

MULTICULTURALISM AND POLICYMAKING IN AFRICA

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Introduction

The post-World War II period saw an emergence of new global ideologies encapsulated in human equality, which, in turn, triggered the rise of three waves of political movements challenging the primordial hierarchies of racial inequalities. These coincided with the decolonisation era (between 1948 and 1965) with its civil rights movements against racial hierarchies and segregation led by African-American activists between 1955 and 1965. The emergence of multiculturalism then advocated for minority rights in the late 1960s. These movements revolutionised the early uncivil racial tradition, social stigmatisation and exclusion in politics and the economy, heralding a series of policies that promote liberal democratic constitutionalism, citizenship and human rights (Kymlicka 2010). Multiculturalism focused on the rights of national minorities, indigenous peoples and immigrants in economic redistribution, political participation and cultural recognition (Banting and Kymlicka 2006).

The policy on multiculturalism gained momentum in the 1970s, as a workable instrument to appease migration and diversity, and as a tool for socio-political inclusion in Western societies (Parekh 2000; Modood 2007). This era of the human rights revolution advocated for ethnic and racial justice to address challenges attendant to assimilationist policies promoted in the pre-Civil Rights period (Kymlicka 2012). The principle of multiculturalism was one of the instrumentalised policies by many Western nations that experienced an influx of immigrants (Freeman 2004). It was adopted to heal the “exclusionary ideologies” wounds and promoted egalitarianism and social inclusion (Kymlicka 2012).

Multiculturalism can be considered within the context of “identity politics”, “the politics of recognition” and the “politics of difference”. Thus, multiculturalism relates to social resilience against the challenge of ethnic variations in modern society. In policy terms, it is either a top-down government effort to enhance ethnic pluralism or a bottom-up process for mobilisation of ethnic interests in policy processes and community development (Radtke 2001). The adoption of multicultural philosophies particularly acknowledges diversity and allocates special cultural rights to minority groups such as women, youth, children and immigrant minorities. It is also a process of nation-building to re-acclimatise a sense of belongingness that accommodates multiple complex identities marked by gender variation and class formation. This can be through negotiation, participation and debates that provide an opportunity for new citizenship: non-formalised legislation and a process of participation that recognises

cultural rights, linguistic differences and representation. Ultimately, multiculturalism fosters “positive nationalism” that is capable of ensuring social cohesion through a participatory approach, and “confrontation of different memories” can be attained (Campani 2004).

Following these developments and conscious of the complex socio-political landscape, African governments have retrospectively intensified efforts towards ethnic integration. Multicultural administration has recently involved drafting and adopting local, regional and international regulatory and constituent policy frameworks to ensure equal political representation, and equality in employment distribution for all-inclusive governance in Africa.

This chapter explores multicultural administration policies in Africa in the context of Nigeria and Cameroon. It addresses a fundamental question around the policy effectiveness of diversity policies in Africa. This chapter provides insights on nation-building/constitutional reforms in Africa while demonstrating the critical role of getting the policy right in deepening social cohesion. It is structured as follows: the next section looks into the theoretical discourse of multiculturalism, followed by an exploration of the basic tenets of the African multicultural governance system. Thereafter, subsequent sections delve into multicultural policies in Nigeria and Cameroon selected based on recent ethno-regional tensions. We conclude by giving a general overview of the policy effectiveness of multicultural policies in Africa.

Understanding multiculturalism and its public policy parameters

The term multiculturalism, contends Kallen (1982), is often used in three multi-dimensional ways: as a public policy adopted to promote ethnic diversity and unity; as a principle targeted towards the absorption of ethnic diversity in the general structure of the society and as a narrative of cultural diversity in society. The phenomenon represents a fundamental philosophical proposition of American anthropology. It is also considered an instrument for ensuring social justice, representation and the hegemonic tendency of identity classifications (Segal 2001). The discourse on multiculturalism represents constructive imagery of plural society that recognises the existence of minority groups as founded on the philosophy of multicultural citizenship (Parekh 2000; Modood 2011). Acknowledging and promoting equality among the ethnically, religiously, racially and culturally diverse societies are the basic characters of multiculturalism (Joppke 1996).

Most importantly, however, multiculturalism is not a homogeneous or unifying theoretical condition. It involves dual lenses, a practical approach to diversity and a component of social philosophy that promotes cultural disparities. Multiculturalism has been applicable in social, political and cultural traditions to respond to the challenge of diversity (Prah 2010). Consequently, it is “the political accommodation by the state and/or a dominant group of all minority cultures defined first and foremost by reference to race, ethnicity or religion” (Modood and Meer 2012, p. 181). Thus, it deals with diversity to uphold the significance of an individual and groups’ cultural values (UNESCO 2001).

However, the fear of fractionalisation based on citizens’ loyalty to their ethnic groups rather than national unity remains a vulnerable component of multiculturalism globally and the greatest threat among nations (Huntington 1996, p. 321). Indeed, the fragility of African states often relates to loose ethnic integration and divisive political competition that this presents in the articulation of governance issues (Hyden 2012). Tibi (2009) argues that some cultural arrangements negate democratic principles resulting in cultural differences that may trigger conflicts and tensions in highly polarised societies like those in Africa, where political stability mainly reside in political settlements made by political elites acting as representatives of different tribal groups (Onyango and Hyden 2021).

Nevertheless, multiculturalism is unavoidable in advancing nation-building, accommodating the interest of diverse cultural groups in allocating political and economic resources. Although competition over political power and economic resources is inevitable, competing processes require an egalitarian structure bounded by a legal code to ensure that competition does not lead to conflict. All cultural groups should access and benefit from state opportunities. However, ineffective management of such variegated cultural and ethnic arrangements are commonplace in Africa, hence the complex political transitions (Hyden 2012).

Significantly, the limit of cultural tolerance needs consideration when discussing the principle of multiculturalism. To what extent can a state permit an individual or a group's cultural value? A liberal state should, however, often promote equal citizenship, and it is only through multicultural policies that an individual and a group's cultural rights are guaranteed. In line with this permissible cultural liberty, the limit of cultural autonomy becomes an unresolved intellectual discourse.

Critiques of multiculturalism employ such ambiguity to challenge some multiculturalism theories like the one by Kymlicka that argues for preserving cultural values of different groups, including female genital mutilation among many African communities today. But scholars like Neil Bissoondath (1994) and Richard Gwyn (1995) challenge this by arguing for cultural limitation against such cruel practices as clitorrectomy. Kymlicka (1998) responds that cruel practices are not accommodated within a multicultural context. Multiculturalism prevents external influences on indigenous cultural values and promotes fairness among the various cultural groups. Still, whose responsibility is to define which cultural values are cruel or inhumane, and which benchmarks can be used to determine such unique cultural practices? This creates an endless discourse about Kymlicka's narratives in defining cultural viciousness. More importantly, considering these salient issues, what is good cannot be absolutely determined by an external entity, foreigners or individuals or groups whose domicile is outside of the domain of where a particular cultural ceremony is practised. Moreover, the philosophical foundation of multiculturalism disregards political inequality and related economic issues in society. Kymlicka (2010) argued that:

Even if all Britons come to enjoy Jamaican steel drum music or Indian samosas, this by itself would do nothing to address the real problems facing Caribbean and South-Asian communities in Britain – problems of unemployment, poor educational outcomes, residential segregation, and political marginalisation. These economic and political issues cannot be solved simply by celebrating cultural difference.

(pp. 98–9)

Also, to promote the unique cultural values of various groups, all customs and traditions cannot be legitimately enshrined in the state constitution, like a forced marriage that has been an age-long practice in some cultures. However, there is an opportunity to carefully select innocuous traditions such as music or cuisine that the members of the larger society can consume. The danger associated with such an option revolves around the neglect and belittlement of cultural disparity (Bissoondath 1994), neglecting the problem inherent in cultural and religious differences (Kymlicka 2010).

Additionally, the principle of multiculturalism is hypothetically capable of fortifying power inequalities and limiting minority groups. In determining which traditions are authentic and decoding and exhibiting them, the state often consults with cultural elites within the group. These are usually older men who neglect how these traditions are practised and challenged by internal forces or reformers who may have opposing views on the practicality

and exhibition of cultural values. This constrains groups like women, youth, children, and people with disabilities who may have been perpetually constricted by the incontestable cultural ethos (see *Part X* of this volume). Consequently, the “post-multicultural models of citizenship” highlight and prioritise political participation, economic opportunities, individual freedom, human rights, inclusive governance over symbolic ancestral cultural identities that are well-established in public policies, and constitutional dictums of many countries in Africa and globally (Kymlicka 2010).

Multicultural governance in Africa

Although the principles of equality and recognition of minorities are globally acknowledged, multiculturalism depends on the historical composition of the society, immigration experiences and the conditionality of the indigenous people (Castles 2002). Compared to other regions, Africa has the most diverse communities. For example, linguistically, Nigeria has more than 470 languages (Mengisteab 2010). Diversity portrays the morphological nomenclature of the African nations. Ethnolinguistic variations and cultural pluralism characterise the African post-colonial state. The DRC has 242 languages, Sudan has 134 languages and Ethiopia is estimated to have 89 languages. Even a small country such as the Gambia has ten languages, while religious differences abound in many countries throughout Africa (Mengisteab 2010).

However, ethnolinguistic realism in Africa is not diverse as observed. The different ethnic groups’ languages are “dialectal variants” or “sub-entities of larger groups”. Localised characteristics of the local groups are regarded as separate entities in much of the anthropological literature. For instance, in Ghana, the Akan is comprised of Akuapim, Fanti, Kwahu, Ahanta, Ashanti, Brong, Akyem, Kwahu, Agni, Baule, Nzema, etc., are often considered as separate people and treated within the country separately. Similarly, in East Africa, especially Southern Sudan, the Bari-speaking people who are culturally and ethnolinguistically homogeneous are counted as Fajelu, Mondari, Nyangbara, Kuku, Kakwa, Bari, etc. Nevertheless, the dynamics of African societies reflects the growing multiculturalism (Prah 2010).

In Africa, the phenomenon of multiculturalism was not recognised as a potential academic discourse in the early 21st century. This is because African social composition was organically established based on a multicultural and multi-ethnic structure from time immemorial. Diversity is not new to African society. The influence of colonialism that lumped divergent ethnic groups together has given it great scholarly attention within academia. Nevertheless, multiculturalism was employed as a potent instrument for nation-building after independence. It was used to de-ethnicise most African societies, creating a unitary structure that affirmed the philosophy of nationhood. The concept was also employed to deal with minority-majority conditions in Africa (Prah 2010).

Despite that ethnicity had an overwhelming influence in African politics, the formal engagement of multiculturalism was designed to and committed to nation-building. Because of the general political and economic failure of post-colonial states in Africa, having recognised the consequences of ethnic differences that sometimes triggered the genocidal wars, ethnic conflicts and clashes between groups, multiculturalism became a tool to foster an individual’s sense of belonging and inclusion in the polity (Prah 2010). The cultural differences in Africa have long been acknowledged. Richards (1969) devised a narrative of linguistic, religious and cultural diversities of communities in East Africa. He argued that one of the

contentious discourses on multiculturalism is assimilation. The author further illustrated the case of Oromo in Ethiopia, where assimilation was adopted as a credible option. Assimilation was also used to maintain a hegemonic ascendancy of a dominant culture (Prah 2010). Thus, multiculturalism addressed a kind of cultural inequity in these contexts.

Towards policies of recognition and (re)distribution in Nigeria

The evolution of Nigeria's federal arrangement began in 1914 when the British colonial authority amalgamated the Northern and Southern regions. The consolidation of primordial regional structures wheedled by the colonial representatives was deliberately synchronised for administrative convenience and economic interest (Umesjesi 2012). The amalgamation of the two regions has been regarded as fraudulent/a costly mistake, lumping together incompatible ethnic groups to date (Kendhammer 2014). Nigeria has more than 300 cultural entities with different languages, customs and traditions. The largest cultural groups are Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo, constituting more than 70% of the entire population. Other minority groups such as the Tiv, Kanuri, Urhobo, Itsekiri, Edo, Ijaw, Gwari, Ibibio, Igala, Ebira, Isoko, Nupe, Jukun, Idoma and Efik constitute 23% to 30%. Other minorities constitute the remaining 5% of the population. These diverse cultural entities have their own local languages despite English being the official language, facilitating national unity. It is officially used in business environments, educational institutions and government establishments (Olukoju 2013).

According to Kirk-Green (1996, p. 262),

Nigeria has a unique problem not experienced by any state in the world past or present. The problem is that of achieving solidarity in action and purpose [amid] hundreds of ethnic nationalities, each exerting both considerable forces on the central issue of the nation.

The socio-political arrangement of the country represents what is being cogitated as an ethnical reflection of "dual citizenship". This dual citizenship originates from colonialism which defined colonial citizenship and legal status with membership in a particular customary ethnic community (Ekeh 1975; Mamdani 1996). Consequently, the proceeding Nigerian governments often pursue national integration since the 1970s through a series of policies, as discussed below.

Quota system and catchment area policies

The federal government of Nigeria formulates quota system and catchment area policies to foster equitable access to education. These policies should guide recruitment exercise and admission processes in tertiary institutions. A fixed number is allocated to various states and local governments. Candidate admission into universities is based on these fundamental policies, meaning that the general criteria for admission into universities are not only based on merit but also on the catchment area. However, quota policies have been criticised for not conforming to principles of meritocracy. The policies encourage mediocrity and provide no room for quality candidates due to their catchment areas (Omeje et al. 2016). Moreover, these policies have provided the opportunity to manipulate identities following the state of origin, putting to question the substance of Nigerian citizenship (Oyovbaire 1983).

Federal character

In 1977, the report of the Constitution Drafting Committee focused on the promotion of national unity, ethnic, religious and linguistic sense of belonging among the various groups within the Nigerian federation (Anyadike 2013). Section 14(3) of the 1979 constitution distinctly provides the mode of operation of the Federal Character principles as follows:

The composition of the government of the Federation or any of its agencies be carried out in such manner as to reflect the Federal Character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity and also to command loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or any of its agencies.

The Federal Character should manifest the pluralistic Nigerian society in recruiting and allocating political and administrative offices (e.g., Lamidi, et al. 2018). The policy should reflect the country's diversity in public institutions. It is also adopted to avoid the previous political struggles that perturbed democratic rules (Obiyan and Akindele 2002). Because of such a policy, Yakubu (1999, p. 40) posits that the federal character policy is anchored on the:

distinctive desire of the peoples of Nigeria to promote national unity, foster national loyalty and give every citizen of Nigeria a sense of belonging to the nation notwithstanding the diversities of ethnic origin, culture, language or religion which may exist and which it is their desire to nourish, harness to the enrichment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Notably, the federal character principle should ensure fair political representation. This policy was later enshrined in the 1979 constitution, which accommodates the divergent cultural, linguistic and ethnic groups in public action in Nigeria. The policy further promotes social cohesion, peaceful coexistence of diverse ethnic groups, equal access to economic resources and integration of less privileged states for socio-economic improvement. However, the policy has been widely labelled as a "tribal character" (Oyovbaire 1983) or a "geographical apartheid" (Suberu 2001). The current political administration of Muhammadu Buhari has been extensively carped by the people, alleged of encouraging and condoning political appointment from his ethnic cronies, crass mediocrity into the public service, weak at fighting ethnicity, cronyism and corruption (also see *Chapter 30* for details on how this affects public policy processes in Cameroon). This state of affairs has fostered instability and inter-group/tribal tensions rather than integrating diverse cultural groups within the political union in Cameroon as many other African countries (Bamidele and Ikulegbe 2004; Obi et al. 2019). Nonetheless, no alternative diversity policy has been offered to promote ethno-regional equalities in Nigeria (Ugoh et al. 2012).

National Youth Service Corps (NYSC)

The National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) was established and enshrined in Decree No. 24 of May 1973. The program aimed to foster national unity by engaging Nigerian tertiary graduates to participate in a one-year mandatory service to the Nigerian state. The focus of the program is to promote social cohesion and interaction among different ethnic groups. In 1987, about 2,400 graduates participated in the program (Marenin 1989). Decree No. 51 of 16th June 1993 states the objectives of the NYSC: To, among others, inculcate discipline in

Nigerian youths by instilling industriousness, patriotism and loyal service to Nigeria. This should raise the moral tone of youths by learning about higher ideals of national achievement, social and cultural improvement, etc.

Therefore, corps members should be sent to different states rather than their state of origin or the unfamiliar cultural environment and undergo a three-week orientation camp and be trained by the military officers. During this time, youths are introduced to several programmes to promote and preserve the country's unity (Marenin 1989). However, it is not surprising that this strategy has hardly transformed underlying cultural prejudices that hinder inter-ethnic integration. First, three weeks is hardly sufficient in transforming cultural prejudices and second inter-ethnic tensions are neither a consequence of different communities not working together nor interrelating and not having insights of the 'other's' culture and capabilities. Instead, from a governance lens, these tensions lie within a complex-mix of structural, historical, political and cultural factors that require well concerted policy frameworks and inclusive efforts that would transform the broader governance context, enhancing equality, justice, meritocracy and representation. That may explain why despite, the NYSC's enabling environment for socio-cultural integration, the recent Boko Haram insurgency, banditry and kidnapping, ravaging the northern part of Nigeria has defeated the fundamental objectives of the policy. The high level of insecurity in the region has necessitated the redeployment of many corps' members, especially to the southern states where the security of lives is ascetically guaranteed. Thus, the issue of insecurity remains a crucial challenge for the survival of the policy.

Ethno-regional agitation for restructuring and looming quest for disintegration

Nigeria adopted multicultural principles which underscored and recognised diversity among various cultural entities. The ethnic differences promoted discrimination, thus hampering national integration and sustainable development. Efforts to ensure national unity by the government could not produce the desired results in Nigeria, leading to ethnic disintegration (Osaghae 1990; 2001). This has threatened the Nigerian political union because of the attendant suspicious marginalisation and unequal political representation in governance processes (Obi et al. 2019; Lamidi et al. 2018). However, Nigeria's history checkered with the struggle by ethnic minorities against injustices attendant to unequal power relations between the majority and minority groups. In correcting such political anomalies, minority groups have been at the centre stage of agitation for political restructuring (Osaghae 2001).

For example, between July 1967 and January 1970, the secession movement led by the late Lt. Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu fought against the government of General Yakubu Gowon in the Nigeria-Biafra civil war. The civil war resulted in the death of millions of citizens and the destruction of property. This was followed by several programs by the federal government centred on reconciliation, reconstruction and national integration. More than 50 years following the reconciliation programme, Biafran agitation still assumes a confrontational dimension between the Nigerian military and the pro-Biafra group (Johnson and Olaniyan 2017). Despite the arrest and pardoning of the Biafra secessionist movement like Chief Ralph Uwazuruike of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), there emerged the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). The MASSOB and IPOB revolve around the lasting bitter memory of civil war, acclaimed marginalisation, especially in politics, economy and distribution of national political offices (Achebe 2012; Agbo 2013).

By clamping down the secessionist frontiers, the Nigerian state declared MASSOB and IPOB terrorist organisations, consequently banning their public appearances. Moreover, the country has also witnessed the recent upsurge of secessionist in the Southwestern areas of Nigeria. A pro-Yoruba nationalists movement referred to as O’odua Nationalist Coalition (ONAC), comprising 18 pro-nationalist Yoruba groups, including Oodua Liberation Movement (OLM), Oodua Hunters Union (OHUN), Yoruba Revolutionary Congress (YORC), Oodua Republic Coalition (ORC), Yoruba Students Nationalist Front (YOSNF), Oodua Peoples’ Congress (OPC), Oodua Muslim-Christian Dialogue Group (OMDG) and 11 other groups (PM News, June 13, 2017). Thus, responding to ethnic tension and secession threats, Nigeria has two options: (re)federalise and decongest the central political structure. This may allow regional governments to control the natural resources even though political-economic restructuring may demote state-centredness (Osaghae 2001) and arrogate the political capitals and economic resources. Restructuring rather than secession will allow each region to determine its economic destiny. Consequently, a certain percentage of the revenues generated from the natural resources can be shared by the regional governments with the national government to foster competitiveness and enable each region to develop its economic potential at the subnational levels.

Towards parity of participation in Cameroon

Cameroon has, until recently, been a relatively politically stable nation in Africa since its independence in 1960. For the past 50 years, Cameroon has had only two Heads of State, beginning with Ahmadou Ahidjo, who ruled from 1960 to 1982. In 1966 under the rule of Ahidjo, all political parties were merged into a single party, namely the Cameroon National Union (CNU). Power became centralised in the President. Paul Biya succeeded Ahidjo as President in 1982, leading the Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement (CPDM). In 1990, multiple parties were legalised after a widespread protest, The CPDM party won the 1992 elections and entered into a coalition with the Movement for the Defence of the Republic. Biya is still serving his seventh term as the President and promised to dismantle the dictatorship established by Ahidjo to build a country based on trust and morality.

However, since independence, the political leadership of Cameroon has strived towards constructing a nationalist discourse of “unity” and a united Cameroonian identity, which arguably remain elusive (Ngeve and Oroch 2012). Also, the democratic process in Cameroon has stalled due to poor political governance, leadership and lack of individual freedom in Biya’s government (Mbaku and Takoungang 2004).

The central argument of many critics is that the Anglo-French partition created separate allegiances. Today, the two linguistic and cultural groups of Francophones and Anglophones remain distinct and uncompromising, with each community firmly attached to its own respective cultures, identities and public policies (Fanso 1999). Therefore, the political situation in Cameroon reflects a split in loyalty, which negatively impacts the pursuit of national identity.

Two traditions: the historical legacy of ethnic and cultural diversity in Cameroon

The complexity of Cameroon’s colonial past presents a range of contemporary challenges for parity in policy processes like participation. After World War I, the Ex-German colony of Kamerun was split into English and French Cameroons, setting administrative boundaries, which ignored both cultural and ethnic identities while impeding traditional communication

lines. They disrupted active community relations, traditions and strong kinship ties based on shared socio-political institutions and economic resources, common customs and practices, and sometimes accepting common political control (Ngeenge 2000). Also, despite over 240 indigenous languages, Cameroon followed many of its post-independence African neighbours and adopted “official” languages from its colonial past.

Following the reunification in 1961, English and French became the “official” languages of Cameroon and a policy of bilingualism. The adoption of French and English as the two official languages gave rise to Francophone and Anglophone Cameroonians (Dyers and Abongdia 2010).

Unresolved tensions

The true situation of public policy in Cameroon today does not reflect the multicultural nature of the country (Mbaku 2005; Mbaku and Takoungang 2004). A significant issue is the ongoing socio-political dispute or the “Anglophone problem” (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2019). The essence of this “problem” goes back to the end of the colonisation and reflects the divide between Cameroon’s populations. The Anglophone Cameroonians, who constitute 20%, feel marginalised and exploited by the Francophone-dominated state and by the Francophone population as a whole (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2019; Tamfu 2018). On bilingualism, Dyers and Abongdia (2010) state that Anglophones are widely considered inferior cultural groups. Therefore, they are more likely to learn French rather than Francophones learning English to access services and state benefits. This has resulted in one-sided bilingualism. Thus, the unequal practice of bilingualism largely stems from the fact that the Francophone population vastly outnumbers the Anglophone population, thereby affecting language preferences and functional spheres of power, including government and broader civil services such as in education and justice systems (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2003).

Besides, the Francophone-dominated government has been criticised for deconstructing Anglophone identity by creating divisions within the Anglophone elite to further an Anglophone-Francophone divide. Konings and Nyamnjoh (2003) contend that Anglophone Cameroon has had little autonomy since the reunification. Kofele-Kale (1986) attributes the beginning of this divide to Biya’s predecessor, President Ahidjo, who was widely accused of undermining Anglophone interests and shifting administrative and commercial centres to Francophone regions away from large, influential Anglophone towns such as Buea and Limbe in the South-West region.

In recent years, the unrest has escalated to new heights resulting in violent demonstrations and strikes over the perceived economic and political marginalisation of Cameroon’s Anglophone minority. This follows a series of grievances that morphed into political demands, leading to strikes and riots. The Cameroonian government maintains a fair governance structure, yet the English-speaking Cameroonians still feel oppressed and need to take action (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2019). Since 2015, the Anglophone resistance has increased, and claims autonomy from the French-dominated regions has grown. This ongoing tension has caused a series of protests, school and court closures, and teacher strikes, in response to government-led interventions to control Anglophone resistance, including internet cuts, curfews and violent clashes (Tamfu 2018).

Since 2015, government forces and Anglophone separatists have engaged in increasingly brutal violence and reprisals to lay down their weapons and return to community life. The opposition activists have also been detained. This has been attributed to the emergence of

“regionalism” and lack of progress concerning the ongoing Anglophone/Francophone dispute to the domestic (cultural) hegemonic tendencies of the Francophone-dominated state (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2019).

Conclusion

For multicultural public policy to be realised in Africa beyond its ideological and constitutional adoptions, the political leadership must undertake genuine political and institutional reforms to remedy the underlying structural/cultural policy problems. In particular, decentralisation policies should be rigorously applied and improved to reduce the powers of emerging ethnic inequalities. More efforts should be on building inclusivity and public trust. There is a need to improve evidence of governance transparency, for example, by creating and strengthening regional councils that can better distribute financial resources and powers through sound and citizen-led public policy designs. Finally, it is vital to take legal measures specific to the marginalised regions in a particular country to ensure representation, especially in social policies like education, health and justice. It is clear from this chapter that the pro-diversity policies currently underway in most African countries should also find ways of using informal, in addition to formal institutions and actors to drive inter-ethnic integration.

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