusion that was reached by the author was that ingroup bias in relation to terror management theory varied in its strength, as different factors affected ingroup bias differently. This demonstrates that ingroup bias, when combined with other theories, can lead to an unexpected bias that may not have been originally anticipated.

When it comes to theories on violence, there are many in existence, and as such for this research a more general representation of this will be provided first, with a focus on a more pertinent theory being realistic group conflict theory after (Insko et al, 1992, pp. 273, as cited in Campbell, 1965). In the paper *Violence, Identity and Poverty* by Amartya Sen, the idea of identity and violence is more blended together with a variety of other subjects, however, the author does choose to topics to approach this from being ‘clash of civilizations’ and ‘engineered bloodshed’ (Sen, 2008, pp. 7). Engineered bloodshed is more pertinent to this paper as it discusses how one type of identity by itself can lead to destruction as groups formed around religion or ethnicity create individuals willing to put in effort for the identity. In the paper *Individual-Group Discontinuity from*

*the Differing Perspectives of Campbell's Realistic Group Conflict Theory and Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory*, Realistic group conflict theory is defined as “outgroup rejection (ethnocentrism and/or prejudice) flows from intergroup conflict over "real" issues such as territory, jobs, power, and economic benefit” (Insko et al, 1992, pp. 273 as cited in Campbell, 1965). The idea of gain is also discussed briefly as the motivator for groups and perhaps a simplification of the aforementioned definition (Insko et al, 1992, pp. 273 as cited in Kelly and Thibaut, 1978). These theories are very much applicable, as the themes they mention can be seen in many conflicts relating to self-determination.

## II. THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

Identity and self-determination are both concepts that are very present on the African continent. Starting with the decolonization movements, people started to identify with their own nations and strived to be able to have their own states with many choosing to utilize violence to achieve these ends. Many more independence conflicts would arise similar to this until most colonial powers were removed from the African continent. Even with this removal though, the problems related to identity and self-determination did not disappear, as while many peoples would achieve their goal of a state, many others were stuck as a minority in newly created states. Not only this, but the past weaponization of identity by colonial powers would further lead to violence on the continent with one of the most tragic examples being the Rwandan Genocide. With many decades having passed since decolonization, it could be assumed that these conflicts have died down and that identity would no longer be an issue as people take up the identity of their host state. This however has not been the case as colonial scars still rear their ugly head, and ethnic conflict that was once not allowed comes to head. Some conflicts from the decolonization period are still simmering to this day, like with Biafra, which tried to secede from the Nigerian state after decolonization and to this day still employs a campaign against the state (Okaisabor, 2023). Some endeavors though have been successful, albeit with a heavier price to pay, such as with South Sudan achieving independence in 2011, therefore allowing its people to exercise their right to self-determination (Johnson, 2013). The importance of identity today, especially when it comes to self-determination and the paths groups take to try and exercise this is something that is extremely important when it comes to understanding the state of many countries on the African continent. One state in particular very much falls into this category, being that of Cameroon. In order to truly understand all of this however, all these concepts that

influence these events must be separated and in turn examined to their core. Theories on identity will be the first to be examined as they provide the bedrock for what is to be examined here. Identity is what makes a person who they are and as such, if an identity can drive a group of people to seek self-determination, to possibly even die for this idea, it is something that needs to be especially understood in all aspects. The vastness of how identities come about and the many different forms identity can take is something to take note of. This has been taken into consideration as every theory on identity was not able to be included in this research and as such the most applicable in terms of being related to self-determination were chosen. In order to not complexify the research further, one definition of self-determination was chosen. However, while this definition forms the base for this concept, various examples of self-determination are referenced in order to bring in real world examples and show how self-determination was implemented or not in these cases. A primary focus when it comes to the visualization of self-determination is previously colonized states as this is what would be most applicable to the research being conducted here. Finally, theories of violence are analyzed, as in many cases, identity and the desire for self-determination are directly connected to a form of violence. The importance of these theories cannot be stated enough, as having an understanding of identity and the various theories related it are vital to visualizing any potential relationships that exist with self-determination. The best way of showing these theories applicability is through the use of past cases in order to visualize how these theories appear in the real world.

With the literature thoroughly examined, it is necessary to demonstrate the relevancy of these theories and concepts to this study. Each of these is connected to identity or self-determination or both and as such they provide a base of reference for this study. Theories dealing with identity formation such as social identity, social categorization, national identity, and ethnic

identity all prove relevant to this study as while there are a variety of concepts on how identity is formed, these theories are hypothesized to prove the most relevant when considering the type of self-determination being examined in this case.

Establishing identities is only one aspect of understanding how the concept of identity operates, especially in Cameroonian Anglophone society. As such, concepts such as identity management and collectivity were selected for this research as once an identity is established, understanding its dynamic is essential, as an identity can either be fluid or remain stable throughout the many decades since its creation.

Identity and violence were another factor that was deemed relevant to include in this study as in many instances these concepts are inseparable and to leave one out would result in a partial analysis being conducted. This is where group bias ties in, as while identity may contribute to certain theories of violence, theories related to identity may themselves be the cause of this violence. As the case being examined in this study has conflict ingrained in it, these theories were deemed necessary to conduct a complete analysis.

Finally, a whole section is dedicated to cases demonstrating these concepts in the context of identity, self-determination, and African separatism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. As the case in this paper can be connected to the decolonization period and as the current conflict today is labeled by many a separatist conflict, the inclusion of cases visualizing similar examples in other African states was deemed necessary in order to show trends and concepts that are relate to this idea of identity and self-determination, especially when violence is sought as a solution. These cases are varied, ranging from instances of cases that are directly connected to the case being examined in this paper to differing levels of success in terms of obtaining self-determination.

## 2.1 Concepts Explored in this Research:

For the purposes of this paper, the analysis of self-determination will be limited in scope in order to retain a principal focus on identity. As such the main focus of this concept is the definition of this idea and its applicability. The definition utilized for self-determination in this study is "Self-determination in international law is the legal right for a “people” to attain a certain degree of autonomy from its sovereign." And this is from the paper Sterio in *The right to self-determination under international law : Selfistans, secession, and the rule of the great powers* (Sterio, 2012, pp. 9). It is important to define how this definition will be utilized regarding the interpretation of the dependent variable in this study. Self-determination in this regard is utilized to focus on identity and how it is connected to this desire for autonomy. With this being said, while the case study was able to investigate the direct relationship between identity and self-determination, the interviews were more limited in their scope due to the sensitive nature of these topics in the region. With these limits in mind, information on identity and self-determination were collected separately through questions focusing on one concept and then the other. Even then, certain questions could not be asked outright and questions of a related nature had to be asked. Pulling from the above definition, questions focusing on level of autonomy and identity such as what level of government should become involved in solving problems and if they had heard of the term ‘Ambazonia’. Through these factors, self-determination is bale to be indirectly gauged and when combined with the identity-based questions, conclusions can be reached. Another method utilized to gauge self-determination as defined above was state failures, as blaming the national government for problems faced may reveal insights into their opinions on autonomy, especially if they think that these problems could be better solved locally. With all of these things being said, the main dependent variable in

this study is support for self-determination. Self-determination is examined in this study in a way that is relevant to the Anglophone population of Cameroon, while also taking into account the sensitive nature of the reality on the ground.

Identity in this research has a much more robust focus and as such is thoroughly examined in order to fully comprehend the two methods employed in this research. It must be stated that individual identity is not focused on in this research as given the chosen definition for self-determination, it was deemed more relevant to focus on individual identity in terms of groups and group identity. With these differing identities being defined earlier in this paper, ranging from social identity theory to national identity, it is important to define how this concept will be utilized in terms of the independent variable. First and foremost, identity in terms of the population be examined and the participants will be utilized as the independent variable. This is essentially the principal identity that represents this group of people and it is what defines them. However, under this identity variable, the different identity concepts observed will be recorded and analyzed in the context of the research question.

## **2.2 Identity, Self-determination, and Separatism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Africa, a continent made up of a majority of states whose borders were originally crafted under a colonial guise is inseparable from the idea of self-determination. At least one example of a separatist conflict or a movement for self-determination can be attributed to every state on the continent at a certain point in time. The reasons behind this vary far and wide, however in many states where these instances have occurred, groups have been dissatisfied with the status quo or have faced persecution. These instances are not just subject to the post-colonial period in Africa, as there are many conflicts on the continent today that either stemmed from this or still have self-

determination as the main objective. Many of these examples do date to before the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, however the trends and events of these instances are still relevant to this day. One of these factors that has lasted the test of time in these conflicts is the concept of identity. The number of conflicts that tie identity to self-determination it could be argued make up the majority of examples. The result of this relationship is that much of these struggles turn violent, forcing one identity group to combat another. This has especially been true in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as conflicts of the last century carry over and new ones break out. Of note too is that self-determination can be utilized as a cover for nefarious aspirations, such as power or wealth seeking, however this can be difficult to prove at times. Cameroon it could be argued has fallen into this category, as what is now labeled as the Anglophone Crisis or ‘the crisis’ by locals of the Anglophone regions has the tenets of an identity-based conflict intertwined with self-determination. In order to understand how identity and self-determination have led to conflict in Cameroon and with the connection between the two subjects being investigated in the methodologies of this paper, other African cases will be looked at here in order to demonstrate that what may be happening in Cameroon, is not only specific to Cameroon.

An identity-based conflict rooted in the throes of the colonialist era that has reignited is the struggle for self-determination by the Sahrawii in North Africa (Omar, 2008). This struggle is one that has been going on for decades and is a prime example of a case for self-determination in Africa that does not have outside support. The connection between identity and self-determination is concrete, as for as long as the desire for their own state has existed, this connection has been inseparable. The identity in question here is one of national identity and this became apparent to the world when prior to decolonization, Frente Polisario or the Frente popular para la Liberación de Saguiat El Hamra y de Rio de Oro resorted to violence in order to

remove Spain from their land (Omar, 2008). This identity would carry over once Spain decolonized, however unlike other states who became full-fledged independent states with the departure of the colonizer, what would be known as Western Sahara would not meet this fate. Instead, and sharing parallels with the Anglophone region of Cameroon, Morocco and Mauritania annexed the ex-Spanish colony and would start to administer it. Mauritania would eventually bestow upon the Sahrawii legitimacy, however even after UN resolutions and an International Court of Justice ruling, Morocco would not grant self-determination to these people. It is of note Western Sahara has resources such as phosphate, one of the reasons Spain assisted Morocco and Mauritania originally in their ambitions here. The consequences of both the decisions taken by the past colonizer and what could be considered the neo-colonizer have left the Sahrawii without a state, even though they receive support from international bodies (Omar, 2008). What has resulted is violence once again being utilized by Frente Polisario as 30 years of its cessation has not led the Sahrawii any closer to their dream of identity-based self-determination (The end of the ceasefire in Western Sahara, 2021).

Not all cases of self-determination and identity share the same development path. With what could be considered one of the most successful cases of self-determination in the 21<sup>st</sup> century being South Sudan. As it can be labeled the prototypical example of a people seeking self-determination and obtaining it, the case of South Sudan is a prime example of identity and self-determination. South Sudan was able to achieve self-determination through a 2011 African Union supported referendum (Johnson, 2013). In order to understand how this referendum was reached, identity and self-determination along with the history leading up to this event must be considered. Identity in South Sudan differs greatly from identity in Sudan where an Arab identity is what is maintained. At the time of decolonization, instead of pursuing independence directly,

South Sudan essentially became a part of Sudan, as the implementation of federalism was what was wanted (Johnson, 2013). In this instance of self-determination by Sudan, independence was chosen and South Sudan was included in this initiative. This union would start to crumble after a coup by the military was initiated leading to a series of events that would cause a civil war in which the South Sudan Liberation Movement had a role. From this point a level of autonomy was granted being the Southern Regional Government, however civil war succeeded this after the government was removed. Examining how self-determination was pursued in this context, it could be stated that violence was the main driver of this and while it most certainly raised the costs of holding South Sudan, neglecting other factors would prove detrimental to an analysis of this case. Since decolonization, the South Sudanese have been considering self-determination from a legal standpoint, considering how the UN viewed decolonization and secession up to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century where decisions had to be made regarding which groups in the country could be included under this umbrella of self-determination (Johnson, 2013). Outside intervention in terms of assistance in establishing peace would be the measure that would lead to South Sudan's independence. The implemented referendum offered two options, a new state or rejoining Sudan. Self-determination was achieved as South Sudan achieved independence. Even with this achievement in self-determination, not all peoples were able to have their voice heard, as other identity groups in Sudan such as the Nuba received no such benefit resulting in violence still occurring in these areas.

Furthermore, a state that has a group of people who are seeking self-determination in Western Africa is Senegal. This case is still active to this day, being that of the Casamance Conflict, yet again shows a conflict based in identity, but unlike the other cases, self-determination was not the initial goal at decolonization. Other factors too have also pushed the

people of the Casamance region of Senegal to seek self-determination through the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (Theobald, 2015).

One of the most well-known examples of identity-based self-determination in Africa is in Nigeria, a neighboring state to Cameroon. The dynamics of this struggle is vastly different than the other cases discussed prior to this and many facets overlap with what is happening in Cameroon. The Biafra struggle for self-determination has existed since the independence of Nigeria and stems from political instability in the post-independence years (Onuoha, 2011). The culmination of Biafra self-determination was on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1967 when the Republic of Biafra declared independent and seceded from Nigeria (Onuoha, 2011, pp. 407). The Republic of Biafra would cease to exist in January 1970 as a result of the Nigerian Biafra Civil War, leaving those in Biafra to continue to seek self-determination (Onuoha, 2011, pp. 407). This context has led to the current state of Biafra today, where the people continue to seek self-determination. However, it can be stated that Biafra has started to follow a similar path to that of the Anglophones in Cameroon in terms of the strategies employed in its struggle (Nwangwu, 2023). Separatists seeking Biafran self-determination have come into fruition stemming from a variety of factors ranging from civil war grudges to marginalization (Nwangwu, 2023). Only recently has violence been adopted as a strategy to pursue self-determination, with the creation of the Eastern Security Network to protect Biafra in late 2020 (Nwangwu, 2023, pp. 42). Violence was only pursued after the Nigerian state employed draconian tactics to crush this idea, including events such as brutality by the military and multiple deaths at the hands of the government in Biafra (Nwangwu, 2023). This strategy has resulted in all out conflict between the two parties with both sides targeting each other, dragging the region further into conflict with the government responding harshly to this group and police being targeted in the state with no claims of responsibility

(Nwangwu, 2023). Presently, and one of the main differentiators between this and other struggles for self-determination, is that attacks are ambiguous, with the government blaming the Biafra movement, while those in Biafra saying that the government is responsible (Nwangwu, 2023).

The Anglophone regions of Cameroon, being the focus of this research, has faced a dilemma similar to all of these other cases, with the Northwest and Southwest regions engulfed in a conflict pitting Anglophone separatists against the Cameroonian government. The separatist movement in this state is one that resulted from an explosion of years and years of attempted assimilation and mistreatment, leading the separatists to seek the creation of a new state named Ambazonia (Okereke, 2018) (Shulika & Tella, 2022). The separatist conflict however essentially started with protests held by members of the education and legal community in the Anglophone regions, with the government responding with torture, killings, and arrests (Okereke, 2018). This violence employed by the government pushed Anglophones towards a path of retaliation, with the Cameroonian security and military be singled out for attacks and bombings (Okereke, 2018). As a result of this, self-defense groups and militias with differing goals formed, further complicating the conflict (Ketzmerick, 2023). Self-determination and identity have taken center stage in this conflict as from an identity point of view assimilation as forced by the government is attempting to erase the Anglophone identity and self-determination stems all the way back to decolonization when Southern Cameroons was given a choice during a referendum between French Cameroun and Nigeria, but not for its own independence (Ketzmerick, 2023).

### **III METHODOLOGY FRAMEWORK**

The methodological framework is broken down into two sections: one focusing on the structure of these methodologies and the other on the implementation of these methods. As such, the research question and unit of analysis are introduced first. Method Setup is then broken down into method selection and data collection. Finally, ethical considerations and the interview breakdown process are examined.

#### **3.1 Methodology Formation**

In this paper, a study will be conducted that hopes to look at Anglophone identity in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon and how identity along with views on self-determination are connected. A case study is first employed in order to analyze both perception and the role identity and self-determination have in Anglophone society. This is done utilizing existing research pertaining to identity, self-determination, and Cameroonian Anglophones. This methodology was formed with the goal of compiling and examining prior research on this topic, both in a more general manner and in the scope of temporal scale. Semi-structured interviews are the second methodology employed and this was selected to collect information from the field in order to provide a current assessment of the topics being examined. Regarding the interviews, respondent-driven sampling was selected in order to ensure a diverse set of individuals living in the region could take-part and these interviews were all conducted in-person. Conducting this research in the field allowed for a more accurate sample of data to be collected than would be secured when utilizing only digital sources. The overall objective of this research is to examine the relationship between identity and self-determination. As this is a limited study, determining

what connection if any identity and support for self-determination may prove more difficult, a face that is important to take into consideration when crafting any conclusions.

### **3.1.1 Research Question**

**What role does identity play in shaping Anglophone Cameroonians view on Self-determination?**

### **3.1.2 Unit of Analysis:**

Anglophone Cameroonians prove to be an adequate case for the examination of identity and self-determination due to various factors that have been and are at play in this population of people. Two different units of analysis were chosen to be utilized for this research with the first being peer-reviewed papers, as they provide a swathe of information that cannot not be collected through the use of the second methodology. The unit of analysis for the second methodology is the interview questions as they allow for insight to be collected on how participants feel about a selected topic, therefore resulting in 1<sup>st</sup> party information being collected.

### **3.2 Method Setup:**

Respondent-driven Sampling through semi-structured interviews, Case Study, Content Analysis.

Selecting the methodologies for this study took much thought, as while receiving approval was one of the primary concerns when it came to choosing methodologies, choosing methods that would be the most adequate in terms of answering the research question was extremely important. As a result, the first method that was chosen was a case study and it was determined that published sources would be utilized for this portion of the research. For the second method, once it was decided that field research was going to be conducted, some kind of interview style would need to be employed in order to hear directly from the people what they thought regarding the topic being examined in this paper. The result was respondent-driven sampling through semi-structured interviews. These interviews were conducted on the ground and in person in the Southwest region of Cameroon. Much logistical planning had to be taken into account for this, as establishing connections and locating interviewees was of vital importance. As a result of this, the respondent-driven sampling was used to find participants and data was collected through audio recordings. The interviews reflect the local populations views on identity and self-determination. These two methodologies allow for an adequate investigation of the research question and its independent and dependent variables due to the vastness in scope they cover, ranging from how research was conducted to background information to finally the data itself.

### **3.2.1 Methodology Selection and Comparability**

When selecting methodologies for this study, various factors were taken into consideration to ensure proper fit. The first methodology was a case study on the perception and

role of identity and self-determination in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon with a temporal aspect. This methodology was deemed important as it provides the proper context for these two ideas and their relationship as measured by other researchers up to the present day. With this first methodology, a broad swath of information can be brought in, contributing to the conclusion reached later in this study in conjunction with the results from the second methodology. It also allows for past data collection to be compared to the most modern data available collected with the first methodology, allowing for a very accurate picture of any potential relationships. For the second methodology, it was decided that a field component would be necessary to conduct this study, as existing up to-date literature is limited in scope. One of the primary considerations for this methodology was its probability of being conducted successfully. Once it was determined that all requirements could be met, interviews were decided upon as the proper field methodology in order to adequately examine the relationship between identity and self-determination in Anglophone Cameroon. Due to limitations associated with this methodology such as time and accessibility, a second methodology was included to bolster the examination being conducted.

### **3.2.2 Data Collection and Challenges**

When it came to collecting data and the challenges this posed, many obstacles appeared that had to be dealt with and it would be disingenuous to say that these challenges did not limit my research. First and foremost, when it came to the first methodology, data collection did not prove too difficult. The process for this method was however time consuming, as discerning if a published work proved relevant to this research required the analysis of said work. Much larger challenges were faced when conducting research for the second methodology: the main reason

being the Anglophone Crisis. Even before arriving in the country, I knew that this would potentially pose a problem as I was sure either the authorities or the separatists would hinder my ability to conduct research. This assumption proved partially true: the authorities, while sometimes a nuisance, did not interfere with my ability to conduct research. On the other hand, the unpredictability of the separatists and the danger they posed as a result of unexpected developments that occurred limited my ability to conduct research, as areas I had planned to travel to with my colleagues became too dangerous and any travel to these locations would most certainly result in an unwanted incident. This goes into the next hinderance when it came to conducting research: travel. Traveling around Cameroon proved difficult and expensive. Roads are unkept and at times dangerous and due to a combination of governmental neglect and the conflict, some roads are either unusable or blocked off, resulting in longer routes that are more expensive. Also due to the security situation in the country, traveling alone was ruled out by my colleagues, meaning that I had to travel with a trusted individual if visiting another town. There were some challenges when it came to recruiting participants as well. Going up to people and asking them to participate was generally avoided as my presence of an outsider was obvious and establishing trust that I was not working with the authorities proved difficult. As a result, I had two main contacts in the region who were able to arrange interviews and while this worked very well, it resulted in me being at the mercy of these individuals to have the time to meet with me and travel with me to meet potential interviewees.

### 3.2.3 Ethical Considerations and IRB Approval

When it comes to ethical considerations and approvals much had to be considered as field work was planned to be involved in this research. As such, first and foremost, planning had to be done regarding the ethical side of things since interviews were sought to be done in person and as the Anglophone regions are in a state of conflict, freely asking individuals out in the open was not a logical option. The safety of my participants was the utmost priority, especially as members of the population informed me that persecution for discussing these topics is a real threat. Participant safety before, during, and after I met with them and the storage of their data was extremely important as one slip up in the process could risk a participant's life. All of these facets were taken into consideration, as the stipulations laid out by the IRB forced me to be very precautionary when it came to dealing with human participants and subjecting them to my research. Not only this, but data storage in terms of interviews was a vital facet of what IRB focused on as confidentiality proved to be a key tenet of the IRB. Regarding the IRB, both of my submissions required corrections that forced me to be even stricter with how I could go about my research. An example of a change that was made was that no names were to be mentioned, and so while some individuals told me they have no problem with their name being attached to statements in this research, no names were utilized in order to stay in line with this requirement. Mainly though much thought was put into the ethical considerations and while certain things changed on the ground in Cameroon such as certain participants conducting the interview in more open areas while others requested more private settings, the safety of the participants was first and foremost. Due to these precautions, it is believed that participants were willing to take part and, in most cases, answer truthfully the questions asked of them. The board did not always

require corrections however and at times requested that certain parts be removed. These parts depending on their importance had to be defended as the board initially did not approve of certain questions that were included in the questionnaire. Some of the questions that focused more on self-determination were deemed not relevant by the board and as such they had to be defended as while they may not seem directly connected to this topic, what participants could answer very much might fall into one of these categories. One of the most difficult challenges faced when seeking IRB approval other than ethical considerations, was that of safety. Safety was something that was extremely important as the Anglophone regions are technically declared a conflict zone and as such all precautions would have to be taken to avoid risk to health and work. Various risks were present ranging from risks to life due to armed conflict, something that was avoided while I was there, to governmental harassment, something that was experienced multiple times, but not as a result of my work. As such this required many corrections over a period of months until the board was able to grant approval to move forward with this research. This approval allowed for the second methodology to be conducted and so the data which was gathered through this was subject to the rules and regulations imposed by the IRB board.

#### **3.2.4 Interview Breakdown Process**

The interview process for this study attempted to follow a strict set of guidelines and as such many processes were similar, albeit with small differences. The most important aspect of the interview process was ensuring the safety of the participants and ensuring they were comfortable answering the questions truthfully. As a result, while it would have been most ideal to conduct the interviews in a homogenous way, much of the interview environments and how they were conducted varied. Many people had different comfort levels regarding speaking openly and as such various locations were utilized based on their comfort, with some more

secluded and some more open. Once this was established, I would meet the interviewee at the location and from here I would ensure they understood the study they were about to participate in through letting them see the questions I would ask, an informational sheet on my study, and a consent form. Once all of this was settled, the interview would begin and I would go through the questions asking them and recording their responses. Depending on the interviewee, some questions would require further explanation or require examples for the participant to understand. One of the questions that touched upon self-determination was misunderstood by most participants and as such required much explanation and examples, this will however be discussed more later in this paper. Interview lengths would vary depending on what participants had to say and whether I had follow up questions to some of their answers. Once the interview concluded, I would thank the interviewee, notify them once again of their anonymity, and either depart or move on to another interviewee. This process was conducted over and over again for the interviews conducted in this paper.

## IV INTERVIEWS

For this research, while two methodologies are implemented, the second methodology required much more effort in its planning and execution. As such, the second methodology being that of interviews, is broken down into much finer detail in this chapter. These interviews were conducted in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon and how these were done is what will be discussed. These interviews allow for an examination of the case at hand being that of identity and self-determination. The idea of interviews in research is very important as it allows the research to pull data directly from the source and it provides a sense of direction to the research. With the creation of the interview methodology presented here, many aspects are able to be examined that otherwise would not have been able to. This is especially true regarding the collection of empirical evidence as the collection of evidence was done strictly for the analysis of this case in the research presented here. With all this being said however, the process of going about this required much planning and much delicacy due to the current security situation in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. These hurdles that had to be crossed will also be discussed here in terms of things such as approvals from both the sponsoring universities, and the Cameroon government, going about designing these interviews, and planning for their execution. Interviews themselves while being a vital source of data are not errorless and as such this concept will be looked at here as well to acknowledge that there is always the possibility of flaws.

### 4.1 Perception of Identity and Self-determination

When it comes to research, where empirical evidence is gathered in the field, perception can affect what is what and how things are interpreted. In this specific research, the perception of identity and self-determination is something that has to be taken into consideration due to the

fact that this could have an effect on the data that has been gathered. The data that has been gathered could be viewed with different perspectives and as such the interpretation could lead to differing points of relevancy for this paper. The baseline of this perception comes down to how participants view the tasks at hand, and even though each participant is most likely to view it different, there will most likely be some similarities, therefore allowing for a general examination of the data when it comes to this methodology. What is meant by this is that while this methodology can be examined in a variety of ways, it is important to keep in mind that participants perception of these concepts could be affected by the context in which they are participating, such as answering questions. This variability was something that was attempted to be controlled for, however it did become apparent during certain interviews that due to either a misunderstanding of a question or misinterpretations occurring during the interview, some abnormalities did occur. The impact of these abnormalities could be debated, however one of the best examples of this from the interviews was when asked how they identified, a participant responded with saying that they are Cameroonian, however later in the interview they said that they supported the separatists, therefore bringing the question as to why didn't she identify as an Anglophone or as a citizen of Ambazonia. Self-censorship could to be blame in this instance, however even if this was the case, the context in which this answer was given needs to be taken into consideration as perhaps the context of me being an outsider pushed this participant to at first answer question in a more general and safe manner.

#### **4.2 Fieldwork in Cameroon: Semi-Structured Interviews**

For this research, fieldwork was conducted in order to collect data that would assist in answering the research question proposed earlier in this paper. The fieldwork that was

conducted, being the semi-structured interviews, consisted of finding willing participants who were originally from the Anglophone regions of Cameroon and having them answer a preset selected number of questions. With the purpose of this methodology now defined, a more detailed description of how the fieldwork was conducted will be given here. In order to conduct fieldwork in Cameroon, a visa and a research permit were required, both of which were received. I had planned to conduct this fieldwork over a period of a month, and as such a base of operations was established, with me the researcher staying in a compound in the center of Buea, Southwest region. Contacts were established prior to my arrival in Cameroon and as such they assisted in setting up operations in Buea. From here two Anglophone contacts assisted me with the research as traveling around alone was deemed unsafe due to my status as an outsider, and so as a result the majority of interviews were organized through these two contacts. In total interviews were conducted in Buea, Limbe, and Kumba, all towns in the Southwest. Plans were made to conduct interviews in the Northwest, with a contact being established, however when the time came, the security situation had deteriorated to the point where attempting this research would put myself and my associate at risk and so this research was not conducted. The interviews that did occur all went according to plan as the interviews were conducted where participants felt comfortable and in a way that ensured their safety. The only time where this differed was when interviews were conducted in Kumba, where they were more facilitated through the Catholic Church, as due to the security situation between Buea and Kumba, attaching myself to a group of priests was the only way of reaching Kumba and once there they were able to assist in finding interviewees, prior to me meeting another contact who lived there. Overall, though fieldwork was conducted in a standardized process that proved successful in gathering information for this research.

Interviews was one of the first methodologies to be decided upon with certainty for this research. The reasoning behind this is that the situation in the Anglophone regions is a very dynamic one, as the conflict has transformed the living situation of the people. Much research has been done when the conflict first broke out, where to many the Anglophones and their struggle appeared to be a textbook case of a separatist movement against the state. While this data proves useful, and is even utilized in the first methodology, in order to properly answer the research question, up to date information on how Anglophones view self-determination and identity was necessary. Semi-structured interviews were deemed as the best choice for this scenario as a script was needed as a result of the complexity of the topics being asked. Even with this complexity however, the questions themselves had to be limited as they had to receive governmental approval. This need for approval from the universities resulted in questions that were more vague or indirect at times. Questions such as how one viewed self-determination for the Anglophone regions were excluded as this was most certainly to result in delays for this research. When this was first proposed, challenges such as this appeared as receiving various approvals and ensuring safety were a must before any interviews were to be conducted. Once all of these logistical issues were solved, I was able to travel to the Anglophone regions and conduct these interviews. As a result, much data was collected that is utilized in the last methodology of this paper. Both excerpts and general consensuses are what is discussed in this methodology, providing the information necessary to answer the research question. While data collection proved adequate, reflections from this process reveal that perfect efficiency was not reached. The security situation in the Anglophone regions was the main factor in this fallacy, as for example, all interviews were conducted in the South West region of Cameroon, leaving the north west to be desired. Leaving out one of the Anglophone regions was an extremely difficult decision as

this was the region with the most separatist activity and as such views in regard to my questions could have drastically differed than the ones I collected in the South West. The safety of my colleagues and myself were of paramount importance and this was the deciding factor as to why original plans for interviews in this region were not carried out. The security situation also forced me to rely on colleagues to find willing participants and as such the majority of interviewees were recruited through two individuals that assisted me with my research. Their names will remain anonymous in this paper in order to protect their identities as while they were not interviewed, this research could not have been done without them. Due to these efforts, a wide swathe of society was able to be represented in these interviews, resulting in a wide array of opinions being captured.

#### **4.2.1 Capturing Identity and Self-determination Through Interviews**

Capturing accurate representations of identity and self-determination are essential to properly analyzing the research question posed in this paper. In order to do this, the interview questions that were asked were purposively designed to allow for participants to interpret identity and self-determination as they saw fit. Interpretation was deemed as one of the most important factors when designing these questions and while what was asked had to be related to these topics, answers could vary to a great extent. For the majority of respondents, these questions did prove comprehensible in the form they were asked. However, at times there was need for explanation in terms of comprehending the questions. This was most apparent regarding the question that asked participants what was important to their identity and the question that asked how participants viewed self-determination in Africa. These comprehension issues

demonstrated why it was important to ask participants follow up questions that while not directly mentioning these topics, allowed for answers to be given that provided support for a participant's views. The two questions though were still answered, however a breakdown of what was meant by the questions and the inclusion of examples was sometimes necessary. Due to this facet, participant's answers could vary as different levels of this assistance proved necessary depending on the participant. The most important facet of the interviews was capturing identity and self-determination as it is in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon.

#### **4.2.2 Interview Question Design**

When it came to the design of the interview questions, much had to be taken into consideration in order to adequately capture the data that was sought, while also receiving approval from the various bodies that I needed it from. The format that was chosen for this was a list format as if participants asked to view it this would be easiest for them to understand. The length of the questions was determined based both on what needed to be asked and not overwhelming the participants. Starting with the first question asking what languages the participant spoke, this was vastly important as getting an understanding of the linguistic ability of the participant shows that either the participant could only speak certain languages and this could affect their responses to other questions or it could show no affect at all. Moving on to the second question asking what was the most important aspect of identity to them and how important language is to their identity. This question was chosen as first and foremost determining how an individual themselves views their own identity is important as it allows for a frame to be constructed that the rest of the interview can be viewed through and it also allows for a type of identity to be settled upon in terms of analyzing their interview. The second part asks

about their language in regard to their identity in order to just clarify the participants view on this, especially considering they are known as anglophones. Asking participants whether they associate more with English speakers versus French speakers was meant to gauge further how language is related to their identity as if they associate more with French speakers, they may have a more French based identity and more French based views on self-determination and asking them why is just to ascertain the reasoning behind their answers. Determining the length in time they have been in town is important as well as not only does it tie into another question that is asked later, it allows for an analysis of time on whether how they think has been shaped by the new town or their old town, and a question relating directly to this is asked later. Tying into the question that was asked before this, the question of whether language or part of identity have changed at all while living in the town is important to ask because it can give an idea of how flexible a participant's identity is and this in turn can reveal how strong identity is in a specific individuals life therefore revealing if identity would have a strong determination on self-determination. Asking about living in a country that is composed of more French speakers as a English speaker was important to ask as it can reveal how participants feel about being part of a minority and therefore whether in their identity they see themselves as a minority or as just another person in the country. Asking about treatment received given speaking a language was something that needed to be included as since language has taken such a major place in the country, tying it to treatment an individual receives and perceptions of this treatment in terms of themselves can reveal more underlying aspects of identity. Community issues and what both the French and English face turns the focus of identity into more of an identity self-determination question. It is able to do this since being that it asks about problems, identity most certainly shines through in what people see as problems, and not only this, but the problems themselves

were important in terms of if they could be related to self-determination at all. Asking also about both English and French speakers was important in order to gauge their views on their own lingua franca group and that of the other major lingua franca. Finally asking who should be responsible for solving problems in the community directly touches upon the idea of self-determination as for this research the level of government could be directly tied to ideas regarding this. Asking about the town, department, and region were necessary in order to gauge their opinion on what level of government should solve problems. Asking participants what is the most important issue in Cameroon reveals a variety of different answers.

### **4.2.3 Identity and Self Determination Defined**

Defining identity and self-determination is not an easy task, as there are both many professional definitions that exist in the research field and there are many unofficial ones. Most participants are not researchers and as a result if I were to use complex definitions to explain these concepts to participants then there may have been a misinterpretation. Many participants themselves misinterpreted self-determination in the context of the questions and many others needed an explanation for identity. When it came to identity and explaining this, I attempted to keep this as simple as possible and would tell participants it is what makes you and things that define who you are, once I was able to do this many participants were able to understand what was being asked of them and answer the question. If examples were needed, I could utilize examples such as if your very religious you could identify yourself as a strong Catholic or maybe your very Cameroonian and that's how you identify yourself. Self-determination was a whole other topic to explain as many people interpreted it differently and so for this, rather than give a theoretical definition many times examples were utilized. The principal examples that were

utilized were Biafra and Nigeria and if the people there had the right to separate and other examples like with South Sudan and its successful separation. Both of these ways were utilized in terms of making sure participants were able to understand what was being asked of them and to make sure they answered the question in a way that pertained to the research question being examined here. Due to how these ideas have been defined, it is also necessary to take them into consideration when interpreting the interview responses that participants gave as this is in part responsible for how participants went about answering the questions. Overall, the context regarding these terms was that of being asked in Cameroon and individuals either lack of having been presented with questions like the ones asked or individuals perception of what these ideas not being the same as what was asked of them and as such this perception is something that is vital.

#### **4.2.4 Time Sensitivity for Interviews**

Due to the limited nature of my study, the possibility for many incidents to occur and for interviews to take place before and after events was not as much possible as if the study had been longer. Although this was the case, there were incidents that occurred that would go on to have an impact on this research and therefore may have altered the responses individuals gave when asked to participate in this research. Time sensitivity was something that was fully considered for this research and while this was taken into consideration, it still greatly affected what could and couldn't be done in this research. The best example of this was my desire to travel to the Northwest to conduct interviews, but due to a combination of time constraints and unpredictable events, this was not possible. When it came to interviews themselves there were no time restrictions placed on the participants and they were given as little or as much time as they

needed. This meant that participants chose their own timeframe, with some interviews being as short as 8 minutes and others being over an hour.

#### **4.2.5 Data-related Biases and Limitations**

When it came to collecting data, it was impossible to collect information without having outside influences and factors outside of my control take hold. It is said that it was impossible as various things at times were out of my control leading to interviews that could have had outside influence in them. When it comes to biases, data could be biased as since I utilized two different individuals to locate subjects and while these subjects did vary, it could be said that these subjects were chosen by two individuals who found them either due to knowing them or as they thought they would be a good participant for my research. Data related limitations stem from various different factors. Starting with my ability to understand data, it could be said that due to both a combination of background noise and my ability to comprehend participant's English, some parts of interviews may not have been the most comprehensible to me.

##### **A). Selection Bias and Self-Censorship**

When it came to selection bias and self-censorship, it could be said that these are both very much real possibilities when it came to handling respondents. Selection bias needs to be considered as I was very limited in two specific areas of my research. First, I was limited in the areas I could travel to as since there is conflict in the Anglophone regions, many towns and cities were deemed unsafe to travel to, meaning that research couldn't be conducted there. On the other hand, the pool of participants was limited as well, this was the case both due to relying on two individuals to locate participants for me and due to the fact that the authorities persecute people

for discussing certain topics, meaning that I could generally not just approach anyone openly with what I was researching. Self-censorship also has to be looked into, and areas of self-censorship are legal, conflict, and trust. Self-censorship could have occurred as a result of legal rules as people may fear that what they say may be used to persecute them by the government. When I was in Kumba, I noticed this in many of the interviews I did there, as people were quicker to censor themselves as the idea of me working for the government plagued their mind. The Anglophone Crisis as well may have led to self-censorship as people may be worried more about what they say and who may be listening. I had heard there were spies in many areas and the possibility of being overheard tells that participants may have been careful with their answers or holding back. Finally trusting me in general may have led to individuals to be more self-censoring as talking with a foreigner that they just met and then having to face potential consequences if something were to go wrong. This requires a lot of trust and unfortunately trust was not something easily built given the time constraint.

### **B). Preference Falsification**

When it came to preference falsification, it could be said that the presence of this was always a possibility. However, it will be said that it is believed that most interviewees seemed to avoid this, as it was made clear to participants that their genuine opinions were sought in response to the questions. When talking to individuals outside of the interviews, there were many occurrences where Anglophone Cameroonians would try to avoid making negative statements regarding Cameroon, as it seemed they wanted me to have a positive opinion of the country. As such there is always a possibility that this could have transferred over into interviews, but the chance of this is very miniscule, as many answers that were received do not focus on this

positivity. With this being said there was also many other ways that preference falsification could have affected the interviews as many of the participants I interviewed most certainly had opinions on topics and had preferences regarding certain topics. Differentiating between preference falsification and what was the true opinion of participants in this research it could be said is quite difficult but not impossible. It can be said that it is not impossible as for example depending on the question asked and the hesitancy of the individual, the authenticity of a response can be gauged as to whether it was a true belief or whether the participant gave a politically correct answer. As stated before, it could be said that genuine answers appeared most often. Finally, while I assume that preference falsification is not rampant throughout my data, there is the potential that in order to get through specific questions, instead of asking to skip them, a participant could have given an answer that they deemed satisfactory in terms of what they thought I was seeking to hear.

### **C). Recall and Response Error**

When it comes to recall and response error, this is something to be expected as no individual is perfect and recalling events, especially events associated with certain emotions or that invoke deep passion, can lead to clouded recollections or responses that have aspects that are based in falsehood. When it comes to the field work that was conducted here, this was something to be expected as while the questions being asked were for the most part not inherently provocative, they do in a way allow for an individual to answer how they see fit, whether that be to convey the truth or whether that be to push an agenda. The main revelation that occurred revealing that there was indeed recall and response error was with how some respondents answered completely opposite of other respondents. And while there may be a possibility that

these respondents had not experienced what the majority of the other respondents experienced, it could be said that either accidentally or purposively the respondent answered differently. Another factor that affected recall and response error that needs to be considered with this is time. For many individuals, they have lived in the present town that they were interviewed in for a while and as a result how they recall events before moving to this town, especially if much time as passed could possibly prove difficult for some participants. Finally, as the conflict in the Anglophone regions has gone on for some time now, many tragic events have occurred and as a result responsibility and reasoning are typically clouded in the fog of war. This was something that was experienced there, as while research was being conducted, an attack by separatists occurred in Bamenda which resulted in the construction of different narratives. This risks historical interpretation being left up to individuals' imaginations which therefore could create views based on falsehoods as they recall the event.

## V Case Study

The first part of this case study discussion is the different way's identity is formed in Cameroon. This is relevant as in Cameroon, differing identities developed in specific ways and as Cameroon has a unique history when compared to other states that faced colonization, how identity was formed here could be considered unique as well. From here the concept of self-determination and what this means based on previous literature and historical events will be examined. This is especially important as identifying what this represents can assist later on in this paper when looking for a possible connection between identity and self-determination. After defining these concepts, they will both be looked at over time in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon to see if these factors have changed over time and if so how and why they have become what they have today. This leads directly into an examination of self-determination and identity today, as understanding these concepts in the present could possibly enable a better understanding of why participants answered how they did. All this will come together in the final section of this chapter where factors driving a possible connection will be examined in order to determine if there are any obvious things that are connecting self-determination and identity. Three sub-sections are included in this to provide a thorough examination of this subject. The first sub-section is persecution, where Anglophones face differing levels of persecution, this could affect how these topics are viewed. Next economic hardship is something that will be brought up as it has brought about tough times for many. And lastly, other potential reasons will be talked about.

## 5.1 Anglophone Identity Formation

Identity formation is a concept that is different in various different states, peoples, and areas. Various factors can go into how a people shape their identity, and in Cameroon this is especially true, as identity takes center stage in many aspects of life. It can be stated that Anglophone Cameroonians, while having a principal identity, tend to have two to three identities associated with them at one time. These identities are an ethnic identity, as every Anglophone Cameroonian is from an ethnic group, which has its own unique culture and language. Every Anglophone is able to speak some level of English and as such this adds another layer to their identity. And finally, each Anglophone is part of Cameroon, therefore it is possible they associate with a national identity. How these three identities formed could be debated, however there is a general acceptance to each as to what the main cause of these identity formations were.

Ethnic identity is an identity that was partially formed prior to colonization and as a result of colonization. This can be stated as tribes existed before German colonization, however a solidification of these ethnic groups happened once they became cut off with new state borders (Ebai, 2009).

As such ethnic identity is ingrained in these population of Cameroon, something still seen to this day. National identity started to form with the German takeover of the region as an idea of nationhood started to take hold (Ebai, 2009). Nationhood was further reinforced, albeit with two different nations once the British and French arrived (Ebai, 2009). Linguistic identity was introduced at the same time with the British and French colonization of Cameroon and was intertwined with this notion of national identity (Ebai, 2009). This breaking point led to the British colony of Southern Cameroons developing very differently than the French one, as

France's goal was assimilation, the British allowed for local rule with a British based legal system (Ebai, 2009). Through this colonization, as hospital and schools were created, national identities started to solidify with those in the French colony viewing themselves as French and those in Southern Cameroons viewing themselves as British at independence (Ebai, 2009). The identity formation was so influential that as part of the national identity, it has been said that the mannerisms of someone British were displayed by those in Southern Cameroons (Ebai, 2009). This has also been demonstrated in the logic behind why Southern Cameroon became part of French Cameroon, being that tribes no longer lead as people viewed themselves as under Southern Cameroon and as such unification did not stem from desire to be together with lost brothers or anything of similar nature (Ebai, 2009).

After unification, Anglophone identity was retained, but the Francophone government was not supportive of this identity, and so while Anglophones were unsatisfied by the situation, identity had not led to any significant changes by Anglophones yet (Ketzmerick, 2023). A transformation happened however in the 1990s, as a new Anglophone identity that revolved around politics was created as a result of political parties being given more leeway (Ketzmerick, 2023, pp. 254).

## **5.2 Self-determination in Anglophone Cameroon**

The idea of self-determination in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon stemmed from the decolonization period. As states were receiving independence, when the time came for Southern Cameroons to receive independence, it was only given the option to join La Republique du Cameroun or Nigeria (Ebai, 2009). As no option existed for becoming independent outright, Southern Cameroons exercised the limited right of self-determination given to them through a plebiscite and became a part of French Cameroon (Ebai, 2009). From here self-determination

essentially vanished as while anglophones were displeased with how they were being incorporated into the state, there were no significant attempts to seek self-determination (Ketzmerick, 2023). Self-determination would once again appear decades after unification, albeit subtly, with political parties that emerged to represent Anglophone Cameroons, with names such as the Southern Cameroons Youth League and the Southern Cameroon National Council, invoking the name of their past colonial state (Ketzmerick, 2023, pp. 254 as cited in Chereji and Lohkoko, 2012 and as cited in Anyfru). From here not much was done for a few decades in terms of self-determination, until finally an explosion would occur that would thrust self-determination into the minds of all the anglophones in Cameroon. What led to this was essentially an idea of what self-determination meant to anglophones, as separation and the creation of a new state was not the goal of a majority of those who were upset with the current system. Instead, the anglophones asked for marginalization to stop and for the cessation of activities that were eroding their identity with main focus on the English language (Ketzmerick, 2023). The transformation of self-determination from Anglophones attempting to right perceived wrongs to this idea of separation occurred as an explosion (Ketzmerick, 2023). This explosion was the protests that arose which resulted in the Federal Republic of Ambazonia being declared independent on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Along with this major step towards self-determination, other factors were put into place such as an anthem, a constitution, and a flag be created for the new state (Ketzmerick, 2023, pp. 255).

### **5.3 Identity and Self-determination Pre-Anglophone Crisis**

Identity and self-determination pre-Anglophone crisis trace its formation to both the decolonization process and the resulting series of events that occurred once this happened. The most prominent event stems from decolonization by the British, where a limited form of self-

determination was offered to Southern Cameroonians through a referendum resulting in becoming a part of Francophone Cameroon (Mehler, 2014). This self-determination was limited as Southern Cameroonians were not given the option for independence and instead only could join Cameroon or Nigeria (Mehler, 2014). Ideas on self-determination essentially evaporated post-unification with 1972 being where this ended. The reasoning behind this ending was Cameroon was declared a unitary state under President Ahidjo destroying all aspects of federalism and North-west and South-west Cameroon were formed out of West Cameroon, meaning the English populations were now no longer together (Mehler, 2014). The idea of self-determination and identity would finally appear with the term 'Ambazonia' being created by a champion of independence: lawyer Gorji Dinka (Mehler, 2014, pp. 59). Other such actions were the creation of the 'Free West Cameroon Movement' and the publishing of a book titled *Prisoner Without a Crime* by Albert Mukong (Mehler, 2014, pp. 59). These were part of the succession crisis, however nothing concrete resulted from this except for governmental persecution (Mehler, 2014). The early 1990s was where this connection was truly started between these two factors as first a federal constitution from Anglophones was shot down and identity formation was extremely pushed with things such as playwriting, poetry, and elites along with intellectuals really grasped onto this idea of Anglophone, all of this resulted from the term 'Anglophone problem' starting to be employed by the government therefore resulting in the topic of self-determination being brought up too (Mehler, 2014, pp. 60). From this point on in the late 90s and the 2000s, identity and self-determination became intertwined, as with more and more political groups would form, radicalization would occur, and not only would low levels of violence be utilized, but Ambazonia was declared independent by the Southern Cameroonians National Council in

December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1999 and in 2006 the Southern Cameroons Peoples Organization initiated Ambazonia's second declaration of independence (Mehler, 2014).

#### **5.4 Identity and Self-determination Currently**

Identity and self-determination both were altered drastically when the Anglophone crisis broke out. Never before in Cameroon had the Anglophone population entered territory such as this and the consequences it could be argued would go on to shape how Anglophones viewed themselves and their future. The official date of this changing thinking was the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, 2017 when Ambazonia was established after a declaration of independence was made (Beseng et al., 2023). With this declaration nothing would be the same, as views on these two themes would become dynamic up until the present date today. Social media was the best demonstrator of how Anglophones felt about what was occurring and reflected their views on identity and self-determination. Near the beginning of the crisis, hashtags that were used on twitter ranged from #genocideinCameroon to #FreeSouthernCameroon (Nganji & Cockburn, 2020, pp. 271). These hashtags both demonstrated that Anglophones felt that they as a people were being targeted for persecution, while also showing that in their minds the solution was one based around self-determination. The difference only a few years made is significant as the conflict dragged on however this unity of identity and self-determination started to fall apart, as disagreements formed with those actively supporting Ambazonia and anglophones themselves started to resent what was happening, especially with women as the destruction and harm was becoming too much (Beseng et al., 2023). Social media especially was a prevalent way in which anglophone opinions were put out there. And as many of these opinions showed, it was not to support self-

determination, but actually had more of a focus on identity as shown by hashtags associated with the tweets demanding the suffering stop (Lee et al., 2023, pp. 425). What this demonstrates if anything is that identity and the relationship it shared with self-determination began to shift once again as people could no longer grasp onto an identity that repulsed them, and as such self-determination was also detached from their identity as a result of this.

#### **5.4.1 Factors driving a possible connection**

Opinions on identity and self-determination do not form in a bubble and as such potential connections may exist to explain why these two concepts are connected. In order to properly establish potential reasons from existing research, three principal sections have been pulled out for examination in terms of what impact they have on bringing these two themes together. These sections are persecution, economic hardship, and other as these three based on existing information seem to be the principal drivers of self-determination and identity.

##### **A). Persecution**

Persecution, a term that should not be used lightly, is a factor that must be taken into consideration in this research. It's long reach in this society affects all Anglophones as it is a part of daily life. Different levels of persecution are present in Anglophone society as the central government and Francophones persecute the Anglophones for who they are. It can be stated that anglophone Cameroonians perceive their treatment from the Francophone government as being discriminatory, as in many cases of discrimination, a population will only tolerate this for so long before desiring equal treatment or a release from the system holding them down (Ebai, 2009). This treatment can be described as targeted discrimination as there are many documented examples of the malign treatment of the anglophones. Treatment from both the security forces and the government ranges from torture, bribery, Francophone courts trying individuals, brutality

and intimidation (Ebai, 2009). Press has also been affected, with draconian measures implemented to stifle this as much as possible in the Anglophone regions (Ebai, 2009). A perfect way of describing this situation is in the paper *The right to self-determination and the anglophone Cameroon situation* by S. Eban Ebai where it is said “a secondary role or status akin to that of American blacks, especially before the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, seems to have been reserved for the anglophones.” (Ebai, 2009, pp. 645). Political discrimination has also been a problem as anglophones are routinely denied positions in government and even when given positions, their power is very negated. This has been seen at all levels even to the extent of denying an anglophone the position of president after being elected (Ebai, 2009). Infrastructure has also been the target of the government as it seeks to make the anglophones dependent on the francophones. This has resulted in things such as roads falling into disrepair, outright destruction of infrastructure, and taking of economic structures from the anglophones (Ebai, 2009).

Both during the fieldwork interviews and outside of interviews, persecution was mentioned so much that it could be considered one of the main topics discussed. Even as a foreigner, I witnessed what the Anglophones faced, albeit my experience was much less due to my privilege of being a United States Citizen. These experiences, where I was pulled out of cabs and busses and questioned by the police, the gendarme, and the military revealed firsthand what Anglophones have to deal with on a daily basis, and even so to a more extreme length. These posts by the authorities are where they are due to the crisis and while they are also in other parts of the state, they are principally in the Anglophone regions preying upon the Anglophone population. With such an extreme level of persecution present in these regions, this factor has to be taken into consideration when discussing the interviews. It was a reality to have a potential

participant give crafted answers as they believed I was from the government and to even have a participant walk out on me after reading the informational pertaining to my research. The government however was not the only source of persecution, as the separatists were also a source of great worry. Many Anglophones I talked with both in the confidentiality and during normal conversation brought up how they are scared of the government or the separatists. This fear is real and to pretend that it did not have any effect on participants would be a disservice to those Anglophones who participated in this research.

### **B). Economic Hardship**

Economic hardship, a factor that also must be mentioned when discussing this case, is cannot be left out of this cross-examination. This factor in the Anglophone regions stems from a variety of causes. One of the most prominent factors that kept being repeated to me no matter who I talked to was that corruption was rampant. Corruption runs in all parts of the society and it was something that had been come to be accepted by the Anglophones. A prime example of this is was how one of the participants mentioned how he was charged obsessive fees due to his business that kept increasing, resulting in him having to borrow money from people to pay this off. Also, security checkpoints, instead of being for security, are more about shaking down Anglophones for as much money as they can. Systems such as these encourage economic hardship for the Anglophones as any success is hampered by how much money is essentially stolen from the people. The crisis however has had the most significant impact on the economic situation of the Anglophone regions. Prices for everything ranging from food to housing were inflated greatly as many people had come to Buea as a result of the crisis. This was something that was experienced firsthand, as the cost of living even for a month in this location was excessive. Combining these two factors of economic hardship as a result of persecution and

rising prices due to conflict are most certain to play a role in terms of how people respond in interviews and some answers did reflect this reality. The role this plays in how identity and self-determination are formed must be acknowledged as a possible underlying factor that while not acknowledged directly still is something that must be considered. Economic hardship depending on how it is defined can include cost of living along with other aspects of life. In order to simplify the economic hardship being discussed here, it will be stated that economic hardship can be regulated to these two concepts discussed in this section, while other aspects that may be similar to this idea will be analyzed in the next section.

### **C). Other**

Factors outside of persecution and economic hardship must be considered as well when utilizing the data that has been collected. These other factors can vary greatly as outside influence is always a possibility as mentioned earlier in this paper. One of the primary factors that must be considered is current events. Current events can shape public perception of groups and ideas and as such the context of the what was occurring must be taken into consideration. Outside influences could influence how respondents gave their answers in their interviews. Interactions throughout the day must also be considered a factor as if an individual encountered hostility or faced challenges at some point in the day, they may have taken out this built-up frustration on the question, therefore eliciting a much stronger opinion than may have been given without this stimulus.

## VI Field Work

As field work was conducted, much data was able to be collected and utilized to investigate the research question. This chapter hopes to disseminate that data in a way that is both comprehensible and is able to support a conclusion for the research question at hand. In order to analyze this data efficiently, trends in the data will be interpreted primarily, with the inclusion of excerpts from the interviews in order to support these trends and their legitimacy. Outliers will also be pointed out, however less emphasis will be put on these as their relevance would most certainly be not statistically significant. The breakdown of this content will occur in this manner: first and foremost, the identity-based questions that were asked will be analyzed with the responses received to them. Identity based questions are questions that were asked in the interview that either directly inquire about identity or touch upon subjects that are generally deemed part of an individual's identity. Once an analysis of these questions and their responses have been done, interview questions that had a focus on Self-determination and their responses will be looked at as well. Questions that focused on Self-Determination were determined to be in this category as they either directly mentioned the term "Self-Determination" or they touched upon topics generally associated with self-determination. Once an analysis of both sets of questions has been done, potential connections between the two sets of data will be examined to determine if there is a relationship between the answers given based on identity to the answers given for the self-determination questions and what this relation may be. After this has been conducted the relevancy of what has been discovered will be discussed as, while this is a small sample, that data still proves relevant to an extent, and as a result whether or not there is a connection between these two subjects, what has been brought to light here is still noteworthy.

Finally a conclusion will be reached regarding the data collected here in order to provide a sense of clarity to this methodology of the study conducted here.

For the analysis of these interview questions, as participant confidentiality is of the utmost importance, no identifying characteristics will be included to describe these individuals. When referencing an individual who took part in this research, they will just be referred to as a participant. What can be stated is not-identifying information related to the participants. As such, 12 participants are included in this analysis below, comprising individuals of both the male and female sex and all above the age of 18 years old.

## **6.1 Identity-based Questions**

With the research that was conducted here, the set of questions that was utilized to gauge participants perceptions was about half composed of identity-based questions. This fact ensured that an adequate focus was placed on identity that could prove useful when it came to an analysis of the results. These questions were asked to all participants and while answers varied, a trend did appear that seemed to reveal which kind of identity was valued most by the participants.

In total, three distinct identities appeared most often and it could be said that each participant generally could be placed into one of these categories. Ethnic identity, Linguistic Identity, and Nationalistic identity were the most prominent. Prior to a breakdown of the questions asked and how these revealed the identities, defining what these identities mean in this context is necessary. Ethnic identity could be defined as the identity that individuals in Cameroon have in terms of what ethnicity and what ethnic group they were born into. This is prevalent throughout society, and while for some it is not what defines them, it can be stated that

every Anglophone Cameroonian is part of some ethnic group and as such can generally speak the dialect associated with it.

Linguistic identity proves different as the population that shares this is much larger than the ethnic groups and from interviewing participants, identities formed around this facet generally are a result of its widespread use in society, the connectedness it allows Anglophone Cameroonians, and the historical association of being referred to as “Anglophone” in terms of being a Cameroonian.

Finally, a nationalistic based identity in Cameroon comes in two forms, those whose identity as Cameroonian where they are set that they are part of the state of Cameroon and those who believe themselves to be people of Ambazonia. Regarding the accuracy of how many participants actually base their identity off of the idea of “Ambazonia” it can not be stated for sure, as many times, depending on the context, when the term was mentioned, participants would react with hesitation or discuss this topic with fear, as the threat from both government authorities and the separatists was one that had to be taken seriously, as speech in these areas can lead to persecution from both parties.

With this all established, the first question that was asked was *What is your first language and do you speak any other languages?* With this question the majority of answers were short and simple. The vast majority of participants answered English as their first language and their dialect as there second. A wide variety of dialects were given ranging from Lamnso to Bakweri. Pigeon was almost always universally spoken by the participants and only a few could speak French at differing levels. This question was more to establish a base for the participant than to determine the prominence of an identity. The question that preceded this however directly

touched upon identity, asking *What is the most important defining feature of your identity? How important is your language for your identity?* This question revealed the divide in how Anglophone Cameroonians identify themselves. The first half of the question however was not always understood by the participants and as such language and identity were the principal focus for the question. With this being said though, the first part was still asked and as a result major emphasis by many participants was placed on either culture or language. Answers however were also given that reflected a political identity and a participant that showed this stated “To be an Anglophone, yeah, I’m proud to be an Anglophone”, while another participant stated when asked what was most important, “I am a Cameroonian”. When it came to language, a statement by one of the participants from Buea summed up the view of many being “we are proud of our language, we are proud of our accents, we are proud of our culture” and this participant would also state that language and culture could not be separated. When language was inquired about, English would also always come up as being an important part of their identity, albeit in a different way. English, in terms of the language and a such excluding any mention of the term “Anglophone” proved part of participants identities as they valued it for how it allowed them to communicate with so many different people and how it connected them to the rest of the world. The next question, dealing with association, being, *Would you say that you associate with the English-speaking population or the French speaking population more or possibly some other group? Why would you say this?* In regard to this question, every participant stated they associated more with the English-speaking population more than French speakers and even more than speakers of their own dialect. The reasoning for the most part was homogenous being that the people around them spoke English or they could communicate with people by speaking English. With this being said participants did still associate with members of their dialect and even French speakers,

just not to the same extent as English speakers. Questions focusing on information related to the participant's location and identity were asked starting with *How long have you been living in the \*stated town/city\*? How would you describe your culture and your identity when compared to others in town?* The responses to this question did not reveal any major trends regarding how long an individual stayed in location as the answers varied from as little as one year 6 months to since Birth. If anything, the only trend visible was that respondents seemed to stay where they are for any years and do not move around all that much. This was true for respondents in Kumba, Buea, and Limbe. The second part of this question however proved more interesting, as answers varied based on the location of the participants. Starting with Buea, the majority of participants made it clear that they differed from others in the town culturally. Answers were at times targeted as one participant stated that people from the Southwest with mention of the Bakweri being not as hardworking as the participants ethnic group and people in the northwest in general to one participant stating that while their cultural is unique, many similarities are present. In Kumba, participants were less willing to discuss this topic, with participants giving reasons such as they were not able to talk about the differences to they only know themselves. The only participant who did answer this question stated that factors such as differences in dress and how they talk. Limbe was the final location, and of the two participants, there is no answer from one, a likely oversight more than a reluctance to answer the question. The other participant however makes the distinction that culture is not as apparent when interacting with people on a daily basis and that culture is reserve more for interacting with members of the community the culture stems from. Building off these two questions, the next question asked being *What town are you originally from and why did you leave it?* Allowed for determinations to be made especially regarding the last two questions if these participants are from these areas or if they relocated

here. Based on the responses given by participants, it can be said that the majority of participants have moved from their original hometown at one point in their life to another town being that of the town they were interviewed in or another town and later ending up in the present town, with only two participants currently living in their town of origin. Of note is that the majority of those interviewed were originally from the Northwest Region of Cameroon, with only two participants having their origin from the Southwest Region. For two participants their towns were only given and inability to identify these locations, their data was unable to be included here. The reasoning given behind these moves generally stemmed from either economic decisions such as work or education decisions like for university. Only one participant mentioned conflict and even then, did not declare it as the principal reason for moving. It is worth noting two participants when talking about their movement history used the term “greener pastures”, something to consider when attempting to understand how these participants viewed moving. As many participants were not originally from where they currently lived, the next question asked proved relevant as it stated *While you have been living here has your language or parts of your identity changed at all?* In response to this question the majority of participants stated that there was no part of their identity that has changed since living in their current town and they didn’t expand much upon this. One participant did say however that they have adopted some things, but not much and another stated that she has forgotten her dialect. For two participants, they answered that their identity had not changed but they expounded upon their answers with one stating that identity is based around language in Cameroon and alluding to that this has caused problems with the statement “when you allow it that this section is English, this one is French, you are building a crisis”. The other participant went even farther and stated that being a Southern Cameroon Ambazonia Citizen is their identity and it is what makes them as a people, along with it being

something that cannot be taken away. It can be stated that with that question, this idea of a political identity meshing with other identities started to reveal itself, especially as the questions got closer and closer to becoming more focused on self-determination. As such with the next question, *How would you describe living as an English speaker in a country with more French speakers?* The majority of participants answered negatively with only three participants answering positively by stating that they have not faced marginalization or problems. The rest of the participants answers varied on a spectrum, with three participants saying that the issue of not knowing French poses a major problem for English speakers and one participant saying they are proud to be anglophone but acknowledges they are marginalized. From here participants really ratcheted up their rhetoric on the treatment of English speakers with one participant stating in response to most regions being French with the exception of 2 “the others automatically feel inferior” and in response to many government institution being French centered and dominated in the Southwest Region, “it really makes the anglophone feel inferior that they cannot occupy some big position in Cameroon”. When asked how they felt regarding this, the participant responded “I feel bad”. Other participants described it as French being forced on them and suppression. Finally, one participant stated that he witnessed a governor calling Anglophones dogs and a pastor calling anglophones fools. Building upon the last question, the next one being *How have you been treated by others due to \*stated language\* being your first language?* Some participants in response to this question stated they have had no issues and that their ability to speak French has led to problems not arising. Other participants however gave a bleaker assessment with statements such as “ive been treated like somebody that dosent know anything to do” and “yeah like im a stranger in the country”. Another participant described visiting the French speaking capital of Yaoundé - “immediately when we step there it’s just like we are in

different country”. He continues with this divide in treatment he notices - “So they don’t want us to feel free, and they say Cameroon is a Bilingual Country, but obviously, but when they just hear French \*English francophone they don’t want to even catch us, that relationship is not there”. For these respondents dealing with French was where problems arose, as when the English region mentioned or local dialects, problems were essentially non-critical. From here determining if there were differences in perceptions of what problems English speakers and French speakers faced, and as such the question “*What is the most significant issue that English speakers face in your community? What is the most significant issue faced by French speakers in your community?*” was asked. The responses given to asking about English speakers was that jobs were a common problem along with the Anglophone crisis, marginalization and communication with French speakers. Other problems that came up were bad infrastructure, crime, pigeon being spoken more than English, crisis, problems being at the highest level of government, imposition of French on the anglophones, abuses by police, difficulties working with French workers brought in by the government, and finally there being no problem. When asked about problems facing French speakers the only responses that appeared more than once were that the respondent didn’t know. The other responses varied widely being bad government, no problems unless they are deep in an Anglophone region, difficulty speaking English, not happy to see English people, the Anglophone crisis, tension between English and French, certain regions of the country not being taken care of, not knowing of any problems, and finally no problem. One participant in particular gave an interesting perspective when asked about this stating - “getting through us, Southern Cameroon, Ambazonia, they now have forces, before sponsor them to come and buy our lands, many buildings owned by French, in Kumbo – a French man can not buy property, they don’t have the means to infiltrate that part of the country,

attitude wise - we are welcoming and kind, if there is any that would turn down your invitation, its because they don't trust anybody out of fear because anything can be used against us, Southern Cameroonians, Ambazonians, whether fighters or not, we are not afraid of death, we are afraid of the process, which is painful, we have seen, we have cried, we have watched videos of children killed, I remember of a baby in my village called baby mata, baby mata was killed in the mothers arms, with the mother, and many of such its not one, im talking about this because its from my home town, mentions another village and atrocity, build military camps in the villages in Ambazonia, villages have been burned, many, the system is bad (judicial), article wrote by minister of justice – open letter to president of the republic, he said, “ mr president you should not be appointing Anglophones to the full post of ministers and directors because one day they will go and meet there brothers, the question is they knew all this, why are they killing us, Biya knows all this, why is he killing us, this minister knew all this, why are they killing us why are we dying, don't we have right to live, who is a human being to determine when we live or when you die, that is how bad it is, that is how bad it has been”. These questions were asked in order to gauge how individuals viewed the identity of language in terms of problems. Due to this focusing on a specific identity, that of a linguistic identity, it was curious to see how respondents would answer this.

## **6.2 Self-determination Based Questions**

As self-determination was the other topic of investigation in this research, a portion of the questions were directly focused on this idea. These questions both directly gauged participants views on this topic and allowed for them to share their opinion. Starting with the

first question being *Who do you think should be responsible for addressing problems in your community? What about your town, department, and region?* Answers did vary for this, with some participants giving answers that would potentially explain their views on self-determination later, while others gave more answers that would normally be expected such as security and economic. The majority of respondents supported the idea of a problem being dealt with at the local level before moving up to other levels of government. Only two participants gave a differing answer with one stating that the central government should solve the problems and the other responded the church should (this respondent's answer may have been biased as had assumed I was with the government). Also, for one participant, no answer was recorded. The next question *What would you say is the most important issue to you in Cameroon?* Resulted in most participants answering that the Anglophone crisis was the most important issue to them with participants giving different insight into why this was their major issue. Some of these were that the anglophones were hurting their own people, with a quote from another participant exemplifying this - "it has done more harm than good" and "we don't know who is who, walking on the streets of Buea you don't know what .... Easily pick you or not, you don't know (yah) the nearest enemy that you have, so if they can actually put an end to this Anglophone crisis it will help to solve so many problems". Another participant stated life has become so much harder due to the crisis - "if you go to the various area you'll see children not going to school, they cannot even write their names because of this crisis" and "Children are really suffering, parents are ..... there houses, they don't have food to eat, we have vulnerable children, vulnerable parents, that there is no shelters, de uh, it's very terrible". One participant said that not even Boko Haram was as an important issue as the crisis. Other than the crisis though, responses such as corruption,

insecurity, worker salary, tribalism and cronyism, exclusion, and a better relationship between the government and the people were all mentioned. When it came to the following two questions being that of *What do you think of Cameroon being such a diverse country? What do you think of Cameroon having multiple main languages?* many participants really did not have a strong opinion on this and seemed indifferent to the topic. Some participants said this was a good thing, while others talked about the 250 ethnic groups in the country. Two noteworthy statements from participants were that “though they say Cameroon is bilingual, ... the Cameroonians are not bilingual, it’s a very poor slander, I don’t like it” Both sides guilty – “all of us are guilty” and a participant described Cameroon with 250 tribes like a chicken moving with 15 chicks. The next question *What would you like to see change in Cameroon?* Was met with a common answer of something in government should change with an emphasis on the president. Also, comments made in regard to this were “we are being ruled by the old, instead of the young” and on participant said they would like democracy where people understand their leaders. Another answer that was given more than once was for the separation of the anglophone regions from Cameroon with statements like “I would like to see a change, yes, yes” “I just want the country, .. my own change .. the country be, there should be ..... they should separate”. Other answers given to this question were stopping the crisis, infrastructure, malaria, education, corruption, and the relationship between English and French speakers. The question of self-determination is then directly asked with *What would you say your views are on Self-determination in Africa?* The responses were overall supportive albeit in different ways and a few participants did not support this. Those that support self-determination said things such as “the French Cameroon should stay in their own section while Anglophone also, should also stay their own section, if

they separated I will sure it will be the most, the people from the eh Anglophone section will be more happier than this, because all the resources are this way, that we have the resources but we cannot manage, you cannot use it, how can I be having petrol in my own land, then Im .... Petrol 1000 Francs where it, where it does not even come from there selling .... 600 franc, 500 francs that's too different, where we ..... while it is in our own land. So its making us so difficult, so that if, for me, they should" and "If people have, want to leave, they should be able to leave then? Yes, yes" while another participant discussed retaliation and states - "if we don't divide, if Cameroon don't divide, this conflict, this war goin on it can till the next 50 years, 1 hundred years, because this, Im a English, I am an English, from birth, not a French". Another participant referenced the ill treatment anglophones receive as being justification for self-determination of Ambazonia. Other who supported self-determination came at it from a more conditional point of view with a participant saying that if there is ill treatment people have the right to vote to break away, a process mentioned by another participant who referenced self-determination as defined by the United Nations charter not being implemented here along with another participant who suggests a referendum as being the key to allowing separation. Finally, one of the participants stated that if there is a good reason, self-determination should be allowed in cases. Five participants did not support the idea of self-determination with many just stating that they either did not support separation or self-determination. One participant stated they didn't want the issue to cause division while another held more pro-Africanist views and as such she stated that once a countries a country, the problems should be solved in that country meaning no breaking away. Finally, a direct question asking about self-determination in Cameroon was asked being *Have you heard of the term "Ambazonia"? If so, what does this term mean to you?* The responses for

this were telling and fell into three categories. The first type of response was one that was either condemnatory of this movement or the participant seemed very nervous or on edge in when answering the question. Those that condemned the Ambazonian movement did so as they felt were not satisfied with the conflict they have brought and how it has interrupted everyday life. It can be said that these participants were hesitant to discuss the topic and only gave brief statements. Other participants fell into this category too of being nervous or hesitant to answer the question and a such gave answers like it is the English-speaking part of Cameroon or that Ambazonia is Southern Cameroon. These participants really didn't describe how they felt about it with one even responding with I don't know. The second kind of response was a more explanatory kind of response with participants giving answers such as Ambazonia being the English regions and it being associated with the separatists. When asked what it meant to these participants, answers ranged from the term meaning being an English-speaking Cameroonian to it being something the government was supposed to deal with to it being just a name associated with the separatists. Finally, the last kind of response was either a justifiable kind of answer or a supportive answer of this movement. The justifiable kind of answer was where the participant acknowledged that people were fighting for a land that could be theirs. The other participants came out in full support of Ambazonia with statements such as Ambazonia – Ambazonia is the, is the ones, us , the Ambazonia to be independent, while the Anglophone should be there, ... we call ourself, we are the Ambazonia of the land” references history and how it was not fair live own way“ “Ambazonia should leave” and “even our own anthem, the anthem that we sing here, the Ambazonia anthem, is even more unique, and telling us who we are, more than, .... The general, national anthem of the country” and “Most people know .. as you are the southwest,

.... for example you are the anglophone speaker, you must know the anthem”. Two other participants talked about how Ambazonia is a state – being ones current country and the other in the future it will be one. What this term meant to these people ranged from people think something went wrong in the country to that name means leave us alone to it meaning where they come from.

### **6.3 Potential Connections**

With the analysis of the interview questions now complete, an analysis of what connection if any these topics have can be done. First and foremost, as has been stated many times throughout this paper, while the sample size is not large enough to reach any concrete conclusions, potential connections that could be further researched is what will be stated here with the possibility that a conclusion could eventually be reached utilizing it. In terms of any connection between identity and self-determination it can be stated that these two themes often overlapped in participants responses as they answered the questions either incorporating both of these themes directly into their response or indirectly mentioning both of these either together or separately. For participants who adopted an identity that was associated with a political concept, trends of support or disapproval did appear. For example, those who at some point during the interview voiced support for the idea of “Ambazonia” ended up having a positive view when asked about the potential for a people to pursue self-determination. Meanwhile those who identified more with a Cameroonian identity tended to reject the idea of self-determination. There were exceptions to the rule however, but overall, this trend seems to be logical. Outside of these miniscule trends it could be stated that the identity associated with being an Anglophone

shaped the majority of participants answers. Factors associated with this identity it could be argued that pushed participants to be more in favor of self-determination versus not are how much importance is placed on the Anglophone Crisis and to what level they describe discrimination at the hands of both the Francophone government and Francophones. These two factors if anything pushed participants to voice support for self-determination which pushes the idea that self-determination is perhaps not a popular idea, but it is one that may be a solution to the problems Anglophones deem important to them.

#### **6.4 Relevancy**

Many peoples throughout history who have sought self-determination have tied their fight to identity and in most cases this connection is a genuine one. Identity and self-determination are two extremely important concepts, especially in Cameroon today. It is so important as the Anglophone Crisis has been framed through this lens entirely. However, while many may view the crisis with this point of view, self-determination is not the primary focus of all Anglophones all the time as evidenced by the interviews. This is not to say support for self-determination is not tied to identity, however it could mean that identity is more of an influence on self-determination rather than being its main driver. This became especially evident in the last section with support for self-determination appearing when participants responded to specific questions with a focus on major discrimination faced from Francophones. While the Anglophone identity may not drive individuals to support self-determination unconditionally in the present, persecution Anglophones have experienced or have seen resulting from their identity, as these participants all spoke English and are Anglophones, could push them to support this idea of self-determination when they otherwise would not have. The same could be said about the crisis, as it

has brought much pain and suffering to many people, so the possibility that some view the government as unable to solve the problem and that just giving the separatists what they want in order to end senseless violence is something that could be a driver of support for self-determination. These ideas however would have to be investigated more, as the questions in this study did not focus directly on this and as such no concrete conclusion can be reached. With this being said, the relevancy poised by what was examined here is the fact that identity and self-determination have a complex dynamic, as revealed from both the case study and the field work. As such, support for separatism in the Anglophone Crisis may be less about identity and more about Anglophone Cameroonians just wanting to be treated fairly and for the violence to be put to an end. As with anything though, there are exceptions as some participants stated directly they supported the cause for independence.

## **6.5 Conclusion and Recommendations**

In conclusion, while it can be said that to an extent identity and self-determination are connected, in the context of this study the connection is either not the main motivator behind support for self-determination or it plays a miniscule role. The data collected from the interviews seems to support this conclusion and while a hard conclusion may not be able to be reached, the trends seem to point towards this. Regarding the research question stated earlier in this paper, what could be deemed an appropriate answer to it is that those who have a strong identity are willing to be supportive of self-determination, however most reasons behind this support are varied and can't be tied directly to one factor. With this determination being reached for the research question, recommendations that can be put forward for those that would like to either build upon this research or conduct research on the Anglophone Crisis should acknowledge that

as many Anglophones can speak two or more languages, it is possible for them to have more than one identity. This fact all included should push any future research to focus on one identity at a time and for any conflict analysts, reasons beyond identity and linguistics must be considered.

## VII CONCLUSION

Regarding reaching a conclusion to the paper that has been presented here, it can be said that there are many things that can be proposed, but while this is the case, no firm conclusion is truly possible with what has been done here. The limitations on the research along with the various other fields of research that could be looked at in conjunction with this is astronomical. Ideas that were discussed earlier and that pointed to trends or concepts are worth investigating more. Such trends as if there are income disparities in terms of how people view this or age playing an unforeseen role causing individuals to craft opinions the way that they have. Many such ideas were put forth and these were examined earlier in this paper, however a firm conclusion is not possible. What can be stated is that Anglophone Cameroonians are not all unified in terms of how they view themselves and how they view self-determination. This has proved true both currently and over the many decades since decolonization. This lack of unity proves to be noteworthy when considering the context this study took place in, being that of the Anglophone Crisis, as whether it could be determined that the crisis has shifted individuals' opinions on these topics or if these topics have ended up shaping the crisis itself is up for debate.

These two topics though are essentially two different ideas and to treat them as one would be to do this research an injustice. This is why it was clearly examined this way earlier in the paper. Identity itself can be presented in many ways and as one interviewee put it, can make things not as easy as alluded to by the participant when they mentioned that there are 250 ethnic groups. What identity is the most important identity to look at in this context or if they are all simultaneously equal is something that would most certainly need to be addressed in future research, as while various forms of identity were attempted to be covered in this paper, there is

most certainly many that have been left out, something that is just a result of the limits of this research. With this being said there were many aspects of identity that were looked at. And while most of this was done indirectly due to the questions that were asked, picking through the data revealed things such as an association either to a linguistic identity or to some other identity such as a political one.

Identity in conjunction with self-determination is where the data proves to be worthwhile as different associations with identity resulted in different views on self-determination. And while they could be many other factors at play here, as no hard conclusion is reached, it can be said that these findings are noteworthy and deserve further exploration. Especially of note was how many participants did not recognize the term self-determination when brought up but that they were able to comprehend it once a definition and examples were given to them. This was able to clarify the specific type of self-determination that was being looked at, unlike identity, and narrow it down to whether individuals deem separatist ideas acceptable or not.

In conclusion, while there are many factors to consider and no hard conclusions can be reached, it is worth noting that there is a relationship between identity and self-determination when it comes to the Anglophones of Cameroon.

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