The United Nations Plebiscites in the Northern Cameroons: Post-Colonial Issues and Challenges in Sardauna Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The Northern Cameroons, which the Sardauna LGA of Taraba State constitutes a part, was neither a colony nor protectorate of Northern Nigeria, but a mandate of the League of Nations (1922 to 1945) and later, a trusteeship territory of the United Nations (1945-1961) handed to Britain to administer after Germany was defeated by the allied forces in the First and the Second World Wars. At the close of colonisation and the independence of most African countries, particularly the British colony, Nigeria and the French colony, Cameroon in 1960, the political future of the Northern Cameroons was not decided until the plebiscite of 1961 conducted under the supervision of the United Nations. The plebiscite impacted on the cooperate existence of the various ethnic groups, who on equal bases voted to join Nigeria, by creating identity question that have become a post-colonial dilemma in the area. This paper argues that since their amalgamation with Nigeria, ethnic groups from this region have had their indigeneity and the citizenship rights contested by the authorities. The problem associated with indigeneity and citizenship questions have persisted because of their transverse nature on the Nigeria-Cameroon borders, lack of historical and political trajectories captured in the Nigeria's political development, and the constitutional gaps in reflecting their unique status of citizenship in Nigeria. The paper concludes that except these problems are addressed, ethnic tension and conflicts will continue to characterise ethnic relations in the area.
Keywords: Plebiscite, United Nations, Northern Cameroons, Indigeneity, Citizenship, Sardauna LGA, Nigeria

Introduction

The evolution of modern states in Africa also raised several post-colonial issues and challenges that have turnout catastrophically for most intergroup relations in many countries in the 21st century. This is particular with the much exploited politics of identity surrounding the question of 'blood and belonging' or otherwise, indigeneity and the citizenship question (Adejumobi 2005). In the international scene, colonial boundaries created the underbellies of ethno-cultural and political identities of the various ethnic groups naturally resident on the borderlands of most states in Africa. In modern time, colonial boundaries have continued to constitute serious challenges to the internal stability of these countries. The problems stem from the fact that the colonialists never created modern states to reflect the internal socio-cultural dynamics of African societies in which they find meaning and expression (Asiwaju 1985).

The lack of people's cultural boundaries tallying with conventional political boundaries created two problems. The first problem was the inability or the difficulty of the state to create a rallying national identity as against cultural identities and divided loyalties. This means that cultural expression of the various ethnic groups came to precede national identities. The second problem was that, it created contested space for the emergence of indigeneity and the citizenship question in most parts of Africa, including Nigeria (Lenshie and Johnson 2012). In contemporary time, the problems manifest both internally and internationally. Internally, it manifest between and among states that have their ethnic populations transverse by the local borders within national boundaries (Alubo 2004, 2006, Egwu 2004, 2006), whereas internationally, the problems manifest between and among ethnic groups, whose cultural boundaries are transverse by the international boundaries (Adejumobi 2005, Talla and Lenshie 2012).

Central to these analogies is the problems of indigeneity and citizenship associated with ethnic identities, which play out along the cultural and political identities, subsumed by the various ethnic groups, as a functional political identity problem in contemporary Africa (Mamdani 1998, 2005). The question posed by Mamdani (1998) 'when does a settler become native?' further generates the identity question for most ethnic groups on the international borders in Africa, which exacerbates the identity question, 'who are they? And where do they belong?' Due to the transverse nature of ethnic groups and the underlying underbelly of colonial state boundaries, the competition for, albeit, scares resources between and among various ethnic populations also create the condition for people to make claims and counter-claims to territoriality, notwithstanding whether they criss-crosses the international borders. In most cases, the problems in contemporary Africa prevails where 'state of belonging' has been controversially determined, or better still, where 'territorial belonging' or 'nationality' was as a matter of fact, controversial before and even after independence. In this region the providence was for

them to determine where they wanted to 'belong' by means of the plebiscite administered on ethnic populations, who majority were traditional.

Plebiscite, worldwide, is known to be a critical issue, because of its centrality in determining the decisions of indigenous people over certain issues that are contestably critical. Plebiscites are conducted, especially when it involves the issues of self determination. It is an exclusive preserve of the United Nations, because they are responsible for granting the opportunity for the people to decide where necessary, their choice of belonging. In all parts of Africa where plebiscites was administered were virtually contested places of self-determination. In recent time, after a protracted ethno-racial conflict in the Darfur Region in Sudan, a plebiscite was conducted and it yielded the country of Southern Sudan. In the Northern Cameroons, the plebiscite created for most affected people, post-colonial issues and challenges such as indigeneity and the citizenship question among others in Nigeria.

Indigeneity and the citizenship question are identity questions, which bothers first, on issues of rights determined on the bases of 'blood and belonging', and second, on benefiting from the several privileges that comes with being a citizens of a country. This identity question creates the situation where some ethnic groups become more preferred above others on the claims that they are 'settler or alien'. In Sardauna LGA, this manifest in the form of the clustering of some ethnic groups at the local government services, the occupation of political positions, and the prejudicial treatment of other ethnic individuals seeking indigene certificates, harassment by the authorities, among other challenges. These experiences in contemporary time have created the impression that their decision to join the Federal Republic of Nigeria was a 'paradox of self-determination' (Chen-Langëë 2004). The objective of this paper is to engage the study of the United Nations plebiscite in this part of the country, to locate within the historical context of the Northern Cameroons the post-colonial issues and challenges underpinning the political development in Sardauna LGA.

Conceptual Issues: Indigeneity and Citizenship

Indigeneity and the citizenship question occupy the centre stage of political discourse in contemporary Nigeria. Indigeneity relates to determining who are indigenous people? These are a community of people, who exist only within the geographical space of an ethnic group (Iroanya 2005). This definition points to ethnicity as central to understanding one's indigeneity, because the basis of such determination is biological and cultural relations. In another definition, indigeneity is seen from the indigenous community standpoint, which according to Cobo (1972) cited in Trujano (2008:13):

> Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems.

From the above considerations, it must be stated that in Africa, the concept 'indigenous community' goes beyond colonial state boundaries as represented in modern state boundaries in Africa, because it incorporates ethnic identity defined by 'ancestral territories' and situated within 'own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems' that determined their bio-social relations and existence as a collective whole. In other words, the sense of belonging of 'indigenous community' is the sum total of the cultural, traditional, social, economic and political affinities defined by ancestral connection no matter the geographical cleaves to which they are enclosed. These, therefore, are the bases of cultural citizenship.

Therefore, indigeneity is a primordial concept which seeks to raise the consciousness of in-group and out-group relations within a geographical territory. In this sense, an indigene of a particular community in a country is a member of an ethnic group, and a citizen of the country (Iroanya 2005). Egwu (2006) sees indigeneity as citizenship at the local level; a status defined by group and community rights arising from the strong attachment to the land and the prevailing communitarian ideology. In this sense, indigeneity could be seen as a factor of discrimination, first against members of same ethnic group, who do not belong to the same village, and second, against members of other ethnic groups within the same locality (Iroanya 2005). This underpins the ethnic claims that 'they do not belong here'. In this connection, Egwu (2004) submits:

> Quite central to the notion of citizenship are civic virtues of political participation and inclusion. The right to participate in the governance of one's country or community is a foremost political right and the basis for measuring the quality of citizenship. It is at the heart, not just of the liberal democratic project, but the very notion of statehood and its membership.

Egwu's assertion points to the roots that give individuals and group the virtue of humanness within resident in a

particular geographical boundary. However, the concept citizenship does not apply to everybody, except upon meeting the conditions attached to acquiring it (Lenshie and Johnson 2012). This is where citizenship becomes a contested phenomenon within the context of defined social, political and civic manifestations. Adebanwi (2009) asserts:

> Citizenship is struggle; it is (struggle for) community, it is (struggle for) belongingness, it is (struggle for) participation, citizenship is also reciprocity. However, there are various degrees of struggle, reciprocity and community embedded in different contexts of citizenship.

But centrally, citizenship struggle is a contested outcome of demand and claims of rights for expanded socio-economic and political space and recognition within a given geopolitical space called a country. The virtual consideration of citizenship finds expression within the paradigm that is enhanced by status of birth (the law of blood), law of place, and naturalization (Kazah-Toure 2004). As the case is in Nigeria, the situation makes it difficult for the conception of nationhood. This is because indigeneity and citizenship factors come to play out in the attempt to create group identities, differentiate or discriminate among them. Internally, a citizen of a community, local and state government in that order, may not be a citizen of another. And internationally, a citizen of a country cannot be a citizen of another, except otherwise provided for by the constitution to permit such. However, there is a difficulty that becomes evident in determining citizenship in Africa, specifically in territories where ethnic groups transverses neighbouring boundaries due to the prevalence of indigeneity and cultural definition of citizenship.

A cultural definition of citizenship is a reflection of communitarian perspective of citizenship, which upholds indigeneity. In this context, citizenship can only be understood fundamentally from the 'relatedness and mutuality' of the society (Sandel 1996), which recognised and incorporate attachment to the shared values and feelings of solidarity of nation states and local communities (Mouffe 1992; Taylor 1992). This is because culture cannot be deleted from the conceptions of citizenship and citizens cannot psychologically abstract their conceptions of the political community from the real communities in which they live, where through experience they have learned to be active citizens (Parry 1991). Since identity is grounded in personal histories, which in turn are grounded in societies in which active citizenship have been learned, the individual is not at all as autonomous as liberals suggest, because it does not exist in a cultural vacuum (Plant 1991, Sandel 1996). Therefore, preserving these identities and their moral bearings, they want to preserve their traditional cultural communities by creating social closure against other people. This is the root of ethnic conflicts in multicultural societies manifested in the context of indigeneity and citizenship question.

Theoretical Framework of Analysis

The questions surrounding indigeneity and citizenship rights in Sardauna LGA is an outcome of 'the mass of complex activities among various groups' in the society (Varma 1975, Heywood 2007:297), making claims and counter claims to territoriality while competing for ends and means of survival in Nigeria. The analytical tools used here are a combination of group theory and elite theory in the context of the political economy approach to describe and explain the dynamics of indigeneity and citizenship questions in the area. Bentley to who group theory originated, defines group as 'a certain portion of the men [women] of a society, taken, however, not as a physical mass cut off from other masses of men [women], but as a mass [of] activity, which does not preclude the men [women] who participate in it from participating likewise in many other group activities' (Varma 1975:162-163). Central to this definition is the 'mass of complex activities' creating patterns of interaction between and amongst groups, the government and its antics. The mass of complex activities (Varma 1975:163), translates into group claims which may not necessarily be the same. In his discourse of group asymmetry, Horowitz (1985:196) pointed out that: 'Group claims are not equal. Some groups seek domination, not the mere avoidance of it.

Accordingly, some seek to exclude others from the polity although, and some seek merely to be included on equal terms'. It is the interrelated but also separate claims to social, economic and political space, recognition and resources that leads to group competition and conflicting relations, manifested in the areas of mutual incompatibility (Horowitz 1985:196). However, the intensity of group conflicts is dependent on the strength of group claims, for example, to both tangible and intangible resources. The claims group make does not necessarily seek for absolute value but a value determined by the extent to which it reduces another group's share (Horowitz 1985:196). The claims could be ethnically or religiously driven, but central to all is that, '…claims to priority or exclusion are supported by appeals to moral principles, invoked to justify departures from strict equality' (Horowitz 1985: 201), depending on their level of consciousness.

Group consciousness does not emerge in a vacuum. There are propellers or motivators of such consciousness, and they may not necessarily be known. But scholars called them the elites. Who are the elites? They are a 'small minority' within a group, who by their possession of social and political power, lots their influence over the larger majority in the society. They are successful people who rise to the top in every

occupation and stratum of society (Varma 1975:144-145, Mahajan 1988). Gaetano Mosca calls them the 'oligarchy' (Varma 1975:144-145). They rule over the masses by the directing and channelling group behaviour and mass actions to meet their objectives. Roberto Michel called them the oligarchs; they are centrally the motivator of collective behaviour among group membership, directed at other groups to rectify these imbalances. The oligarchs achieve this objective through the use of oratory power, persuasion and by playing upon sentiments in order to fool them. C. Wright Mills classified them as follows: the political elite, religious elite, traditional elite, economic elite and the military elites. These elites must not necessarily be integrative, but within their spheres have common objectives. They have greater role in creating and determining the peaceful or conflicting engagements among various groups in the society (Varma 1975, Mahajan 1988). In this context, it is when the elites (governing and non-governing elites) are engaged in an unhealthy competition for state power, social, economic and political space as well as for primitive accumulation of resources in a multiethnic society that, ethnic consciousness is created and directed at perceived competitors using the label 'indigeneity and the citizenship question', in spite of the long history of collective and mutual relations. This explains the situation in Sardauna LGA of Taraba State.

Sardauna LGA: Political Geography and Historiography

Sardauna LGA located on the Southeast of Taraba State was created on the 3rd February, 1976, from the defunct Sardauna province in North-East Nigeria. Tukur (2005a) revealed that the area was earlier addressed in Fulani language as *Chabbal Haman Joda*, which means the 'mountains of Haman Joda'. However, the area was later renamed the *Mambilla Plateau*. The administrative Headquarters of Sardauna LGA area is Gembu. Gembu as well as Nguroje (the second most populated area) are metropolitan towns in the local government area, not just inhabited by the Mambilla as often presumed but also other ethnic groups that include the Kaka, Panso, Kambu and Fulani.

Sardauna is a Fulani title given to any person, who is considered to be goodhearted, altruistic, selfless, and philanthropic. The title is associated with one of the hierarchies in leadership in the Sokoto Caliphate. Therefore, the name of the local government area is a direct adoption of the title of the late sage, Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto and the premier of Northern Nigeria. Accordingly, the adoption of the name at its creation indicated acceptance of the gesture of Sir Ahmadu Bello, who was found to be kind-hearted and unselfish to have travelled from the premier headquarters in Kaduna to the area ahead of the plebiscite of 1961. The journey was not unconnected with the need to ensure that this part of the Northern British Cameroons was not ceded to the Republic of Cameroon during the plebiscite (Ahmadu, Joseph and Ngah 2009, Lenshie and Johnson 2012).

Sardauna LGA share borders with the Republic of Cameroon on the Southern, Eastern and almost half of the Western parts of the local government area (Ahmadu, Joseph and Ngah 2009). On the Northern and South-Western axis, she shares boundaries with Gashaka and Kurmi LGAs. It covers a land mass of about 3,765.2 Km². Sardauna LGA is situated on the latitude 5°31' and 7°18' North and longitude 10°18' and 11°37' East (Tukur 2005). Suffice it to note that, Sardauna LGA is located on an altitude of about 1850 metres above the sea levels (Ciroma 2009). This makes the area the only territory with the highest altitude in Nigeria. Sardauna LGA is inhabited by the Mambilla, Kaka, Fulani, Kambu and Panso ethnic groups, whose villages are situated on the undulating mountainous ranges, spread from the Nigerian borders into the Republic of Cameroon. The population of the area is projected at 224,357 (National Population Commission 2006). Sardauna LGA, because of its landmass and population is described as one of the largest in the state.

Sraduana LGA like other territories in Africa, and particularly on the Nigeria-Cameroun borders and their negotiation into either Nigeria or Cameroun were outcome of colonial debacles which is not a recent phenomenon. The history of Western colonialism on the African soil evolved from the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, during which the continent of Africa was partitioned by the gregarious European nations (Rodney 1979). Generally, the colonial occupation of Africa brought a lot of consequences (Bagu 2011:83). Colonialism was simply arm-banditry, and particularly, for the citizens of the Northern Cameroons, a betrayal of trust. Colonialism which manifested in the form of interchange created the problem between national citizenship and cultural citizenship through the act of state creation (Lenshie and Johnson 2012). It gave rise to ethnicity and exclusionary politics in Nigeria, especially, for ethnic groups' resident on the international borderlands. On the Nigeria-Cameroun borders, ethnic group affiliations transverses the two countries, and because of this, the ethno-cultural citizenship rather than national citizenship assumes the major source of ethnic identity boundaries. For them, international boundaries exist only in the maps, but cultural boundaries are what define their indigeneity and citizenship.

Although, Germany annexed and occupied the Cameroons in July 1884 (Nfi 2012:59, Ngoh 1987), on this axis, they were the first to penetrate and establish colonial ties with the people in 1907, after halting the fierce and determined jihadists, the *Fulbe Siire* from capturing the Sarduana LGA in 1901 (Lenshie and Johnson 2012). Within this period, Germany has successfully annexed and established the colonial territory, both on the

African and the World map, before the Anglo-French allied forces forced them out of the area during the First World War in 1916. Although, the period before 1914, Germany had established administrative headquarters in Banyo, their military and administrative officers visited Sardauna LGA several times. The experience of the aborigines with the German colonial officers in this region was considered to be that of brutality (Talla and Lenshie 2012). Describing the administration of Germany in this part of the world, Fombad (2011) pointed that,

> German rule … was based on a law that was passed in the Reichstag in 1886, which conferred wide powers on the Kaiser to legislate by decree for order and good government in the protectorate. To facilitate administration, the country was divided into several administrative districts. The districts around the coast were placed under civil administrators whilst those in the interior were placed under military commanders. ….Many writers on the country share Le Vine's conclusion that German rule, as well as its system of justice, was strict, often harsh, but just.

With the fall of Banyo in 1915 to the allied forces, it marked an end to the nominal administration by German colonial power over this vast territory. But, the total lost was acknowledged after the fall of their last stronghold on the territory at Mora fell on 20th February, 1916 (Fombad 2011). On 4th March, 1916, the two victors finally initiated an agreement that formally partitioned Cameroon into two unequal parts, with the French taking almost four-fifths of the territory. This partition was confirmed in an Anglo-French Declaration, signed in Paris on 10th July, 1919 by Viscount Milner (for the British) and M. Simon (for the French), which legally confirmed the borders as delineated on 4th March, 1916. When a final peace settlement with the German Government was concluded in France in 1919, called the treaty of Versailles, they latter gave up all claims over the territory.

The division was done in such a manner that one-fifth of the territory contiguous with eastern Nigeria was assigned to Britain while the remaining four-fifths was assigned to France as mandates ratified by the League of Nations in 1922. The process was confirmed in Article 119 of the Treaty of Versailles and under Articles 22 and 23 of the League of Nations Covenant. This conferred a trust to the two mandatory powers, Britain and France, 'to promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and social progress of the inhabitants of the territories', and make regular reports to the League of Nations' (Fombad 2011). With this situation, it marked the beginning of colonial interchange for the ethnic inhabitants of Sarduana LGA. This confused their sense of belonging and self-determination, who were under the same colonial control before Germany lost out in the world war.

In the British sphere, the one-fifth territory of the German colony was divided by the Benue valley to be designated as Northern British Cameroons and Southern British Cameroons in 1946. The 1946 British 'Order in Council' contains the details of such division (Lenshie and Johnson 2012). The presence of British colonial officers in Sardauna LGA was first witnessed in 1917, but formal colonisation started in 1926 after securing full mandate to administer the area (Tukur 2005b). It is important to state that as part of the Northern Cameroons, this area was neither British colony nor protectorates, rather a trust territory handed over by the United Nations to administer on her behalf, between 1946 and 1961 when plebiscite was conducted in the area to determine their status of belonging.

The UN Plebiscite in the Northern Cameroons: Sardauna LGA in Perspective
Prior to the independence of Cameroon and Nigeria respectively, it was imperative to engage the citizens of the Northern and Southern Cameroons in a self determination exercise. It was no longer tenable that the people will continue to be administered by these countries at attainment of independence as UN Trusteeship territories. Houser (1959) reported that:

> At the 1958 session of the General Assembly no question aroused more bitterness than that of the future of the British and French Cameroons Trust Territories. These territories, halves of the pre-World War I German Kamerun colony, which first became League of Nations mandates and subsequently UN trust territories, in a cultural sense comprise three, rather than two, territories: the French territory, the Northern British Cameroons, and the Southern British Cameroons (the latter two separated by a thin slice of Nigerian territory).

The concerns for the territorial independence of the Nigeria and Cameroon at the 1958 session of United Nations General Assembly was to necessitate a plebiscite for the Trusteeship territories. The United Nations Plebiscite Council was then saddled with the responsibility of forging the modalities for the plebiscite to be conducted in November of 1959. At this juncture, it is therefore relevant to explore the dynamics of the plebiscite in Sarduana LGA, being a part of the Northern Cameroons.

The Politics of Self-determination and the 1959 Plebiscite
The United Nations had decided to conduct a plebiscite in 1959 in the Northern Cameroons under the auspices of the UN Plebiscite Council, so that the people individually would determine where they want to belong. This suggests that the self determination exercise was arranged, conducted and supervised by the UN herself.

Sardauna LGA which was a part was to also participate in the plebiscite under the umbrella identity as the 'Mambilla District'. For the purpose of effective plebiscite, trust territories were separated from Nigeria under adopted Resolution 1352 (XIV) of the United Nations (Nfor, 2010). Dr. Djalah Abdoh of Iran was made plebiscite Commissioner and had organised the Northern Cameroons into 334 plebiscite stations, where on the 7th of November 1959 the people were expected to determine their political future. The questions presented were as follows:

i)   Do you wish the Northern Cameroons to be part of the Northern Nigeria when
        Federal Republic of Nigeria becomes independent?
ii)   Are you in favour of deciding the future of the Northern Cameroons at a future date?

During the plebiscite, only the male gender was allowed to participate. The Northern Nigerian elites and their erstwhile colonialists had confidently asserted that given the homogeneity of the Northern Cameroons citizens with the Northern Region was going to yield explicitly a result that was going to be in their favour.

According to Houser (1959), 'Surprisingly, the results of the plebiscite announced in November 9, 1959 indicated that, the people of the Northern Cameroons wished to have the trusteeship continue until a later time'. What was unspoken on the mind of the people of the Northern Cameroons was the dissatisfaction with the plebiscite for not having a 'third alternative' on the questionnaire, which may have read: 'do you wish to achieve independence without joining both the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the *La Republique du of Cameroun*?' From the plebiscite result (Table 1), indicating out of the registered population of 10,098 people, a majority population of 7,353 as against 2,745 people voted in favour of the deferment of the plebiscite to show their dissatisfactions. It was evident that the citizens of the Northern Cameroons were not ready or willing to join Nigeria. Therefore, it was only left for the United Nations to determine further what steps to take to ensure the political future of the people.

Table 1: Result of voting by each district in the British Northern Cameroons in 1959

Plebiscite	Vote for Nigeria	Vote Against Nigeria	Vote Total
Dikwa North	7,575	7,197	14,772
Dikwa Central	8,891	11,988	20,879
Gwoza	3,336	6,773	10,109
Madagali/Chubunawa	4,247	9,818	14,065
Mubi	6,120	13,578	19,698
Chamba	4,539	11,651	16,190
Toungo/Gashaka	2,252	2,099	4,351
*Mambilla	2,745	7,353	10,098
United Hills	3,063	89	3,152
Total	42,788	70,546	113,334

Source: Trusteeship Committee Report on the Plebiscite of 1959, United Nations Document T/1491.*Currently, Mambilla District is contemporary Sardauna local government area.

In Sardauna LGA, the decision to defer a final decision on the territory's future until a later date was not taken by a single ethnic population registered in the plebiscite. Since all the registered population constituted a collection of the various ethnic groups in the area, it is inferable that they decided in the majority for the future date. However, this decision by the people were misinterpreted and some particular ethnic groups in the area were considered to be in enmity to the plight of achieving independence by joining the Northern Region on the attainment of Nigeria's independence. This teething problem was to manifest boisterously in the forthcoming plebiscite in 1961, when the United Nations General Assembly on the examination of the results/reports from the 1959 plebiscite was to advise appropriately on the next line of decision. Accordingly, Houser (1959) reported that

> Another plebiscite will be held after the French Cameroons and Nigeria have
> achieved independence, in 1960, to allow the people to choose whether they wish to
> join Nigeria, to join the French Cameroons, or to form an independent territory with
> the Southern British Cameroons.

Whether it was a speculation as pointed by Houser (1959) above, that a third alternative was to be included in the administration of the 1961 plebiscite, was very much to be desired by the people of the Northern Cameroons as well as the Southern Cameroons. Unfortunately, arriving from the Fourth Committee meeting of the United Nations Plebiscite Council amidst controversy over the position of the Trusteeship territory between John Foncha (who favoured the union with the *La Republic du Cameroun* and E. M. L. Endeley (who favoured the union with Nigeria), the Fourth (Trusteeship) Committee adopted the compromise between the two leaders that a plebiscite should be held in the territory in which the exact wording of the plebiscite question was left to the session of the Assembly to determine (Houser 1959, Talla 2011, Lenshie and Johnson 2012). At the session, the choice of achieving independence by joining an independent Nigeria or an independent Republic of the (French) Cameroons was adopted.

On the resolution/report submitted by the Fourth (Trusteeship) Committee, the United Nations General

Assembly resolved and adopted thus:

> Recalling further its Resolution 1473 (XIV) of 12 December 1959 in which the General Assembly, having considered the results of the plebiscite in the northern part of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration, recommended the organisation by the Administering Authority, in consultation with the United Nations Plebiscite Commissioner, of a further plebiscite to be held in the Northern Cameroons under United Nations supervision between 30 September 1960 and March 1961, on the basis of the two questions defined in paragraph 3 of the said resolution.

With this resolution, it was certain that another plebiscite was to be held in the Trusteeship territories on the basis of two questions as pointed above. It is equally important to examine the process the plebiscite of the 1961, particularly in Sardauna LGA.

The 1961 Plebiscite: Continuity and Change in Self-Determination Politics

At the height of the plebiscite campaign, ethnic peculiarities came to play out in the political process of self determination. There were claims and counter claims over the territorial ownership of the Sardauna LGA. The Panso, Kambu and Kaka speaking people were enlisted for deportation on the ground that they did not belong in the territory. The attempt was despite shared cultural affinities and common history of migration some centuries before formal colonisation of the region was announced at the Berlin Conference of 1885. The attempt was not without mass protest that almost caused ethnic conflicts in Sardauna LGA. It was the intervention of Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto and Premier of Northern Nigeria that their deportation was halted because there were no bases for such actions since the history of all human has been of migration and transmigration (Lenshie and Johnson 2012).

Notwithstanding, the people were granted the rights to participate in the 1961 plebiscite to determine where they wanted to belong. It must be stated handy that there was no third alternative in the 1961 plebiscite. The absence of a 'third alternative' was considered as a conspiracy against the people of the Northern Cameroons, because earlier the United Kingdom Representative to the United Nations Trusteeship Council, Andrew Cohen, had advised Her Majesty the British Monarch, Queen Elizabeth, not to accept the decision to the inclusion of a 'third alternative' (Lenshie and Johnson 2012). The questions presented to the people of the Northern Cameroons in the plebiscite of 11th February 1961 were as follows:

i)   Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroon?
ii)   Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the Republic of Nigeria?

At this time, of the 20,000 people from the Mambilla District that participated in the plebiscite, a population of 13,523 people as against 7,467 people in Sardauna LGA voted to achieve independence by joining Nigeria. See table 2 for the details of the plebiscite results. It is important to point out that the decision to vote for Nigeria despite their proximity to the Republic of Cameroun was taken individually and not as ethnic groups, and this was motivated by Sir Ahmadu Bello's visit and promises to the people prior to the plebiscite. He urged the people '…to look forward to sharing in the tremendous economic development of our country, to sharing in the massive scheme for expanding education. Above all, you can be assured of security of the rule of law, the protection of your lives and houses and farms and to the guarantee of your human rights' on the basis of equal citizenship status (Ahmadu, Joseph and Ngah 2009).

Nevertheless, for over five decades of Nigeria's independence, the citizenship status of these ethnic nationalities is still contested both from within and externally, by people who know little or nothing about the colonial trajectories that configured them and their territory into Nigeria. As this is the case in Nigeria, on the other side of the Republic of Cameroun, their nationality is also contested.

Table 2: Result of voting by each district in the British Northern Cameroons in 1961

Plebiscite Area	Vote for Nigeria	Vote Against Nigeria	Vote Total
Dikwa North	22,765	10,562	33,327
Dikwa Central	28,697	24,203	52,000
Gwoza	18,115	2,554	29,672
Madagali/Chubunawa	16,904	13,299	30,203
Mubi	23,798	11,132	34,930
Chamba	9,704	25,177	34,881
Toungo/Gashaka	4,999	3,108	8,107
*Mambilla	13,523	7,467	20,00
United Hills	7,791	157	7,948
Total	146,296	97,659	243,958

Source: Trusteeship committee report on the plebiscite of 1959, United Nations Document T/1491. *Currently, Mambilla District is partly Sardauna local government area.

The question is: 'where do they belong?' From the 1961 plebiscite results, the people from the Chamba Plebiscite station never voted to achieve independence by joining the Federal Republic of Nigeria, but at no circumstance their nationality have been contested in Nigeria. Why then the citizenship contestations of some ethnic groups in Sardauna LGA? The problem stems from enduring colonial legacies manifested through ethnic division between the Republic of Cameroon and the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This is explicit that throughout Africa, boundaries distinguishing different sovereign state entities were drawn by colonial powers in the late 19th century without local knowledge and interest in the political, social, and regional particularities. The inability to actually take into consideration the peculiarities of these ethnic inhabitants construed the post-colonial crisis which most ethnic group on the Nigeria-Cameroon borders encounters in the contemporary Nigeria.

The Post-1961 Plebiscite: Issues and Challenges in the Northern Cameroons
The 1961 plebiscite marked the period colonial domination of somewhat characteristic ended because it was during this period the citizens of the Trusteeship territories determined their place of belonging via the plebiscite conducted that year. It was also the period that the United Nations during its 994th plenary meeting of 21st April 1961, in accordance with the General Assembly Resolutions 1352 (XIV) and 1473 (XIV), resolved to terminate the Trusteeship Agreement of 13th December 1946 concerning the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration. Nevertheless, it was a period that after the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement that the United Nations in accordance with Article 76b of the Charter of the United Nations and in agreement with the Administration Authority that, the Northern Cameroons on 1st June 1961, upon its joining the Federation of Nigeria should be made a separate province of the Northern Region of Nigeria. The termination of the Trusteeship Agreement and the integration of the territory into Nigeria, created new problems though salient, but constitute the centre of contestation in contemporary time. Some of the problems, from the general point of view as they affect the Northern Cameroons to specific as they affect Sardauna LGA will be explored.

The Absence of Historical and Political Trajectories: What went wrong?
There is the question whether the Northern Cameroons was a part of Northern Nigeria since 1914 as historically presumed in both political and historical literatures as well as the atlas of Nigeria. This is because the incidence that followed after the defeat of Germany in this axis in 1916, presented the people as victims of the World War I, necessitated by the circumstance which led to the establishment of the League of Nations, saddled with the responsibility of handing them over to the United Kingdom as a 'Mandate Territory' ratified in 1922. After the World War II, the territory was transformed to a 'Trusteeship Territory' under the auspices of the United Nations in 1946. The transformation guaranteed the United Kingdom to administer them as such, and not either as a colony or a protectorate (Lenshie and Johnson 2012). The territory was therefore not a part of the Northern Nigeria, but if it was, there would not have been a separation and plebiscite administered in the area to determine where they wanted to belong.

Unfortunately, many Nigerian historians and political scientists while chronicling the history and political development of Nigeria, they fail to incorporate the historical and political trajectories of the Northern Cameroons to demonstrate how it was configured into Nigeria. Of the most historical and political literatures on Nigeria to the best of our knowledge, there are very scanty studies conducted by Nigerian scholars on the area (Kurfi 1983). Could it be that they were in haste not to have captured the historical events that took place in the region? Or could it be that it was deliberate? It suffices to state that Nigerian historians and political scientists have been unfair to the ethnic populations in this part of the country, who later join Nigeria in 1961.

It is historically and politically well documented, sermonised and appreciated that 1st of October 1960 was when Nigeria gained independence from the United Kingdom. The way the Nigerian political history is presented in most historical and political literatures presented the Northern Cameroons as part of the contemporary geography of Nigeria. It is pertinent therefore to ask: were all parts of the country independent on the 1st day of October 1960? If not, why has the history and political development of this territory not incorporated into the Nigerian political history for the Nigerians to know and appreciate the peculiarity of the territory in Nigeria and to give the inhabitants of the territory a sense of belonging in Nigeria.

There is also the question whether they are Nigerians or Cameroonians by nationality. Where do they belong since their history is not reflected in most literatures of history, government and politics of Nigeria? The absence of special consideration by Nigerian historians and political scientists to chronicle the events and circumstances that brought the Northern Cameroons into a marriage of convenience with Nigeria presents the situation paradoxical to them. To celebrate a centenary (1914-2014) to mark both formative and consolidation period of Nigeria, without situating the place of the Northern Cameroons in her political history will be inconsequential; in fact, it will a historical disconnect if the government failed to historicise and recognise the amalgamation of the Northern Cameroons with Nigeria which dates to the 1961 plebiscite.

IISTE

Constitutional Gap: Indigeneity and the Citizenship Question in Sardana LGA

In contemporary Nigeria, where individuals and groups find expression within the context of citizenship, the people from this territory are faced with the consequences of identity question, because of the lack of the understanding of the historical trajectories of the territory in Nigeria. Generally, the people are at the periphery of the periphery in Nigeria, in terms of the indices of development such as standard of living, education institutions, available job opportunities, road networks, healthcare facilities and the means of livelihood among others. It is evident that former provinces across the country have become states except the former Sarduana province which the Sardauna LGA constitutes a part. These seeming problems are at the core of indigeneity and the citizenship crises in the area, because of the overwhelming competition for limited resources and opportunities among the various ethnic groups in habiting the areas (Lenshie and Johnson 2012).

Although the people were dragged into plebiscite supervised by the United Nations to decide between the Republic of Cameroun and the Federal Republic of Nigeria, they decided to vote in favour of joining Nigeria. Their decision was limited due to the absence of a 'third alternative', whether they should be an independent federation with the Southern Cameroons (now, a part of the Republic of Cameroun) like other smaller countries such as Comoros, Chile, Nicaragua, Nauru, Gambia and Seychelles among others. More so, perhaps they would have decided to join the Republic of Cameroun given their proximity but decided on the contrary. This gesture required Nigeria's government commitment to the development of the territory, but has seen far less development. The confederation of ethnic nationalities in Mubi LGA in Adamawa State and Kurmi LGA of Taraba State had to demonstrate displeasure by hosting the flag of the Republic of Cameroun and asked the Nigerian Authorities in their land to vacate before the federal government responded to their demand for local government areas.

Other localities within the Northern Cameroons are faced with similar and many varied demands which have received little or no attention from the government. The inability of the government to respond to their yearnings and aspirations further renders their self determination more paradoxical, given that they have continued to search for identity, well-being and recognition in Nigeria. It is this search that has led to several conflicting relations among the various ethnic inhabitants of the territory since they cannot engage the government directly. Most of the ethnic groups situated on the Nigeria-Cameroun border have often been prejudicially treated. They have had their citizenship contested before ascertaining it after they have suffered embarrassment from the authorities.

Historically, these problems were triggered by the colonialists to meet colonial expediencies of the divide and rule system. Bauzon's (1992:7) asserts thus:

> Colonialism per se was undemocratic, whatever form it took. Its political and administrative apparatus was meant for ruling, not as a vehicle of representation. And it was established for the purpose of pursuing colonial policies, not for advancing the interest of the colonized. Contrary to stated aims, colonial administrators did not prepare the colonial people for any meaningful independence and self-government. Instead, elaborate arrangements were made, wittingly or unwittingly, to prepare for the coming phase of neo-colonialism.

With the dawn of the neo-colonial age, individual and group interests became politically crystallised. In the same vein, indigeneity and the citizenship question assumed prominence. After joining the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 1961, of all the constitutional amendments the citizenship status of these people were and still have not properly been addressed. At this juncture, it is relevant to make reference to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to illustrate and clarify this assertion. Chapter three on 'Citizenship', Section 25, and Sub-section (1) and (2) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (As Amended) states and I quote inter-alia:

> 25.(1) The following persons are citizens of Nigeria by birth, namely-
> (a) every person born in Nigeria before the date of independence, either of whose parents or of whose grandparents belonged to a community indigenous to Nigeria;
> Provided that a person shall not become a citizen of Nigeria by virtue of this section if neither of his parents nor any of his grandparents was born in Nigeria;
> (b) every person born in Nigeria after the date of independence either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria: and
> (c) every person born outside Nigeria either of whose parents is a citizen of Nigeria.
> (2) In this section, "the date of independence" means the 1st day of October 1960.

From the foregoing, it can be inferred that the constitution never took into cognisance the status of citizenship of the citizens from this territory since the date of independence is 1st of October 1960. Given that the people in this axis through a plebiscitary democratic procedure voted in favour of Nigeria on the 11th of February 1961, and later were amalgamated into Nigeria on 1st June 1961 (Lenshie and Johnson 2012). Can citizenship status by birth be granted to any individual or group in retrospect? In an earlier publication, Lenshie and

Johnson (2012:57) have argued that the Nigerian Constitution did not arrogate the status of citizenship to the people of the trust territory, Sarduana LGA inclusive, in retrospect, but took effect from the post-independence 1963 Republican Constitution. This assertion is overridden by superior issues and challenges.

The 1963 Republican Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was supposed to be the root of their citizenship, but the provisions make reference to the former colony or protectorate of the United Kingdom as determinant of their citizenship status by birth. This is quoted inter-alia in Chapter II, Section 7, Sub-section (1) and (2): thus:

> 7 – (1) Every person who, having been born in the former colony or protectorate of Nigeria, was on the thirtieth day of September, 1960, a citizen of the United Kingdom and colonies or a British protected person shall become a citizen of Nigeria on the first day of October, 1960: Provided that a person shall not become a citizen of Nigeria by virtue of this sub-section if neither of his parents nor any of his grandparents was born in the former colony or protectorate of Nigeria.
>
> (2) Every person who, having been born outside the former colony and protectorate of Nigeria, was on the thirtieth day of September, 1960, a citizen of the United Kingdom and colonies or British protected person shall, if his father was born in the former colony or protectorate and was a citizen of the United Kingdom and colonies or a protected person on the thirtieth day of September, 1960, (or, if he died before that date, was such a citizen or person at the date of his death or would have become such a citizen or person but for his death) become a citizen of Nigeria on the first day of October, 1960

In the reasoning faculty of many people, including scholars in the academia, policy makers, opinion leaders and the common people, it will seemingly appear that, the Northern Cameroons was a part of Nigeria (Lenshie and Johnson 2012). If 1914 was the year Nigeria was born after amalgamation of the colony and protectorate of the Northern and the Southern Nigeria, the question is, where then was the Northern Cameroons? There are no provision stated in the colonial chronicles that the Northern Cameroons was a colony or protectorate of United Kingdom, but as a territory held on 'mandate'. (The term 'Mandate' in this context is a contract agreed by United Kingdom to perform a service without payment) or held in 'Trust'. (The term 'Trust' is a legal arrangement by which the trustee holds and manages a property belonging to somebody else, at this juncture, the United Nations). Therefore, it is plausible to state that the provisions of 1963 Republican Constitution on citizenship does not also apply to the people on this axis. In any modern society, the constitution is the document that determines and guarantees one's nationality or citizenship, because it spells the conditions of becoming a citizen of a country.

Since the people of this axis voted to join Nigeria in a plebiscitary democratic procedure in 1961, their citizenship has not adequately been addressed by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The lack of clear-cut provisions which point to their citizenship status in Nigeria remains a major challenge to indigeneity and the citizenship rights. Even though without a clear-cut provision of their citizenship status, the people have enjoyed some political privileges and representations in Nigeria, to mark what can be referred as the 'act of constitutionalism', individual and group rights associated with nationality is still very much contested. The reason for this is informed by their historical and territorial peculiarities caused by the plebiscitary democratic procedures that brought them into Nigeria and the transverse of ethnic boundaries which cut-across the Nigeria-Cameroun borders. Since the 1961 plebiscite, the voter registration card used at that time has continued to be seen as a legal tender to determine one's nationality, albeit, on individual basis, this is in spite of their 'joining' Nigeria over fifty-two (52) years ago. The use of this plebiscitary card is anachronistic and requires to be deterred. It is outdated and inadequate because there is no such constitutional provision that permits the use of plebiscite registration card to determine one's nationality or any statutory provision that captures this one major challenge the people are facing in contemporary Nigeria. The inability to address this problem was and is still a factor creating political tension and conflicting tendencies in Sarduana LGA.

Ethnic Conflicts in Sardauna LGA: Trends and Dynamics

Conflicts, generally, emanates from the context of mutual incompatibility among the various competing groups for social, economic and political space, recognition and hegemony. Even though conflict manifestations are rooted in group quest for domination and control of resources, which may not necessarily be the interests of the collective whole, represents the interests of the few called the elites pursued at the expense of the collective whole, achieve by aggravating group sympathy. The conflicts in Sardauna LGA, though ethnic in character, the drivers are usually political and economical with elite overtones, and can be situated in the inability of the government to deploy its aptitude to address the problem of indigeneity and the citizenship question historically and constitutionally. The implications were notably the result of ethnic violence of November 1982 and December 2001 respectively. The dynamics of these conflicts will continue to be memorable among ethnic

inhabitants in the area if these pertinent questions are not addressed.

The questions over indigeneity and citizenship rights in November 1982 led to political violence in Sardauana LGA between the Mambilla and Kambu/Panso speaking people. The reason for this was strictly political because during the 1979 military transition to civil rule, individuals and ethnic groups within the provisions of democratic principles of individual freedom to choose from the avalanche of political parties and candidates, the Mambilla majority through their support for GNPP which was dominant in the defunct Gongola State and the Kambu and Panso majority were in support of the NPN. At the end of the general election, NPN won at the presidency and GNPP won the governorship in the state (Ahmadu, Joseph and Ngah 2009, Lenshie and Johnson 2012). With the Mambilla rising to political relevance in 1979, the Kambu and Panso became underprivileged in their immediate constituencies.

This created ethno-political bitterness and hostility and later degenerated into conflicts among the ethnic groups. The conflict resulted to labelling the latter as aliens, which nearly caused their deportation the immigration authorities. It took the timely intervention of the Gongola State Government under Alhaji Abubakar Barde, to prevent the act of deportation (Katsela 1982). Katsela (1982) and Blench (2004) reported that it would have been the worst deportation in Nigeria history. In Sardauna LGA, as Coser (1952:8) will put it, the political violence was caused by 'the struggle over values, claims to status, power and scarce resources in which the aims of the "opposing" parties are not only to gain the desired values but also to neutralise, injure or eliminate rivals'. It should be state that the violence occurred coinciding with the 1983 political transition (Ahmadu, Joseph and Ngah 2009: 82-100).

In December 2001- January 2002, it was Mambilla versus the Fulani ethnic groups. Although, land questions was central to the conflict, but also was the political and chieftainship questions. Ahead of the 2003 democratic transition, the fear of having political opponent emerging victoriously became a major source of ethnic group animosity using land and chieftaincy questions as remote triggers of the conflicts. It could be recalled that before the conflict the Mambilla had insisted that after the death of Alhaji Mohammadu Masur (the Chief of Mambilla), no alien was going to rule over them (UNHCR 2006, Talla and Lenshie 2012). The second factor in the conflict was the land question. Land is conceived to be the wealth of the nation. The post-colonial land tenure policy throughout Africa created problems which ethnic groups have fought and continue to fight one another over claims to ownership. The Mambilla have historically accused the Fulani for annexing their land unduly to use for grazing of animals (Egwu 1999, Nnoli 2006:96-97). They have also accused the government for supporting the Fulani through the promulgations of statutory laws, which started during the colonial era (Blench 2003). Since 1979 the Mambilla have continued to use their positions to agitate and make claims to land ownership from the Fulani (Blench 2003).

According to van de Goor, Rupesinghe and Sciarone (1996), the tendency for in-group hostility to occur against the out-group can occur due to perceived deprivation or change in the socio-economic and political statuses of a group over another. But beyond this theoretical assertion, is the motivation of the invincible hands of the elites. It is in this context that Blagojevic (2009) asserts that, 'political entrepreneurs in their quest for power, mobilise ethnic constituencies by promoting inter ethnic animosities using the rhetorical weapons of blame, fear, and hate' to create in-group/out-group category to achieve their objectives. This ethnification and intolerance manifest in the form of native/settler question or native/alien question. Often, such ethnic question arises from the feelings of 'egoistic deprivation or frustration' (the feeling that the other individual is doing well on their 'homeland') and the situation where an ethnic group engages another in conflicts on the same ground generates from the 'fraternal deprivation or frustration' (the feeling that one's ethnic group is deprived relative to the others) (van de Goor, Rupesinghe and Sciarone 1996).

These problems create contested but elusive atmosphere and the difficulty of ascertaining who is and who is not a citizen in the area. The complication of indigeneity and citizenship question in Sarduana LGA as it is further complicated by the historical and constitutional gaps, which finds expression in the expanse of time from 1961 to date in Nigeria. To understand and appreciate the complex dynamics of citizenship question makes the interrogation of the trans-border ethnicity of the various ethnic groups in the area in the context of migration and spread between the Nigeria-Cameroun borders.

The Making of Trans-border Ethnicities in Sardauna LGA: Who is and who is not a Citizen?
Migration, whether of whatever kind, is a fact of life. All humans have history of migration. It is in this context that theoretical studies have reflected the pattern of migration such as emigration and immigration to differentiate their dynamics. In each geographical space there exist some patterns of migration, which ethnic groups share across boundaries, informs what can be termed as transmigration. The history of human existence has been of migration and transmigration, which means all ethnic groups migrated from somewhere into where they are today. The only difference is the time which they arrived the territory. The pertinent question is why do people migrate? This is deducible accordingly that:

When people move they move for reason. They move because the population has

expanded. They move because the resources which support the population in the settlements have become more or less inadequate. They move because there are changes to the climate and they move for the sake of finding better areas in which to live (http://www.uiowa.edu/~africaart/people/Mambilla.html).

From the foregoing, there are two central reasons why people migrate, and these can be categorised into occupational mobility or geographical mobility. The former is informed by the change in the occupation caused by change in the population density, whereas the latter is shift in territory caused by change in environmental conditions. Evidently, therefore, there is no ethnic group whenever can be isolated or insulated by the fact of migration. This affirms that human are all strangers in places where they abode today. Whether humans are migrants, it is necessary to situate succinctly in the migratory history of the various ethnic groups in Sardauna LGA.

It is widely held that the early arrival into Sarduana LGA was the Mbum ethnic group, now resident in Kilayang and Hore Taram in the modern day Republic of Cameroun (Ahmadu, Joseph and Ngah 2009, Lenshie and Johnson 2012). The migration of other ethnic groups, such as the Mambilla, Kaka, Panso and Kambu as well as the Fulani into the area between the 17th and early 19th century, apart from other necessitating factors, the jihadist movement was paramount. The migration of these ethnic groups following the split of the Bantu linguistic categories on the Mambilla region, which falls between the Nigeria-Cameroun border is historically not recent (Lenshie and Johnson 2012:52, Talla and Lenshie 2012). Zeitlyn and Connell (2003), in this connection submit thus:

> There have not been any major movements of people in the region and for over 4000 years related groups have inhabited the area. Especially during the Fulbe jihads some groups were pushed southwards and were forced to co-habit villages with other groups, which led to changes in ethnic identity and changes in languages through language contact.

Therefore, the spread of these ethnic groups transverse by the Nigeria-Cameroun borders in contemporary time, have had serious implications for language synthesis and socio-cultural mutual exchanges. Evidently, all ethnic groups share close cultural identities, relations and affinities that are markedly glaring on both side of the borders, and this relates to the migratory history of the various ethnic groups, which their existence territorially predate the modern state.

Historically, the Mambilla, an ethnic category with history of migration from the French Cameroun is relatively a majority ethnic group in Sardauna LGA. They are widely spread into the Adamaoua Province and the North-West Province in the Republic of Cameroun in areas such as Atta (Ta), Somié (Ndeba), and Sonkolong (Mbor), Lingam, Ngambe, Kimi (Bankim), Njarup, Ly, Kunchum, Twendi and Ribao, Tibati, Lip and so on (Rehfisch 1996; Zeitlyn 1989, 2003, Talla and Lenshie 2012). However, the Kaka speaking people, although their historical origin is unclear, it is widely held that like the Mambilla, they migrated from the French Cameroun. A closer study reveals that the Kaka ethnic group is a mixed population of Tikar, Mambilla and local origin (Nkwi and Warnier 1983), spread across the Nigeria-Cameroun borderlands of Kusuku, Kakara, Inkiri, Warkaka, Ndum-yaji, Sarkaka, and the Ngoruje areas, as well as the Bamenda Province of the Republic of Cameroun (Ahmadu, Joseph and Ngah 2009, Lenshie and Johnson 2012).

The Panso speaking people also known as the *Nso* in the Republic of Cameroun were said to have migrated from the British Cameroons almost at the same period other ethnic groups migrated into Sardauna LGA. In the local government area, they are widely spread across areas such as Dorofi, Tamnya, Ngoruje, Maisamari, Mayo-Ndaga, Kusuku and Gembu where as in the Republic of Cameroun, they are found in places such as Nkar, Mbaime, and Kikai among other areas. Nevertheless, the Kambu are also an ethnic groups situated in Sardauna Local government area, they are known as the Limbun in the Republic of Cameroun. This ethnic group are also widely spread in Sardauna LGA Dorofi, Tamnya, Ngoruje, Maisamari, Mayo-Ndaga, Kusuku and Gembu whereas in the Republic of Cameroun, they are located in Ndu, Nkambe and Nwa among other places (Ahmadu, Joseph and Ngah 2009).

The Fulani are Senegambian category. They are located everywhere in the West African sub-region. There origin is controversial as different version of narratives point out (de St Croix 1945, Fanon 1981). The Fulani presence in Sardauna LGA is speculated to be at the wake of the jihad when the militaristic Fulani *Siire* sought to bring the various ethnic groups under imperial subjugation in the century (Refisch 1974). Their conquest and subdue of various ethnic populations in Cameroun and Nigeria accompanied by the establishment of lamidate in about 1823 explains their expanse on this axis, particularly in Sardauna LGA. However, Blench (2005) accounted that the migration of the Fulani into Sardauna local government area was informed by their pendular nature, and that their presence in the area dates to 1875.

From the foregoing account it is evident that all the ethnic groups in Sardauna LGA as it is throughout Nigeria and beyond migrated from one place or the other to settle in their current abodes. Their expanse was largely construed by so many factors, most of which have not recently been interrogated and understood.

However, before colonial incursion, they have understood their boundaries albeit by family and kinship relations, and later ethnicity before nationality became the determinant of ethnic boundaries. Nevertheless, national boundaries established by the colonialists have not defied ethno-cultural boundaries, because on this axis of the Nigeria-Cameroun borders ethnic groups have and continue to interact and correlate virtually every day in all spheres of social, economic and political lives. The trans-nationality of ethnicity among the various ethnic groups in the area is glaringly evident, such that cultural citizenship is at the heart of ethnic relations across the Nigeria-Cameroun borderlands in contemporary time.

Conclusion: The Northern Cameroons, Towards Inclusive Citizenship in Sarduana LGA

Evidence from this study reveals that inclusive indigeneity and citizenship in this part of the country much still needs to be desired. Historically, the United Nations plebiscites have had serious implications for the borderland settlements across Africa, and particularly those ethnic groups on the Nigeria-Cameroun borders. But, the indigeneity and citizenship question were colonially construed identity problems as modern state boundaries were not carried out conterminous with the traditional boundaries of the various ethnic populations. On the Nigeria-Cameroun borders, after over five decades of colonial departure, ethnic groups on these borders have continued to relate conspicuously on the bases of cultural affinities affirming cultural citizenship above national citizenship. For them national boundaries are imaginary but what is real for them is ethno-cultural boundaries defined by kinship and ethnicity. This is because in the traditional sense borders are not fixed, rather they are perpetually shifting to include or exclude other primordial categories based on shared affinities.

Notwithstanding, while within ethnic categories there exist social closure, certain labels are used to exclude other ethnic groups from the inclusive citizenship based on the claim that they are not indigenous or citizens, despite shared historical, political and cultural affinities existing among them. This is usually evident when it comes to participating in the distributive politics of the state. Beyond the enclave of study, their citizenship status remains contested, because of their trans-border ethnic character across the Nigeria-Cameroun borders. This present them as people in the middle of nowhere, and it is more pervasive due to the inability to situate adequately the unique nature of historical and political trajectories in the historical and political literatures on Nigeria, as well as the absence of sacrosanct constitutional provisions to situate their citizenship in Nigeria. These experiences have often truncated intergroup relations in Sarduana LGA, with greater deleterious implication on their collective wellbeing and development.

Drawing from foregoing, the following recommendations become necessary. Firstly, the Nigerian government in order to ensure cordial intergroup relations on the Nigeria-Cameroun borderlands, including Sarduana LGA, must take a proactive step by inserting the necessary clause(s) in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and other statutory books/documents to recognise the historical and political trajectories associated with the people in the former Northern Cameroons, who within the democratic procedures individually voted in a plebiscite to join Nigeria in 1961. More so, the necessary socio-economic and political structures needed for 'good life' that will open up space for greater opportunities for the youthful population on the bases of inclusive citizenship should be expanded in the territory. Secondly, the Taraba State government should impress upon the federal government the historical and political trajectories associated with the people, pointing out the socio-economic and political peculiarities and the implication of overlooking such, which may be detrimental to government concerted effort to promoting cordial intergroup relations and mutual understanding throughout the country, and thirdly, the various ethnic groups and their stakeholders that constitute the local government area should first of all accept the fundamental fact of history and geography that, they all are interconnected and interrelated historically, culturally and linguistically, sharing common destiny, whether they like or not, and agree to initiate a common front and action that will normalise their social and political status in the Nigeria legally in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigerian, which has not properly been captured.

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